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Fourth Meeting of the Regional Project Steering Committee
for the SOPAC/UNDP/UNEP/GEF Project:
*“Implementing Sustainable Water Resources and Wastewater
Management in Pacific Island Countries”*

Nadi, Republic of Fiji Islands, 30th July – 3rd August 2012

***Development of a Results-Based Approach to IWRM in Pacific Island
Countries, including Options to Strengthen Stakeholder Awareness of
Indicator Frameworks and Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms***

1 INTRODUCTION

The deliverable of Component 2 of the UNEP and UNDP Project Document ('ProDoc') is the development of an IWRM and WUE Regional Indicator Framework. Progress on this component to date has been slow and the Mid-Term Review (MTR) identified a need to provide greater support to countries in both understanding the indicator approach and in developing and mainstreaming national indicator frameworks. This paper presents the progress from RSC3 on the development of regional and national indicator frameworks and strategies to complete Component 2, including responding to the needs identified in the MTR.

1.1 Regional and National Indicator Frameworks

The deliverable of Component 2 of the UNEP and UNDP Project Document ('ProDoc') is the development of an IWRM and WUE Regional Indicator Framework with the objective of "*IWRM and environmental stress indicators developed and monitored through national and regional M&E systems to improve IWRM and WUE planning and programming and provide national and global environmental benefits*". It was proposed in the ProDoc that the regional project indicator framework might evolve into the ongoing regional participatory M&E framework.

Component 2 of the ProDoc identifies the need for:

- A participatory monitoring and evaluation approach (PM&) mainstreamed into national best practice
- A Regional Indicator Framework (RIF) integrated into national sustainable development approaches (NSDSs and NEAPs) and national adaptation programmes for action (NAPAs) and national adaptation plans (NAPs) for disaster risk reduction
- Indicator data providing an evidence base for action by SIDS National Governments
- Communities actively involved in designing, implementing and monitoring water and environment projects
- National expert monitoring staff available as a resource to National IWRM APEX bodies and across government using systems thinking approaches
- Established national data collection for monitoring and access by all database facilities with appropriate institutional mandates and powers in place for use of and action with the data for national programming, advocacy, learning and accountability

1.1 RSC3 Recommendations

At RSC3 it was agreed that national indicator frameworks would be developed by all countries by February 2012, informed by the Outlook reports. The RSC approved the broad approach for a regional indicator framework proposed by the RTAG (Addenda 1) and committed to developing national indicator frameworks for each country by February 2012. These national frameworks were to be integrated into a Regional Indicator Framework by RTAG by March 2012.

1.2 Progress on National and Regional Indicator Frameworks

A change in partner priorities resulted in the Outlook process not being funded to enable completion in 2012. This setback meant that the core information targeted to inform discussions on national indicator frameworks had not been compiled in many countries. Accordingly, the development of the national indicator frameworks was delayed across the region.

Despite the delays associated with the Outlook process, several countries have identified that they are now well placed to commence this process, including requests to provide support into Tuvalu and Samoa. In response to these requests the PCU went into Tuvalu in late May to assist in the development of a national IWRM indicator framework (Draft report in Addendum 2) and is due to provide similar support into Samoa in September 2012.

In addition to the above, during 2012, the PCU also completed the important regional assessment of water resource vulnerability (*Freshwater under Threat: Pacific Islands*), which informed the development of indicators, including the regional IWRM indicators, approved at an earlier RTAG session.

1.3 Mid-Term Review Comments

The MTR recognised that:

“work in developing the regional indicator framework has been slower than planned although the approach has now been presented to, and approved by, the RSC and is expected to be utilised at the regional and national level. This work will also enable the national demonstration projects to compile baselines using a common and agreed approach. It is important that the momentum in developing the indicator framework is maintained and even more effort should be to ensure a good understanding of the processes involved, the benefits and use of this data. During the MTR’s mission there was some uncertainty by both national project teams and stakeholders of the importance and potential benefit of this component, which is likely to stem from a lack of awareness on this topic, and consequential a need for Components 2 and 4 to assist further in explaining the value of the indicator framework”

and

“Comments received by the MTR during the mission to demonstration sites indicated that both the national demonstration projects and the national authorities needed more assistance with both understanding the indicator approach and translating these tools into national approaches”

Accordingly, the MTR recommended *“that the Regional PCU presents a report to the RSC meeting (summer 2012) on means to improve the awareness and uptake of the indicators developed. “*

2 WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

2.1 Developing National Indicators in Tuvalu

Development of the Draft National Indicator Framework for Tuvalu provided several lessons that will inform future development of national and regional indicator frameworks. The success of the consultation was reflected in part by requests on guidance to provide similar workshops for agriculture and fisheries; however, more formal feedback is yet to be provided and will inform future facilitation.

Whilst the Tuvalu experience is just one country, it does provide some initial guidance on where further thought may be necessary in developing a regional framework. The key outcomes directly relevant to the formulation of a Regional Indicator Framework are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1 – Lessons from Tuvalu National Indicator Development

Questions	Supported?	Comment
1. Are the six broad groupings ¹ appropriate?	Yes	Stakeholders were comfortable with the categories
2. Is each of indicators appropriate for Tuvalu?	Yes	Recognised eventual need for Economic development indicator, but not currently appropriate
3. Are indicators likely to be consistent across the Pacific	No	Even the Human Rights (MDG) indicators are unlikely to be consistent. In Tuvalu they are not seen as adequately representative of water and sanitation needs in-country. This is likely to vary country to country
4. Can this be achieved through facilitated workshops	Possibly	It was possible in Tuvalu partly because of the work undertaken engaging the same stakeholders on the national water policy
5. Are reporting cycles likely to be consistent with other regional cycles?	Yes	2-yearly cycle proposed should enable consolidation into regional reporting
6. Is the concept of a national reporting mechanism supported?	Yes	Identified a reporting mechanism (2-yearly report card) to supplement other national reporting mechanisms (census, etc)
7. Are all indicators likely to be adequately representative of national status in a regional	Probably not	Four of the five indicators developed have demonstrable logical links to national-level progress (health, environment, human

¹ Health; Water Security; Human Rights; Governance; Environment and Economic Development

Questions	Supported?	Comment
framework?		rights and water security). Whilst the fifth logically addresses components of governance ² , it may not be reflective of national IWRM governance within a regional framework given the broad range of aspects of governance
8. Was sufficient data available?	No / Yes	Much of the key data was obtained prior to the workshop commencement; however some key studies are still outstanding. Whilst this hasn't prevented the development of the national indicator framework, particularly with respect to feeding into a regional framework, it was necessary to source the data before final decisions could be made
9. Was stakeholder awareness at a level to support indicator development?	No / Yes	No – at the commencement of the workshop, and considerable time was required to raise the awareness and understanding of several stakeholders Yes – by completion of the workshop

The key features of the national indicator framework developed are consistent with those proposed by RTAG for the RIF:

- Each country may have a different group of indicators – Tuvalu for example currently does not have an indicator associated with economic development
- The broad categories seem to have general consensus
- There may be several similar indicators across countries – the examples being diarrhea and some form of indicator aligning with the MDGs for drinking water and sanitation

3 NEEDS FOR PROGRESSING INDICATOR FRAMEWORKS

3.1 National Framework Development

The Tuvalu experience supported the assumption that establishing a national indicator framework was consistent with the development of most national strategies, with similar key components. Possibly one relatively unique aspect of water indicators is that people across all sectors identified value in having indicators, from the Minister for Works Communications and Transport to community members. In discussions this was almost invariably linked to water security during drought period.

Whilst the development of the national indicator framework may differ from country to country, the key components include:

- Engage APEX body and stakeholders – fundamental to obtaining broadly accepted indicators, but also in identifying indicators that are often cross-sectoral and/or community-based
- Collation of available data – fundamental to support sound governance decisions
- An understanding of national reporting mechanisms
- Consultative discussions
- Capacity development in PM&E
- Time

In mainstreaming the indicators it is also necessary to have reporting mechanisms, an awareness raising strategy and political support. Ultimately, if well chosen, and with appropriate reporting mechanisms, the indicators should readily lend themselves to awareness raising, providing stakeholders with access to key information on how water management is impacting on their values, aligned to the six themes.

It is important that political support is secured early in the process as unexpected negative indicator results may be challenging for governments, who in turn may be reluctant to release the results.

Time is a critical factor in the process. The nature of a pilot IWRM project means that many stakeholders engaged in Tuvalu as part of this process have not been engaged previously on aspects of IWRM, including indicator development. Generally people intuitively relate to good indicators, but

² The governance indicators adopted for Tuvalu were female representation on the Falekaupule and the establishment of regulations

are often not used to applying it in the water sector. The concepts of formal PM&E were also a relatively new to many participants. Additionally, in Tuvalu (as anticipated in several other countries), the broad knowledge and understanding of water management is variable across stakeholders. For meaningful indicators to be developed and owned by such a group, both good facilitation and time to process and discuss concepts and issues is important.

3.2 Regional Framework Development

In progressing the RIF it is evident that a broader range of country inputs is required before it is possible to define the nature of the framework. The Tuvalu experience suggests that conceptually the framework should be sound, but until more countries have developed frameworks discussions on aggregation can only be based on assumptions.

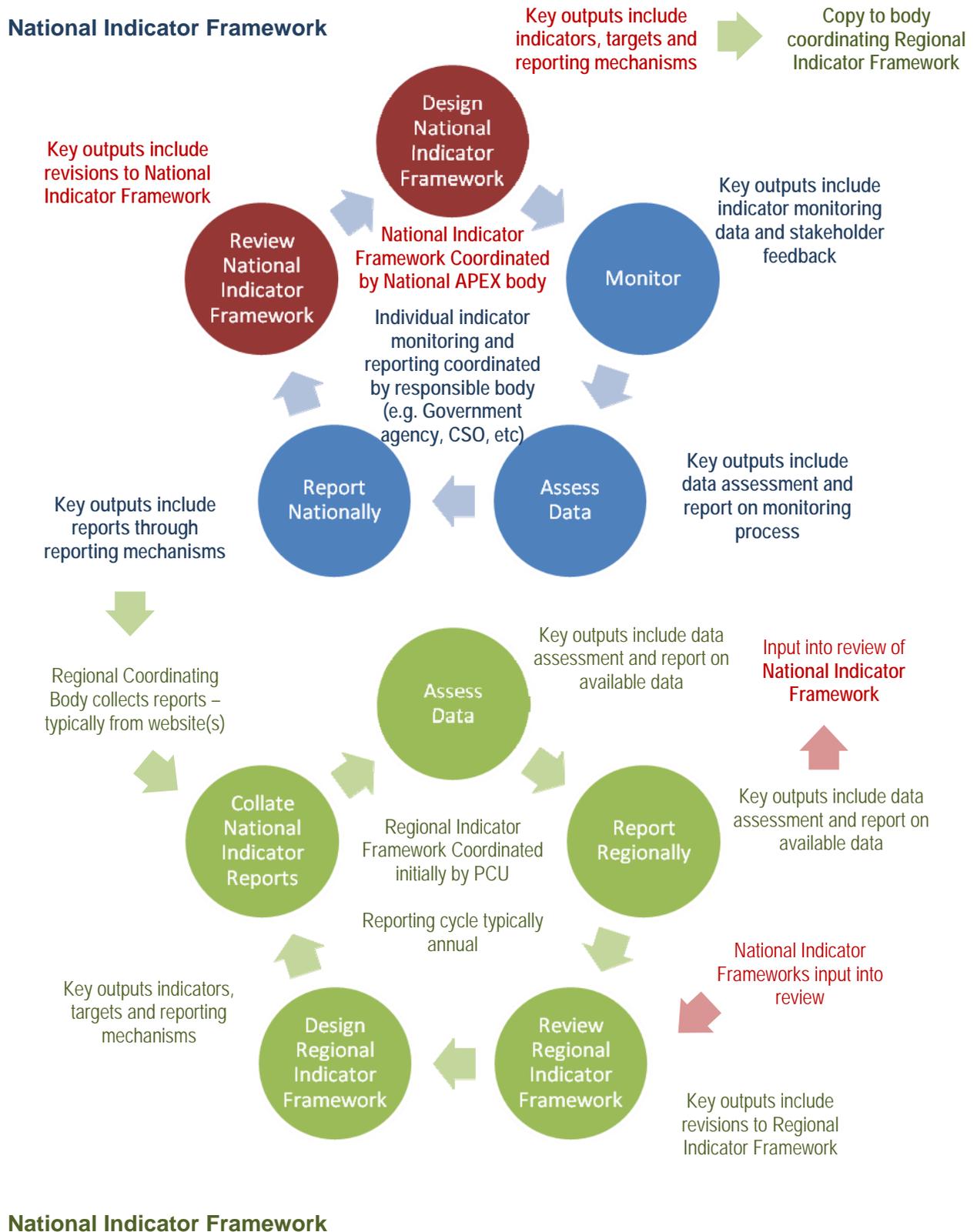
In progressing the RIF, it is necessary to incorporate:

- An aggregation mechanism to identify how countries and the region are tracking against targets
- A technical review of the aggregated data to provide some interpretation of the regional context
- A reporting mechanism and roles and responsibilities, including funding needs and source

These needs are consistent with many other indicator frameworks across many sectors. Once indicators and data are available from several countries, the compilation of data, aggregation in various forms and technical review should be relatively straightforward. The reporting mechanism and roles and responsibility are yet to be finalized; however, the design of the framework has meant that the costs associated with this process should be minimal. In the first instance the PCU will perform this role. Once an agreed reporting process is finalized, the options for ongoing maintenance of the reporting system can also be finalized.

A conceptual diagram of national and regional data collation and review is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Draft Conceptual Regional Indicator Framework



4 OPTIONS FOR PROGRESSING INDICATOR FRAMEWORKS

4.1 National components

The Mid-Term Review identified the need to improve the awareness and uptake of the national indicators. Whilst the approach adopted to achieve this is likely to differ from country to country, there are several common components:

- Stakeholder engagement – the frameworks are PM&E frameworks and require considerable stakeholder engagement from the outset, although much of this should simply be building on the existing project stakeholder engagement
- APEX body lead – whilst the work can be facilitated through national PMUs, it is likely that the national APEX bodies will need to be central in the development of national indicator frameworks
- Data and information – most countries do not have a consolidated set of key water data, information and existing and planned monitoring (including census/DHS cycles). This needs to be compiled, collated and reviewed prior to or as part of the indicator development process
- Political will – the approach and timing will depend upon the national circumstances, but it remains a core component

Developing a strategy to address the above components prior to indicator development is likely to significantly improve the final framework and the likelihood of uptake. Note that the timing for this, depending on individual country circumstances, could take weeks to several months.

There are broadly four options for facilitating the development of a national indicator framework:

- PMU / APEX body
- PCU in-country (similar to Tuvalu)
- National consultant
- International consultant
- A combination of the above

The various considerations of each approach are outlined in Table 2. The decision on the approach to adopt will be dependent upon each country's national and project circumstances. A combination of mechanisms is likely to present the best option for several countries, with initial technical support provided either from the PCU or a consultant, and the PMU / APEX body seeing the indicators through to completion.

Notably all options will require considerable country input, both from stakeholders and from the PMU / APEX body to manage the awareness and uptake, including engaging political support.

In order to provide sensible data collection and reporting timeframes for reporting at RSC5, it is likely that the national indicator frameworks will need to be endorsed for implementation by the end of 2012. In order to raise awareness of the indicators, it is suggested that countries consider World Water Day, 22nd March 2013 as the target for release of the indicator framework and initial results. This would provide adequate time to collate existing data and present targets and baselines for all indicators and current trends for some.

Importantly, there are strong synergies between the development of national indicator frameworks and the development of national IWRM plans. Accordingly, where possible it is proposed that the two activities be linked; however, it is also necessary to recognize that the timeframes for the two processes may differ. Consideration may need to be given to how these processes will link, and whether interim national indicators may be developed (which in turn may inform the national IWRM plan process), or whether countries are adequately advanced for the two processes to run parallel (which may provide significant savings in mobilisation).

Table 2 – Options for Facilitating National Indicator Framework Development

Facilitation Mechanism	Indicative Cost per country ³	Capacity Building	PCU / APEX body input	Resources Available	Timing ⁴	Comments
PMU / APEX body	Nil	High	Very High	Possibly	Weeks	May be challenging to identify appropriately skilled individuals in the PCU / APEX body in most countries to facilitate the development of national indicators
PCU in-country	~\$1,000 to \$3,000 ⁵	Moderate	Moderate	Yes	1-2 months	Advantage of bringing in someone familiar with IWRM indicators and country challenges. Timing depends on planned missions. Capacity building likely to be enhanced by linkages with project and targeted training
National consultant	~\$2,000 to \$10,000	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Possibly	Variable	Dependent upon availability of consultants in-country with appropriate skill-sets (likely to be difficult to find in many countries) and confidence in completion. Capacity building dependent upon retention of skills in-country and targeted training built into contract (also likely to increase costs). Potentially a good mechanism for countries with in-country capacity and budget
International consultant	>\$10,000 ⁶	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Yes	1-3 months	Provides confidence of completion in timeframe and quality (although not a guarantee). Capacity building dependent upon targeted training built into contract (also likely to increase costs).
PCU / PMU / APEX body	~\$1,000 to \$3,000 ⁵	High	High	Probably	1-2 months	Dual advantage of bringing in someone familiar with IWRM indicators and country challenges and building national and stakeholder capacity. Timing depends on planned missions. Capacity building likely to be enhanced by linkages with project and targeted training
International Consultant / PMU / APEX body	~\$10,000 ⁶	High	High	Probably	1-3 months	Provides confidence in initial work undertaken. Capacity building built into contract, together with quality control on outputs provides confidence in framework quality. Reliant on adequate available budget and confidence that can be completed in-country, otherwise costs increase dramatically

³ Indicative costs do not include workshop-hosting costs (venues and refreshments), which vary from country

⁴ Assumes that prerequisites in terms of data and initial engagement underway/completed

⁵ Low end (\$1,000) if able to align with normal country missions; high end (~\$3,000) if not

⁶ Low end (\$10,000) assumes that prerequisites in terms of data and initial engagement underway/completed. If not, likely to be significantly higher

4.2 Regional Indicator Framework

Further national inputs are required to enable significant progress on the RIF. However, the capacity of the RTAG to provide input on the development of the indicator framework may be limited by the capacity to meet, which may in turn be affected by other RSWC agenda items.

In order for the RIF to be developed and meaningfully utilized within the project cycle, it is necessary that the framework is developed for reporting before RSC5. Similar to the national frameworks, World Water Day would provide a target for release that might optimize exposure and awareness.

It is proposed that the RTAG develop reporting protocols by the end of November for circulation to RSC out of session, together with a framework incorporating available national indicator frameworks. For this to be meaningful, it would typically require at least four countries to have established national indicator frameworks (even at an interim stage) by the end of October. Options for presenting the RIF outputs will also be provided together with this package.

5 THE WAY FORWARD

5.1 Proposed way forward

It is envisaged that project managers will work through the details of delivering national indicator frameworks in-country during the workshop in the week following RSC4 (6th to 10th August 2012), and individual country strategies can be developed during that workshop. In order to guide this workshop and subsequent RTAG development of the RIF, it is proposed that RSC consider committing to timeframes for both national and regional indicator frameworks.

The PCU offers to support in-country development of national indicator frameworks with the view to completing all national indicator frameworks by the end of 2012, within the normal limitations of having to stagger missions to service multiple countries.

5.2 Recommendation

It is recommended that RSC consider committing to completing the national indicator frameworks by the end of 2012.

It is recommended that RSC consider tasking RTAG with the completion of reporting protocols and a package of proposed RIF outputs by the end of November 2012 and with release of the RIF by World Water day

ADDENDUM 1 – REGIONAL INDICATOR FRAMEWORK OUTLINE

First and foremost, delivery of a sustainable regional indicator framework is dependent upon the willingness and capacity of countries to collect data and report on indicators. Accordingly, regional indicators need to align with national indicators.

As discussed earlier, these indicators are likely to include a small set of core indicators (typically MDG and health related). However, there may also be scope for indicators of governance to be incorporated relatively simply, provided that these can be agreed upon – a starting point on the governance indicators may be the IWRM indicators agreed to at the 2nd RTAG Meeting (Annex 2).

In addition to these core indicators there would also be indicators that could then be broadly grouped, probably in accordance with the categories agreed to through the outlook process. Challenges that will then need to be addressed in establishing a regional indicator framework include:

- Inconsistency across region – comparison of say five different types of indicators for water security, which might be rolled-up into a water security indicator
- Lack of information on some key global indicators – even where core indicators are available, there are significant concerns about the reliability of the published data. The MDGs for access to improved sanitation and drinking water are two such indicators. Currently the Joint Monitoring Programme (WHO and UNICEF) are seeking to address these issues
- Consistency in approach in reporting indicators – diarrhoeal statistics is a simple example, where different countries use different criteria for assessing whether a case of diarrhoea is reported (e.g. report to hospital, admitted to hospital, report to clinic, etc). Notably, there may be more disadvantages for a country to change the way it reports these numbers (through a loss of understanding of what the numbers mean) than there are benefits from adopting a common approach

The framework would therefore need to combine core indicators reported for all countries (such as MDGs and diarrhoea figures), with a capacity to incorporate different monitoring methodologies with indicators reflecting national status and response to in-country risks.

At the National Level, the indicator framework, including reporting could be developed through a series of workshops involving relevant stakeholders, led by the APEX body. Key inputs would include the existing national reporting frameworks, including National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDS), Censuses, Demographic Health Surveys (DHS) and legislated reporting, including timeframes for their cycles. The timeframes are important from both a reporting perspective, to be able to link the monitoring to the reporting cycle(s), and from a planning perspective as national reporting can't commence until the indicators are embedded in these reporting frameworks. From this data, it would be possible to develop national report cards or other tools to help raise awareness. An example national report card has been developed for Tuvalu (Figure 2).

It is important to note that in developing a national indicator framework in the manner described, countries will necessarily set their own targets to reflect national conditions. This means that data would not necessarily be directly comparable between countries (although much of it is not currently consistent). However, this approach would identify the areas where countries are progressing well in meeting their national objectives, as well as areas where support may be best targeted. It would also enable direct comparison of the progress of different countries against their own targets, reflecting their own national values and unique circumstances.

At the regional level, it is either possible to accumulate the indicators in some form of index, adding scores for each category (human rights; economic development; sustainable environment management; health and wellbeing; resilience and governance) or averaging, or weighting categories. Alternatively, these can be presented in a map format; an example is presented in Figure 3. Country report cards could also be produced as part of a regional report. The map approach is initially preferred due to the likely differences between indicators

TUVALU WATER REPORT CARD

Despite 2013 being a dry La Niña year with drought from September to December, only 3% of houses ran out of rainwater. In 2013 Tuvalu dramatically improved long-term national resilience with the completion of composting toilets in 35% of Funafuti and Outer Island households. This, combined with the implementation of a national drought response strategy, and a close partnership between community and government in managing communal supplies resulted in the limited failure of rainwater supplies. Improved water availability is probably a driver for the reduction in waterborne disease.

Environmental recovery in Fongafale Lagoon remains slow; however productive water use is increasing as a result of an expansion of the market gardens.

TUVALU PERFORMANCE

Health



Moderately Low



Reduction in waterborne disease; although numbers are still relatively high compared with target

Governance



Moderate



Water policy implemented and rainwater resource model established to guide decisions; Regulations under development

Human Rights



Moderately High



Water policy implemented and rainwater resource model established to guide decisions; Regulations under development

Resilience



Moderately High



Reduction in water use and increase in sanitation through composting toilet installation. Supply reliability increased during drought period

Economic Growth



Moderately Low



25% Increased productive water use and 40% increased productivity in expanded market garden

Environmental Sustainability



Moderately Low



Impacted area of lagoon not significantly changed; although no increase in impacted area

Figure 2 Example Draft National Report Card

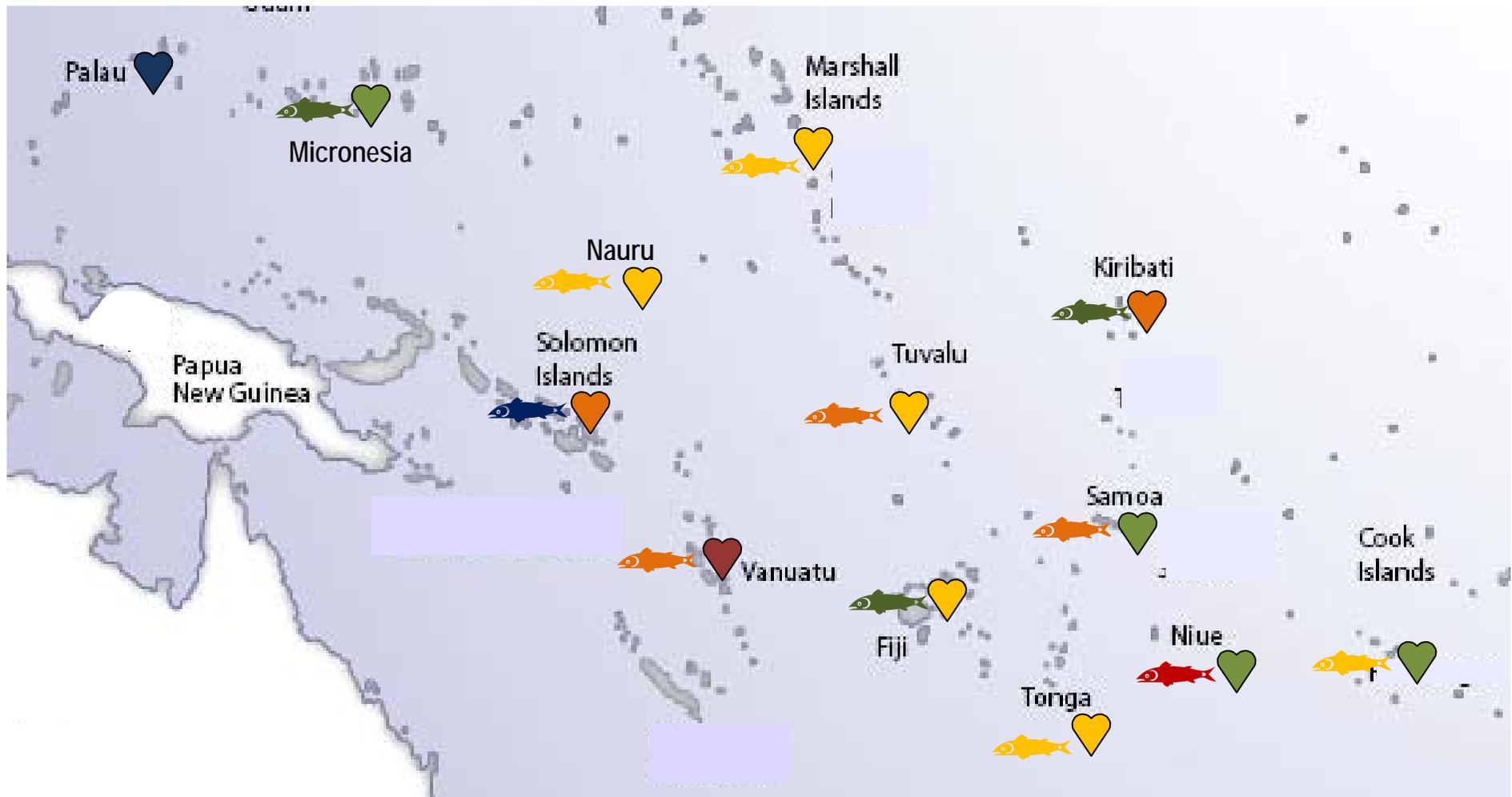


Figure 3 Example Draft Regional Map showing status of national health and environmental sustainability

ADDENDUM 2 – DRAFT REPORT ON TUVALU NATIONAL INDICATOR DEVELOPMENT