

Progress Report
on
Project: Samoa Marine Biodiversity Conservation
submitted by the
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
for the
Cabinet Development Committee

**First Report on
Project: Samoa Marine Biodiversity Conservation**

1. Purpose of Submission

First Report from period: January 2006 to March 2007

2. Executing Agency

Ministry of Finance (MoF)

3. Implementing Agency

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE)

The Project is coordinated by the Principal Marine Conservation Officer and implemented by the Marine Conservation Section of the Division of Environment and Conservation.

4. Background of the Project

The Project is fully funded by the UNDP. The project aims to strengthen scientific knowledge and national capacity for the sustainable management and conservation of marine biodiversity in Samoa. Its overall goal is to provide an enabling environment that will facilitate the development of appropriate policies and management plans for the protection of target marine species.

The project specifically involves research and training in cetacean and marine turtles of Samoa, and in developing awareness materials to promote their status for conservation. The funds requested will address three main areas: building capacity, improving information gaps and reviewing national legislation. Targeted research on cetaceans and other marine species of conservation concern will be carried out in partnership with international institutions and other government agencies.

5. Project Duration

This is a two-year project which officially started in January 2006 and will continue until December 2007.

6. Funding Sources and Conditions

(i) External assistance: UNDP (TRAC)	US\$100,000.00
(ii) Local/Government contribution:	-
TOTAL:	US\$100,000.00

7. Current Financial Status

(i) Total expenditure to date:

To date, an estimated total of US\$46,500.00 has been spent for the implementation of activities since commencement in January 2006.

(ii) External funds received:

(iii) Government financial resources: -

(iv) Amount approved in current budget year: -

(v) Amounts already disbursed to or by Implementing Agency: US\$46,500.00

8. Additional Resources Requested

(i) External

⇒ *Capital inputs*

None

⇒ *Programme support*

None

(ii) Local/Government

⇒ *Capital inputs*

None

⇒ *Programme support*

None

⇒ *Recurrent costs*

None

9. Current Implementation Stage (% of physical completion)

About 80% of the project activities have been implemented since commencement. These were mainly scientific Surveys of target marine species (i.e. whales, dolphins, turtles, marine invasive species, etc.) and others (i.e. coral damage and bleaching), Drafting of national Legislation on marine species, Drafting of National Policies & Management Plans for target species protection, and National Capacity Building and Awareness Programs.

10. Outstanding Activities

The remaining activities to be completed by December 2007 include:

- (i) Whales & Dolphins Watching Survey
- (ii) Cetaceans Longline Interaction Survey
- (iii) Cetacean biopsy training
- (iv) Development of MoU with the Government of Am. Samoa on the protection of trans-boundary marine species - cetaceans & turtles

⇒ *Revised implementation schedule*

None

⇒ *Revised total project costs*

* *Capital costs*

None

* *Recurrent costs*

None

Reason for request of project variation, additional funds etc.

Not Applicable

11. Possible Implications on Project

The possible implications of the project to be elaborated on under the following headings:

(i) Project financial and economic rate of return

Not applicable as this is not a commercially orientated project. However, it is expected that successful implementation of the project activities would be beneficial in terms of improved and/or strengthened capacity for the sustainable management and conservation of marine biodiversity in Samoa. The ultimate benefit rests with the marine environment and its resources in terms of recovered and/or improved status of marine life including the target species.

(ii) Project reaching its objectives

The Project has so far achieved its core objective of improved capacity for the sustainable management and conservation of marine biodiversity in Samoa. This is indicative of the fact that the local staff themselves can now conduct scientific surveys more effectively than having to depend on overseas consultants.

(iii) Project sustainability

Ongoing government support e.g. provision of technical and timely advice on key marine issues as well as continuous community support and participation is seen as crucial to the long-term sustainability of the Project.

The Project activities fall in line with the objectives and Work Plan of the Division of Environment and Conservation (Marine Conservation Section) so at end of Project, the DEC will continue to implement and monitor these activities.

12. Summary of Issues

None

13. Recommendations for Consideration

None

10. Signature of Executing Agency

Tu'u'u Dr. Ieti Taule'alo
CEO, Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment

11. Date

04 May 2007