

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

Development of Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) Anchored Fish Aggregation Device (FAD) Development and Management Plans

A. BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

The National Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) has partnered with the states and several government departments to implement a World Bank (WB)-financed project as part of its development activities within the FSM.

The FSM Pacific Islands Regional Oceanscape Program – Economic Resilience (PROPER) Project is an FSM Government-led Fisheries project where the primary objective is to strengthen the shared management of selected Pacific Island oceanic and coastal fisheries, and the critical habitats upon which they depend, for economic recovery and resilience. The project consists of three key components, namely Oceanic Fisheries, Coastal Fisheries, and Marine Habitats and Waste. Each component focuses on specific activities and interventions aimed at addressing the unique challenges faced in their respective areas.

Inshore fisheries resources are important to the food security and economic livelihood of all communities within the small islands of the FSM and as such their continued sustainable usage is essential to the wellbeing and development of the nation. Equally important is the continued maintenance of the environment that supports these resources.

Inshore marine fisheries and resources within the FSM are owned and managed by the state (Pohnpei and Kosrae), or by traditional reef owners (Yap and Chuuk). Inshore coastal fishers target a wide range of finfish and invertebrate resources using multiple fishing techniques and gears for subsistence and small-scale commercial activities. The fishers target both reef-associated and nearshore pelagic resources. Both men and women are involved in various aspects of fishing throughout the nation with specific roles undertaken based on traditional and cultural aspects of the different states and communities.

Per a recent situation analysis report on coastal fisheries resources in the FSM, it is apparent from the information provided by stakeholders that varying levels of overfishing are occurring in all states, particularly near to population centers on the main islands. This is giving cause for serious concern among fishers, communities and other citizens of the nation. However, information gathered from these consultations on how this overfishing can be managed and still ensure fishers continue to meet their needs was not articulated by stakeholders. The difficulty of the stakeholders to provide positive management outcomes rest with the fact that current fishing pressure is a direct result of the need and want of the communities for fresh fish for both subsistence consumption/food security and income generation. Giving up both or either will create economic and social hardship unless economic needs are met from elsewhere.

Key subsistence and commercial harvested finfish and invertebrate species are showing decline in the total numbers caught, the loss of spawning aggregations, increased time and effort required to catch the resource, and sizes of individual specimens are diminishing. This is particularly apparent for resources that have a high economic value (e.g. sea cucumbers, mangrove crabs), are preferred food fish (e.g. rabbitfish, bumphead parrotfish, humphead wrasse, and grouper) and those species that can be easily targeted by specific fishing methods (e.g. parrotfish by nighttime spearing, juvenile species on the reef flats using gill nets and/or targeting fish spawning aggregation sites). Thus, targeted coastal finfish and invertebrate resources of the FSM are seriously threatened. Past Development activities, including FADs, deep-water fisheries, and aquaculture have not made up for reductions in wild catches.

FAD programs in the States could be better targeted with FAD management plans that coordinate efforts in a strategic manner to ensure such programs are effective and deliver benefits to the people.

The FSM Department of Resources & Development (FSM DRD) is supporting respective State Marine Resources and Fisheries agencies to better manage resources and implement fisheries development activities for sustainable utilization of these resources. With the available support from the PROPER Project, the FSM DRD is seeking the services of a fisheries expert Consultant to undertake a consultative process to formulate four distinct but coordinated anchored FAD development plans for each of the States of Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae and Yap.

The services of the Consultant will be supported by the PROPER Project Implementation Unit (PIU) at the FSM NORMA along with the Central Implementation Unit (CIU) has been established under the Investment Finance Unit in the Department of Finance. Project Coordinators in each State are also providing on-ground support in collaboration with Working Groups in each State Government with membership from relevant Government agencies including fisheries and marine resources agencies.

B. PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES, SCOPE OF SERVICES

Purpose: To engage a qualified consultant to provide technical expertise and facilitation support to Federated States of Micronesia National Oceanic Resources Management Authority (NORMA) and FSM DRD for the development of four distinct yet coordinated anchored Fish Aggregating Devices (aFADs) development and management plans covering Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei and Yap States.

Objectives:

1. To develop comprehensive, evidence-based (aFADs) development and management plans for each of the four states that align with national frameworks and international best practices
2. To ensure coordination and consistency across the four aFAD development and management plans while respecting community and state-specific contexts
3. To facilitate meaningful stakeholder engagement across all four states
4. To build capacity within the state and national Fisheries Agencies and local stakeholders for effective implementation of the aFAD development and management plans.

Scope of Services:

The consultant will be responsible for:

i. Review and Analysis

- Initiation and planning based on scoping and baseline information and avoid socio-ecological mismatches
- Review existing fisheries legislation, policies, regulations, and management practices in FSM and the four States
- Conduct literature review of relevant fisheries and aFAD catch and effort information, relevant technical and scientific reports
- Identify and prioritise issues,
- Analyse socio-economic dependencies on fisheries resources in each island/state
- Identify commonalities and differences across the four states to inform coordinated yet context-specific management approaches
- Review regional frameworks and best practices in fisheries management.
- Identification of negative environmental and social impacts or risks associated with the FAD and devise mitigation measures.

ii. Stakeholder Consultations

- Develop a comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Strategy
- Conduct in-country consultations with:
 - National Fisheries Agency staff
 - State/Island government officials and fisheries officers
 - Traditional/customary leaders
 - Fishing communities and fisher organizations
 - NGOs and civil society organizations
 - Private sector stakeholders (e.g., fishers, fish markets, fish processors, exporters)
 - Research institutions, Academia and training partners
- Facilitate face to face or virtual follow-up consultations as needed
- Ensure gender, youth, and vulnerable groups are included in consultations

iii. Document Development

- Draft four individual Fish Aggregation Device Development and Management Plans (one for each FSM state) that include:
 - State-specific situational analysis
 - Management objectives and strategies
 - Management measures and regulations
 - Monitoring and compliance measures
 - Climate change adaptation considerations
 - Traditional knowledge and new/emerging technologies integration
 - Livelihood and food security considerations
- Develop **Implementation Plans** for each management plan including:
 - Timelines and milestones
 - Roles and responsibilities (national and state-level)
 - Resource requirements and budgets
 - Capacity building needs
 - Coordination mechanisms between states and national level

iv. Validation and Finalization

- Present draft plans to stakeholders in each state for feedback
- Conduct validation workshops (in-person or virtual as appropriate)
- Incorporate feedback and finalize all four management plans
- Ensure coherence and alignment across all four plans

v. Training Stakeholders:

- Identify training needs and areas for intervention
- Recommend stakeholders requiring training per implementation plans
- Develop awareness and training materials
- Undertake initial trainings as identified and approved by the Client
- Produce training reports

Key Deliverables:

1. **Inception Report** outlining methodology, work plan, stakeholder engagement strategy, and detailed timeline (including travel schedule)
2. **Comparative Situational Analysis Report** covering fisheries status, challenges, and opportunities across the four states, identifying commonalities and unique contexts
3. **Stakeholder Consultation Reports** documenting findings from each island/state
4. **Four Draft FAD Development and Management Plans** (one per state) with respective Implementation Plans utilizing attached templates for reference.
5. **Workshop/Validation Reports** summarizing feedback received from each state

6. **Four Final State FAD Development and Management Plans** (with Implementation Plans) incorporating all stakeholder inputs.
7. **Four training reports documenting trainings in the States with training and awareness materials.**
8. **Coordination and Harmonization Note** documenting how the four plans align with each other and national frameworks
9. **Final Report** summarizing the entire consultancy process, key findings, and recommendations for implementation

C. TIMELINES

This consultancy is expected to take place between February 2026 and October 2026 for approximately **100-120 working days** over 8 months (approximately 8-10 months to accommodate travel, consultation scheduling, and review periods).

Indicative Timeline:

Activity	Working Days
Contract signature	0
Inception meeting (virtual with national Fisheries Agency)	1
Document review and analysis phase	10
Development of Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and consultation tools	4
First in-country visit: Consultations across 4 states	
- Travel and consultations State 1	5
- Travel and consultations State 2	5
- Travel and consultations State 3	5
- Travel and consultations State 4	5
- National-level debriefing and coordination meeting	2
Virtual follow-up consultations (across all states)	6
Analysis and synthesis of consultation findings	8
Development of four draft Fish Aggregation Device Development and management plans and implementation plans	40
Preparation of validation and training materials and presentations	6
Second in-country visit: Validation workshops and Trainings	
- Validation workshop and Trainings State 1	5
- Validation workshop and Trainings State 2	5
- Validation workshop and Trainings State 3	5
- Validation workshop and Trainings State 4	5
- National validation and harmonization workshop	5
Finalization of four management plans incorporating feedback	16
Development of coordination/harmonization note and Training Reports	5
Final presentation and submission	2
Total Working Days	145-150

Travel Requirements:

- The consultant must undertake **two in-country visits** to FSM, visiting each state.
- **First visit:** Approximately 3-4 weeks for consultations across all four states (including inter-state travel time)
- **Second visit:** Approximately 4-5 weeks for validation and training workshops across all four states
- Travel logistics will need to account for inter-state transportation (flights, boats, etc.)
- The FSM National Fisheries Agency will coordinate with state governments to optimize travel schedules

Note on Timeline Flexibility:

- The timeline accounts for potential delays in inter-state travel due to flight schedules, weather conditions, or stakeholder availability
- Buffer time is built in for review and approval processes at both state and national levels
- Virtual consultations will be used strategically to maintain momentum between in-country visits

D. REPORTING AND CONTRACTING ARRANGEMENTS

Reporting Line: The Consultant will report directly to the Assistant Secretary for Marine Division of FSM Department of Resources & Development.

Milestone/Deliverable	Deadline	% Payment
Inception Report	2 weeks from contract signing	10%
Completion of first in-country consultations and submission and acceptance of Comparative Situational Analysis Report and Stakeholder Consultation Reports	3 months from contract signing	20%
Submission and acceptance of four Draft Fish Aggregation Device Development and Management Plans with Implementation Plans	5 months from contract signing	30%
Completion of validation and training workshops and submission and acceptance of validation and training reports	7 months from contract signing	20%
Submission and approval of final four FAD Development and Management Plans, Coordination Note, training reports and Final Report	8 months from contract signing	20%
TOTAL		100%

E. SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS

Essential Requirements:

Education:

- Bachelor's degree in marine science, fisheries or marine resource management, or related field

Experience:

- **Minimum 10 years** of progressive experience in conducting analysis, reviews development of fisheries and/or aquaculture management plans, policies and strategies.
- **Proven track record** of developing FAD management plans or similar strategic documents.
- **Demonstrated experience** in conducting multi-stakeholder consultations across different geographical locations, including remote/outer island communities

Desirable requirements

- **Experience working in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)** or Pacific Island countries, with understanding of inter-island logistics and travel constraints
- Experience with implementation planning and monitoring and evaluation framework development

Duration of the Consultancy

The consultancy will be for a period of 8 months commencing in June 2026.

Working Arrangement

For effective delivery of the assignment, the consultant may work with a local counterpart (via sub-consulting) for in-country logistics and/or consultation facilitation. Alternatively, the Consultant may request Client to assist with facilitating in-country consultations and logistics as needed by Consultant. This can be finalized at contract negotiations.