

TERMS OF REFERENCE – Independent Institutional Review

A. Background/context

The Pacific Community

The Pacific Community (SPC) is the principal scientific and technical organisation in the Pacific region, proudly supporting development since 1947. SPC has been working to support the realisation of development goals, at both regional and national level, through its provision of scientific expertise advice and technical support across all its programming areas and is one of nine member organisations in the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP). The Pacific Community is owned and governed by its 27 country and territory members, including all 22 Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs). SPC is proud to be applying its collective capabilities in science, knowledge and innovation to serve the people of the Pacific in reaching their sustainable development goals and aspirations. By placing Pacific people at the centre of its approaches, and with its deep understanding of Blue Pacific contexts and worldviews, the organisation has embarked on the journey to implement the [Strategic Plan 2022-2031](#), which encompasses the insights and foresight of SPC members, staff and key stakeholders. It builds on learning from previous plans and, alongside the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and other CROP organisations, commits to the [2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent](#).

Organisational structure

SPC is governed by the Conference of the Pacific Community, which meets every two years. Between conference meetings, the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA) is empowered to make decisions on governance issues. There are three subcommittees reporting to the CRGA: (i) the CRGA Subcommittee for the Strategic Plan; (ii) the Pacific Board for Educational Quality; and (iii) the Audit and Risk Committee.

There are currently eight programmes and divisions at SPC: the Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems Division; the Educational Quality and Assessment Programme; the Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Division; the Land Resources Division; the Geoscience, Energy and Maritime Division; the Statistics for Development Division; the Public Health Division; and the Human Rights and Social Development Division.

SPC has made steps towards more integrated, trans-disciplinary ways of working. It is led by a three-person Senior Executive, the Director-General and two Deputy Directors-General, one with primary responsibility for science and capability (based in Suva) and the other for operations and integration (based in Noumea).

SPC is supported through functions in communications, executive advice, finance, human resources, information services, internal audit and risk, partnerships, integration and resource mobilisation, regional services and engagement, strategic leadership, Pacific women and girls, strategy, performance and learning. The Senior Leadership Team is a forum that supports the Director-General through advice, information and recommendations on concerns, resolutions, priorities and resource allocation.

Strategic Plan 2022–2031

The Pacific Community's *Strategic Plan 2022–2031* was endorsed by its member countries at the Pacific Community Conference held in Noumea in November 2021. [The Framework for Pacific Regionalism](#), which was approved by Pacific Leaders at the 2014 Pacific Islands Forum Meeting, and the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent*, endorsed by Pacific Leaders in 2022, are the key reference points in shaping how the Pacific Community will support its members. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals provide a common framework for tracking progress in the region.

There were a number of firsts in the development and production of *Strategic Plan 2022–2031*¹. The membership provided three guiding principles – inclusivity, ownership and futures – to shape the participatory process. The CRGA Subcommittee held the pen to co-create the structure and content of the plan; the process leaned into Pacific ways of knowing and being, and included Pacific values, metaphors and illustrations. The engagement approach included foreign affairs through the CRGA Subcommittee and full membership, youth through the Pacific Youth Council, and technical focal points through the sectoral official and ministerial platforms, implementing partners and staff.

The plan organises the work of the organisation under four overarching goals, listed below.

Goal 1: All Pacific people benefit from sustainable economic development.

Goal 2: All Pacific communities and cultures are empowered and resilient.

Goal 3: All Pacific people reach their potential and live long and healthy lives.

Goal 4: One SPC delivers integrated programmes through streamlined services.

These goals are further shaped through seven key focus areas (KFAs) and five common pathways, shown below.

KFA 1 Resilience and climate action

KFA 2. Natural resources and biodiversity

KFA 3. Food systems

KFA 4. Equity, education and social development

KFA 5. Sustainable economies and livelihoods

KFA 6. Planetary health

KFA 7. Transforming institutional effectiveness

Five common pathways: policy to action; data, statistics and knowledge; innovation and research; digitalisation and technology; capability and influence.

Regional context

The independent institutional review is being conducted in response to the recommendation from CRGA 52 to conduct an organisation level review within the context of the Review of the Regional Architecture (RRA) process. The Forum Leaders agreed the RRA is an opportunity to comprehensively consider the suitability of the current architecture, to effectively deliver and realise the Leaders' vision as articulate in the *Strategic Plan 2022–2031*.

In 2022, the Forum Leaders agreed to the mandate of the RRA to consider:

- a. the political setting: to review political groupings, leadership, collective interests and decision-making and sustained political will;
- b. institutional processes, systems and mechanisms: to review processes, systems and mechanisms supporting collective decisions, actions and advocacy;

- c. governance mechanisms: to review mechanisms in place to effect cooperation and coordination among the various regional entities and their engagement with the Pacific Islands Forum; and
- d. engagement and partnerships: to consider how the Pacific Islands Forum interacts with international partners and stakeholders to progress regionalism.²

Organisational context

The IIR sits within a landscape of nine previous organisational reviews from 2012–2022. The most recent organisation level review was conducted in 2022 as a Capstone Report to the *Pacific Community Strategic Plan 2016–2020* (See Section G. for a list of the reviews).

The Secretariat has used the evaluative findings to inform decision-making and course correction for the term of the *Pacific Community Strategic Plan 2016–2020* and in the development of *Strategic Plan 2022–2031*.

At its June 2022 meeting, the CRGA Subcommittee agreed to review the strategic plan at the three-, five- and eight-year milestones.³ The following year, at its June 2023 meeting, the Subcommittee considered the focus on relevance and the purpose of learning and adaptation for the three-year review milestone. The scope of the three-year horizon review was agreed as alignment, coherence and fit-for-purpose. At the same meeting, the Subcommittee considered the merit of an evaluative approach that brings the evaluative strands of the IIR, the *Strategic Plan 2022–2031* three-year review and the RRA together in a meaningful and coherent way.⁴

This terms of reference has been developed within this broader regional and organisational context.

B. Purpose, objectives, scope of services

The purpose of this evaluative activity is to provide an independent opinion and set of recommendations to the full CRGA membership on the Pacific Community as a Pacific-owned scientific and technical capability in service to the region.

IIR objectives

Objective 1: To assess to what extent the organisation is fit-for-purpose to deliver regional aspirations and priorities
Objective 2: To assess to what extent the organisation is fit-for-purpose to deliver the aspirations in its strategic plan in relation to Goal 4 and KFA 7
Objective 3: To assess SPC’s operational model, governance arrangements and institutional capacities and identify strengths, areas for improvement and opportunities
Objective 4: To assess relevance in relation to member needs and service delivery
Objective 5: To review the alignment and implementation process at the three-year horizon of the SPC <i>Strategic Plan 2022–2031</i> within the broader context of this institutional review

The review will seek the views of and be useful to SPC membership and a range of SPC’s internal and external stakeholders. It will be framed by the value proposition in the Strategic Plan:

The Pacific Community supports sustainable development by applying a people-centred approach to science, research and technology across all of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We serve our members by interweaving and harnessing the nexus of climate, ocean, land, culture, rights and good governance;

through trusted partnerships; investing in Pacific people; and understanding Pacific contexts (SPC Strategic Plan 2022–2031: 7).

Specific activities will be negotiated with the successful consultant(s) and the CRGA Subcommittee (or an alternative evaluation steering committee). However, some aspects of previous reviews, such as the 2018 member survey, were received positively by members and should be considered in negotiating activities. Additionally, the important work of the PacMEL initiative to contextualise and advocate for Pacific MEL methodologies should also be considered when negotiating the activities.

The extent to which the terms of reference and evaluative activities for the mid-term review of the Women in Leadership initiative relates to the KFA 7 aspect of this IIR should also be considered at the appropriate time.

Review methodology

The review is expected to adopt a non-experimental, mixed-methods approach, with a utilisation and strategic level focus, requiring both regional and country-level analysis.

The exercise will not be a complete analysis of individual programmes or project activities, but rather build on the institution itself. Where the availability of data may be a challenge, triangulation can be used to provide credible evidence.

A refined methodology will be finalised by the CRGA Subcommittee and the successful bidder during the inception phase.

The review will be in three phases: (i) preparation/inception; (ii) data collection, analysis, and validation; (iii) reporting, launch and presentation.

Final outputs will include a final synthesis report, a summary report (4–6 pages) and a PowerPoint presentation or alternative knowledge product to communicate key findings and recommendations to the CRGA Subcommittee and the CRGA.

It is expected that the synthesis will adopt key guidance in the [Pacific monitoring, evaluation and learning capacity strengthening rebbilib](#), and the [UNEG Norms and standards for evaluations \(2016\)](#) and respect the [UNEG guidance on Integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluation](#).

Evaluation questions

The review will be guided by the following questions:

Objective 1: To assess to what extent the organisation is fit-for-purpose to deliver regional aspirations and priorities

Evaluation question	Source/s
What has been SPC's regional progress in realising Pacific aspirations (e.g. the 2050 Strategy and other regional commitments)?	2022 Friends of the Chair review
Identify 2050 Strategy priorities that are relevant to SPC's work and mandate. What readiness and resourcing does SPC have to help deliver on these?	Survey of Subcommittee
What is SPC's unique role and contribution relative to other regional partners, including other CROP agencies, bilateral and multilateral donors and other regional development actors?	2012 Independent external review 2022 Australia-SPC partnership
How has SPC contributed to the delivery of regional public goods?	2022 Capstone

To what extent does the organisation's strategy take into account the specific needs of PICTs and complement national strategies?	BetterEvaluation: European Commission
What course corrections or changes may be required post-RRA findings?	Suggested by CRGA Subcommittee on 21.07.23

Objective 2: To assess to what extent the organisation is fit-for-purpose to deliver the aspirations in its strategic plan in relation to Goal 4 and KFA 7

Evaluation question	Source/s
How effective are SPC's governance arrangements to deliver high quality, timely results, in terms of goal/strategy setting, accountability and oversight of SPC business, and in terms of collective decision-making?	2014 Governance review
To what extent do members have their views considered in decisions and have influence in relation to institutional effectiveness and strategic direction setting?	2014 Governance review
To what extent have the monitoring, evaluation and reporting frameworks and arrangements aligned with the regional and organisational contexts, and provided evidence for improved programme management and accountability for results?	2022 MFAT-SPC core funding mid-term review 2012 <i>Report of the expert reference group</i>
To what extent has there been use of robust evidence to judge organisational performance, clear lines of accountability and the ability to address areas where performance falls short?	2014 Governance review
What can SPC learn from its existing partnerships? How can it establish stronger partnerships to achieve its strategic goals and priorities? What partnerships should it consider pursuing?	2022 Capstone
To what extent and how are the SPC values built into and affect decision making processes?	McKinsey 7S Model
Where are the organisation's capability strengths and gaps in relation to Goal 4 and KFA 7?	McKinsey 7S Model

Objective 3: To assess SPC operational model, governance arrangements and institutional capacities and identify strengths, areas for improvement and opportunities

Evaluation question	Source
How effective and efficient are the current SPC services provided to PICTS?	2012 <i>Report of the expert reference group</i>
Is the operating style, decision-making on operational matters, and service delivery model fit-for-purpose?	Seven-s model, Subcommittee discussions
To what extent have administrative procedures of allocating funds and managing actions facilitated or impeded progress towards the strategic objectives?	BetterEvaluation: European Commission
What are the ideal organisational governance arrangements and structure to support optimum service delivery to PICTs?	2012 <i>Report of the expert reference group</i>

What are the factors enabling or hindering change in relation to SPC's operational model, governance arrangements and institutional capacities?	2019 Capacity development
Are the skills, experience and knowledge of SPC's staff matched to the competencies required to deliver services to members	McKinsey 7S Model
Are staff recruitment processes, job descriptions, salaries and working conditions adequate for improving and enabling technical competencies in Pacific staff?	Friends of the Chair review recommendation
Is the operating system supporting the capability needs and workforce development, i.e. is there appropriate resourcing, policies and processes?	McKinsey 7S Model

Objective 4: To assess relevance in relation to member needs and service delivery

Evaluation question	Source
Discuss, explore and assess SPC technical service delivery and relevance of services experienced by each PICT at the technical line ministry/agency level and against wider national development plan achievement	2022 Friends of the Chair review
What priority did the PICTs give to specific programmes and how important was SPC's work to the development programmes of individual members?	2012 Independent external review
To what extent have the strategies and implementation approaches of <i>Strategic Plan 2022–2031</i> contributed to position SPC as a key player in national and regional development agendas?	2022 Capstone
What recommendations are identified for the future focus and strategic direction of SPC's long-term core services, building on the work done under this review, the <i>2050 Strategy</i> Implementation Plan and the RRA?	2012 <i>Report of the expert reference group</i>

Objective 5: To review the alignment and implementation process at the three-year horizon of SPC's *Strategic Plan 2022–2031* within the broader context of this institutional review.

Evaluation question	Source
What course corrections to the plan would better guide the operations of SPC to support members' development needs?	2018 Mid-term review of the strategic plan
How has the operationalisation of the strategic plan been taken up, including strategic shifts and components of programme activities being well designed and logically aligned to the achievement the strategic plan? This includes flagships, integrated programming, funding sources and mobilisation strategies, human resources, knowledge generation and utilisation, COVID-19, etc.	2022 Capstone
To what extent has implementation of the strategic plan contributed to prioritisation and integration of appropriate strategies to advance human rights, gender-based approaches, social and environmental responsibility mainstreaming, and consideration of target groups (e.g. gender, age, traditional knowledge holders, persons with disabilities, other relevant target groups)?	2022 Capstone, 2018 Mid-term review of the strategic plan
What have been the main enabling factors and barriers to delivering this Strategic Plan and what are we learning from them?	2018 Mid-term review of the strategic plan
To what extent and how has SPC implemented the pathways of KFA 7 on its journey to the 2031 Future State?	Source: Evaluation of the shifting systems initiative
To what extent is <i>Strategic Plan 2022–2031</i> aligned with global, regional and national development goals and priorities?	2022 Capstone

C. Timelines

Table 2: Details of expected outputs and timeframe

Milestone/Outputs	Detail	Timeframe
Phase 1: Preparation/inception		March
<u>Deliverable 1.1:</u> Inception report with methodology and implementation timeframe, submitted to the CRGA Co-Chairs	1.1.1. Desk review and consultative meetings, refine synthesis questions and TOR 1.1.2. Preparation of an inception report with detailed methodology (in response to the draft questions), plus a proposed workplan / timeframe to be shared with CRGA Subcommittee for comments and approval	
Phase 2: Desk reviews, interviews, field visits and validation		April-September
<u>Deliverable 2.1:</u> Comprehensive list of relevant references, with summary of surveys if implemented <u>Deliverable 2.2:</u> First draft of emerging findings to CRGA Co-Chairs <u>Deliverable 2.3:</u> Consultation workshop with CRGA Subcommittee and other stakeholders	2.1.1. Undertake data research and conduct key informant interviews/surveys, etc. and prepare list of references and surveys/interviews 2.2.1. Data cleaning, consolidation and analysis 2.2.2. Development of preliminary findings, conclusions, and recommendations in first draft of synthesis Capstone report, including two case studies, one under Goal 4 and one under KFA 7 of <i>Strategic Plan 2022–2031</i> 2.3.1. consultation workshop with SPC and other stakeholders to validate findings, conclusions and workshop recommendations	
Phase 3: Reporting and presentation of final synthesis results and recommendations		October–January
<u>Deliverable 3.1:</u> Draft report, summary and presentation to CRGA Subcommittee Co-Chairs <u>Deliverable 3.2:</u> Final draft report, summary and presentation to CRGA <u>Deliverable 3.3:</u> Final report and summary incorporating feedback from CRGA.	3.1.1. Prepare draft review report, summary report (4–6 pages), and a PowerPoint presentation or alternative knowledge product to communicate key findings and recommendations for CRGA Subcommittee to review 3.1.2. CRGA Subcommittee review and provide consolidated feedback 3.2.1. Finalise the review report, summary report and knowledge product 3.2.2 Presentation of findings and recommendations to CRGA	

D. Reporting and contracting arrangements

The consultant(s) will work under the guidance and supervision of the CRGA Subcommittee Co-Chairs, who will provide governance oversight throughout the implementation. The Director

Strategy, Performance and Learning, the Lead – Strategy and Innovation and the Lead – Quality and Impact will provide day-to-day contract and process management, including logistical, budget support and approval of deliverables and payments. The CRGA Subcommittee for the Strategic Plan will provide quality assurance to the findings and conclusions of the review, and propose improvements if required.

The assessment is expected to last over a period of 11 months (starting from 1 March 2024 and ending on 30 January 2025).

The assignment will largely be carried out remotely with the addition of duty travel.

E. Skills and qualifications

The expected skills and qualification of the Consultant(s) are outlined below:

- Post-graduate qualification in evaluation, international development, policy and administration or equivalent experience
- Experience conducting reviews and evaluations with a strategic level focus, requiring regional and country-level analysis.
- Demonstrated competence and experience in review methodologies, and data collection methods and analysis.
- A proven track record of delivering high-quality reviews and evaluations in an ethically and sensitive manner, observing international best practice in ethics and research integrity.
- Good knowledge of the Pacific, including on regionalism (governance mechanisms) and the regional architecture.
- Strong communication skills to interact with various stakeholders; and the ability to clearly document findings and recommendations. An ability to communicate in French and / or another Pacific language is considered an asset.

F. Scope of Bid Price and Schedule of Payments

Payments will be made as three lump sum payments on achievement of deliverables, on acceptance by the CRGA Subcommittee Co-Chairs and the Director, Strategy, Performance and Learning.

A breakdown of the percentage of total payment is provided in the table below.

Any expected travel in relation to delivery of the consultancy will be fully covered by SPC according to its travel policy.

Terms of payment will be in accordance with the provisions of Article 10 of the SPC General Conditions. Payment terms follow SPC finance policy (30 days from acceptance of invoice).

Milestone/deliverables	Deadline	% payment
Preparation/Inception Deliverable 1.1: Inception report with methodology and implementation timeframe, submitted to the CRGA Co-Chairs	30 March 2024	30%
Data collection, analysis, and validation	30 September 2024	40%

Deliverable 2.1: Comprehensive list of relevant references, with summary of surveys, if implemented		
Deliverable 2.2: First draft of emerging findings to CRGA Co-Chairs		
Deliverable 2.3. Consultation workshop with CRGA Subcommittee and other stakeholders		
Reporting, launch and presentation		
Deliverable 3.1: Draft report, summary and presentation to CRGA Subcommittee Co-Chairs		
Deliverable 3.2: Final draft report, summary and presentation to CRGA	30 January 2025	30%
Deliverable 3.3: Final report and summary incorporating feedback from CRGA.		
TOTAL		100%

G. Annexes to the Terms of Reference

H. List of past reviews

The nine previous reviews, including their ToRs, are available online.

2012 Independent External Review

[https://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/SPC/Collection/SPC Evaluations](https://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/SPC/Collection/SPC%20Evaluations)

2012 Report of the expert reference group

[http://repository.usp.ac.fj/6166/1/Report of the Expert Reference Group Editted 06022012 Final.pdf](http://repository.usp.ac.fj/6166/1/Report_of_the_Expert_Reference_Group_Editted_06022012_Final.pdf)

2014 Governance review

[https://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/SPC/Meetings/CRGA/CRGA_44/SPC Governance.html](https://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/SPC/Meetings/CRGA/CRGA_44/SPC_Governance.html)

2018 Mid-term review of Strategic Plan 2016–2020: Partnership survey

[https://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/SPC/Strategic Plans/SPC Strategic Plan mid term review Partnership Survey Executive Summary.html](https://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/SPC/Strategic_Plans/SPC_Strategic_Plan_mid_term_review_Partnership_Survey_Executive_Summary.html)

2019 Capacity development

<https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/uuxw9>

2022 Synthesis evaluation of SPC's Strategic Plan 2016–2020: Capstone Report

<https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/qxzyi>

2022 Friends of the Chair review

<https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/x6h7o>

2022 Australia-SPC partnership

<https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/australia-spc-partnership-evaluation-final-evaluation-report.docx>

2022 MFAT-SPC core funding mid-term review

<https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/Aid-Prog-docs/Evaluations/2022/Mid-term-Review-MFAT-SPC-Core-Funding-2020-2024-FINAL-For-Release.pdf>