



1. Project Data

Project ID P151777	Project Name PROP Solomon Islands	
Country Solomon Islands	Practice Area(Lead) Environment, Natural Resources & the Blue Economy	
L/C/TF Number(s) IDA-55670,IDA-D0150	Closing Date (Original) 30-Sep-2020	Total Project Cost (USD) 4,366,936.24
Bank Approval Date 22-Dec-2014	Closing Date (Actual) 30-Sep-2021	
	IBRD/IDA (USD)	Grants (USD)
Original Commitment	9,750,000.00	0.00
Revised Commitment	6,177,312.20	0.00
Actual	4,366,936.24	0.00

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2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

As mentioned in the Financing Agreement (January 29, 2015, page 5) and GEF grant agreement for project P152938 (January 29, 2015, page 6), the project development objective (PDO) was to **strengthen the shared management of selected Pacific Island oceanic and coastal fisheries, and the critical habitats upon which they depend**. The PDO was stated the same way in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD). The Project Development Objective is for a regional project and this ICRR only reviews results in the Solomon Islands project - P151777. The third element of the PDO "strengthened shared management of critical



habitats” was designed to be addressed by the project with the Forum Fisheries Agency project alone. The PAD (page 57) specifies only the first two outcomes for the Solomon Islands PROP (ICR paragraph 13).

Please refer to the Implementation Completion Report Reviews (ICRRs) for the Pacific Island Regional Oceanscape Program (PROP) (P131655), PROP for Marshall Islands (P151760), PROP for Federated States of Micronesia (P151754) for a complete overview of the regional project.

There are two objectives contained within this PDO:

- i) strengthen the shared management of selected Pacific Island **oceanic fisheries**; and
- ii) strengthen the shared management of selected Pacific Island **coastal** fisheries.

Both the oceanic and coastal fisheries have are linked to regional management. The management of oceanic fisheries is highlighted in the PAD to require coordination between different countries in the region to maintain fish stocks and avoid free-riding. Meanwhile the Solomon islands coastal fisheries in the PAD are to be linked to regional markets.

Component 1: Sustainable Management of Oceanic Fisheries

Component 2: Sustainable Management of Coastal Fisheries

Component 4: Regional Coordination, Implementation Support, Training and Monitoring and Evaluation

The following received no allocation to the Solomon Islands - Component 3: Sustainable Financing of the Conservation of Critical Fishery Habitats

b. Were the project objectives/key associated outcome targets revised during implementation?

Yes

Did the Board approve the revised objectives/key associated outcome targets?

No

c. Will a split evaluation be undertaken?

Yes

d. Components

The project was designed with four components, with the Solomon Islands receiving commitments for three out of the four components. As the PAD notes these components were supplemented by the Mekem Strong Solomon Islands Fisheries (MSSIF) programme, which is a joint Solomon Islands-New Zealand Fisheries and Marine Sector Program, though the co-funding amount is not defined.

The components for the Solomon Island's project were as follows.



Component 1: Sustainable Management of Oceanic Fisheries (Total cost at appraisal US\$7.75m IDA, revised to US\$5.33m IDA, actual US\$3.14m IDA)

At appraisal planned activities for the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) for disbursement linked indicators (DLI) were defined to strengthen tuna fisheries management, included: increased sea and aerial surveillance patrols; a fisheries surveillance Operational center in Honiara; use of integrated electronic reporting systems; training for MFMR staff; technical assistance on a range of issues; construction and equipping of a fisheries surveillance operational center in Honiara; and construction and equipping of two outlying enforcement centers.

In the restructuring of 2018 the DLI modality was dissolved and activities were reduced to the design, construction and fit out of an enforcement center in Noro, roll out of a new Electronic Monitoring System to monitor fish catch by up to 25 Long Line Vessels, the provision of goods and technical assistance including training to strengthen the National Compliance Officer Program, the provision of goods and technical assistance, including training, to strengthen the National Observer Program. Specifically, two activities were removed: (i) the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) activity and associated funding planned under Component 1 due to duplication of funding sources, while the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) activity; and (ii) the proposed enforcement center in Honiara due to the absence of a suitable site for construction and insufficient time available for completion of construction.

Component 2: Sustainable Management of Coastal Fisheries (Total cost at appraisal US\$1.8m IDA and US\$1.37m GEF, revised to US\$0 IDA and US\$1.37m GEF, actual cost US\$0.1 IDA and US\$0.89m GEF)

At appraisal planned activities included supporting the Government to expand current data collection programs for coastal fisheries, working in conjunction with Provincial governments and communities to improve resource baseline information and to use this information to support community-based resource management. It was intended that this component complement support from the MSSIF program, this component supported operational costs, goods and services (including training) for coastal fisheries resource assessments, monitoring, community empowerment and national management.

In the restructuring of 2018 the scope was reduced to a nationwide frame survey to provide a baseline study of the coastal fisheries, Fisheries Resource Assessments and Fisheries Environmental Risk Assessments and development and implementation of management plans for key fisheries species.

Component 4: Regional Coordination, Implementation Support, Training and Monitoring and Evaluation (Total cost at appraisal US\$0.2m IDA, revised to US\$0.8m IDA, actual cost US\$1.02m IDA)

The objective of this component was to provide regional coordination, implementation support and program management, to ensure a coherent approach to program implementation and wide dissemination of results and lessons learned.

The 2018 restructuring strengthened the PIU staffing complement to compensate for lack of implementation support that was to have been provisioned by the regional FFA PROP Project, but failed to materialize.

e. Comments on Project Cost, Financing, Borrower Contribution, and Dates



Financing

At approval, project financing was US\$9.75 million from IDA with a \$5.95 million credit and \$3.80 million grant loan (restructuring paper page 5.), and US\$1.37 million from GEF. At restructuring project financing was US\$6.15 million from IDA (US\$4.15 million credit and US\$2 million grant) and US\$1.37 million from GEF.

Project Cost

The project was restructured on June 28, 2018 and June 11, 2020 (ICR paragraph 19.). The 2018 restructuring reduced the scope of components - see above - and commitments as well as strengthening the staff component of the project implementation unit at the country level with a project coordinator and M&E specialist. The 2020 restructuring of the project changed the project completion date. Total disbursement for the project is US\$5.25m made up of USD\$4.37 million against IDA credit and grant amount and US\$0.88 million against a GEF grant. A breakdown of commitment and disbursements before and after restructuring in 2018 are contained below.

	Before restructuring	After restructuring
Commitment IDA (USD Millions)	9.75	6.15
Commitment GEF (USD Millions)	1.37	1.37
Disbursement IDA (USD Millions)	1.31	3.06
Disbursement GEF (USD Millions)	0.21	0.67
Share of Disbursement	29%	71%

Given the reduced ambition of the project this review concurs with the ICR and a split rating will be undertaken.

Borrower Contribution

While no government contribution is discussed, there was a total joint co-financing NZD8.9 million from 2015 to 2020 from the joint Solomon Islands-New Zealand Fisheries and Marine Sector Program, MSSIF. The MSSIF sought to contribute to the following outcomes in the Solomon Islands, that overlap with this project: Strengthened Solomon Islands capacity to sustainably develop and manage fisheries; Increased economic contribution from sustainable inshore fisheries and aquaculture; Increased government revenue from sustainable offshore fisheries; and Increased income and employment from fishing, onshore processing and related activities. Both the ICR and the evaluation of the MSSIF recognize weaker collaboration than originally intended.

Dates

The project was approved on December 22, 2014 and became effective on April 29, 2015. The second restructuring (June 11, 2020) changed the closing date by 12 months from September 30 2020 to September 30 2021 to account for COVID-19 restrictions, but did not revise any of the components.



3. Relevance of Objectives

Rationale

Both the oceanic and coastal objectives of the project are substantially relevant for the World Bank's country strategy of the Solomon Islands where fisheries are an area targeted for interventions by both the World Bank and IFC. Support to fisheries, as identified in the ICR, is defined as a very important area of development for the Solomon Islands in regional and national forums and documents, including, the Pacific Island Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), the Solomon's National Development Strategy.

The Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for the Solomon Islands 2018–2023 consistently identifies fisheries as an important element in securing sustained economic growth, especially through increasing export growth. In relation to coastal fisheries the CPF highlights the productivity and resilience of small holder fisheries as a critical priority identified in the SCD. Moreover the CPF cites the importance of oceanic long-line fishing, which the electronic monitoring systems piloted in the project targets. This project and both objectives are highlighted as an area for ongoing support within Focus Area 2 “Promoting Inclusive and Sustainable Growth,” of the CPF, specifically, objective 2.3 'Improve fishery production capacity'. The continued relevance of the objective is demonstrated by the implementation of the second phase project of the project, which became effective in July 2022 (P177239). The CPF also identifies the importance of regional efforts in fisheries and notes that it is giving priority to platform-based approaches with access to the regional IDA window.

Two areas relevant to country conditions that are missing in the objectives of the project are the incorporation of gender and relevant FCS challenges. Steps to address gender are emphasized in the CPF, but not in the project's objectives. Neither the Oceanic nor Coastal fisheries objectives include a focus on gender inequality. In contrast, the CPF states that it will mainstream gender in Operations. The project's objectives do not include a link to gender mainstreaming or gender gaps. For example, the indicators of the project do not substantially contribute to the CPF indicators on direct and indirect employment of women. Moreover, links are not made with the IFC's effort to strengthen female labor force participation in supply chains. The PAD states that women are particularly dependent on coastal fisheries, but no interventions are tailored to address this issue in the Solomon's Island project. The gap in considering gender inequality in the project is reinforced by the ICR that identifies the need for improvement in its consideration. Further the Solomon Islands throughout the life of the project was identified as a fragile and conflict affected small states with high institutional and social fragility. This issue is not reflected in any part of the project development objective or corresponding elaborations. This means that the objective does not reflect a project working in a set of diverse and difficult operating environments, that can experience frequent and fast changes on the ground, reversals, security and active conflict risks.

Thus, the rating for relevance of objective is Substantial.

Rating

Substantial



4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)

OBJECTIVE 1

Objective

Strengthen the shared management of selected Pacific Island oceanic fisheries.

Rationale

The PAD does not include a theory of change and the ICR reconstructs the theory of change for the regional project and highlights the relevant elements for the Solomon's Islands, consistent with its objectives, approach and activities of the project both before and after restructuring (ICR, Figure 1, paragraphs 9 & 10; Figure 2, paragraph 26). The PAD and ICR define a rationale for the project based on a regional context of increasing cooperation and coordination in fisheries and the need to strengthen national and regional elements to optimize the protection of fisheries and their natural habitats, while enhancing the economic benefits.

Theory of Change (ToC) objective 1: The ToC defined in the ICR (see above) proposes that the project contribute a long-term outcome to enhance livelihoods, habitats and fish stocks in the Solomon Island's based on the implementation of collective practices in fisheries surveillance monitoring and enforcement, effective and sustainable fishing practices and value addition, improved access to regional markets, and receiving a more equitable distribution of returns from sustainable tuna and habitat conservation. To contribute to these outcomes the component focused on the oceanic fisheries focuses on the expanded and enforced regional access regime. Outputs that sought to contribute to these outcomes are for Oceanic upgrading, management and fisheries surveillance systems and enforcement facilities at the country level. This would be supported by compliance training, fisheries guidelines and shared information systems from the regional level by the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA).

Although the various elements of the ToC are reasonable, the translation of outputs into outcomes at the regional level has several shortcomings as assumptions between the different implementing agencies are not unpacked, the fragile environment of the project is not reflected and measurement did not cover the theory of change. The main assumption that could have been further unpacked is how committed the Solomon Island's Government is to the regional elements of the project, that were central to the delivery of outputs. For example, the PAD requires that the Solomon's government engage in implementing and maintaining an regional procurement evaluation committee (page vi) and accept technical, fiduciary, monitoring and implementation support from the regional entity in the FFA (page vii), but does not demonstrate that this is viable. Another relationship that is not unpacked is the connection to the New Zealand Government funded MSSIF intervention. Though the PAD recognizes that there may be an overlap with the project and assumes that coordination will be through the MFMR planning processes, there is no indication in the PAD as to whether there is commitment for this process within MFMR or MSSIF or if the needed coordination and cooperation capacity is present to bring together two overlapping, but unique externally funded interventions. The Solomon Islands has been identified as a fragile and conflict affected country from 2013 throughout the project period. The theory of change does not describe how it responds to specific fragility issues related to the Solomon Islands. For measurement indicators were initially stated at the outcome level and then after restructuring at the output level. At no point was the quality of outputs assessed leading to a gap in establishing the link between outputs and outcomes, this is further discussed below.



Outputs pre 2018 restructuring (ICR paragraphs 39-41)

There is a gap in output monitoring before the 2018 restructuring due to the focus of project indicators. The indicators defined and used in the project do not assess the outputs delivered and are instead at the level of demonstrating and outcome of expanded and enforced access to oceanic fisheries. The ICR states that the original results measures were weak proxies for achievements with questionable attribution to project activities (page 15). As a result though four out of six indicators were achieved the gap between actual implementation and results measurement means that these indicators do not provide a useful basis for assessing efficacy.

In reporting before restructuring the ICR reports that about 50 percent of the budget under this objective (component 1) had gone into training and expanding the staff complement of compliance officers. Yet at the time of restructuring core elements of program activities related to the establishment of electronic fish catch reporting and construction of fisheries surveillance operational centre and enforcement centres were in the process of procurement with a range of important questions still outstanding. Review of aide memoires from April and September 2017, prior to the restructuring mission in March, 2018, highlighted that 16 MFMR compliance officers recruited and financed were certified as inspectors by February 2017 and were on duty by September 2017, plans were being put in place to have their positions provided for in the regular budget. The project was supporting the development of a MOU to allow for fisheries compliance cooperation between MPD and MFMR. Outside of the project two boats had been fitted with eMonitoring equipment on locally registered longline vessels financed by The Nature Conservancy. It was at this time anticipated that the project would finance the next phase of the rollout to expand coverage to an additional 50 longline vessels. With the MFMR working with FFA's legal team to draft regulations to make eMonitoring equipment a condition of licensing for all locally registered vessels by January 2019.

More information on the project outputs post-restructuring is below.

Progress for the entire project duration is rated as modest, in alignment with the ICR. The indicators available were not useful in measuring the limited progress on important project activities. Finally, from the project documents we are not able to determine the additionality of the compliance officers as no indication is provided of the prior level of staffing or their anticipated monitoring coverage.

Rating
Modest

OBJECTIVE 1 REVISION 1

Revised Objective

Strengthen the shared management of selected Pacific Island oceanic fisheries.

Revised Rationale

In the restructuring of 2018 the DLI modality was dissolved and activities were reduced. Following restructuring, construction of a surveillance operations center and one enforcement center were removed, the project only sought to construct and fit out one enforcement center in Noro. Ambitions for the new Electronic Monitoring System to monitor fish catch were specified rather than being left open with it now targeting up to 25 Long Line Vessels. The institutional strengthening activities were specified as the provision of goods and



technical assistance including training to strengthen the National Compliance Officer Program and the National Observer Program. The Monitoring, Control and Surveillance activity and associated funding planned under Component 1 due to duplication of funding sources. All indicators for this first objective changed.

The ICR reports (page 17-18) that all targets for the project were achieved, though these were not very ambitious given the level of outputs before the restructuring, achievements are outlined below:

- i) 24 certified compliance officers, 10 female were recruited and trained and are reported to have expanded the monitoring and enforcement of national/regional fishery rules and regulations, and also received training on investigations and evidence management. This output exceeds the target of 16 certified compliance officers.
- ii) 9 electronic monitoring systems for long-line vessels were installed and were in operation in the Solomon Islands, exceeding the target of 7. The introduction of the e-monitoring system is reported as a major milestone as it is a regionally shared tool to improve oceanic fisheries management as it also an independent collection of fisheries data and thereby verification of reported tuna catch data and compliance with VDS regulations.
- iii) An electronic monitoring system for long-line vessels was developed whereby data from sensors are sent in near real time to the Marine Control Surveillance Center, complimenting the existing Observer Program through increased monitoring coverage in long-line fisheries.

In addition, the MFMR licensing team was supported by funding two license officers and the purchase of office supplies and the procurement of new gear for the Observer Program and renovations to its offices was financed.

As reported in the ICR, the design, construction, and equipment of the Noro enforcement center in Noro was not completed. It was reported that this occurred largely due to COVID-19-related shipping delays and cost increases.

The progress after restructuring is rated as modest. This review concurs with the ICR that the revised indicators are not a strong reflection of improved shared management of oceanic fisheries, which remained the objective of the project. The measurement of the application of the outputs would have better shown a contribution to project objectives, for example, number of inspections and patrols implemented to target identified high-risk ports, boats, and fish receiver premises. It would have been helpful for the ICR to more clearly define what outputs were achieved post-restructuring and their significance. [CDN1] It is also not clear how adequate fitting 9 vessels were with eMonitoring equipment given initially 50 then 25 vessels were targeted. In addition, eMonitoring equipment was already being piloted on locally registered longline vessels by February 2017. Further description of the significance of the new system and an indicator showing what proportion of long-line vessels fitted with eMonitoring equipment would have provided more assurance on the project contribution to the shared management of selected Pacific Island oceanic fisheries. Finally, no compliance centers were built which the ICR notes is a significant missing piece. Lack of financing or time does not appear to be an issue with achieving further outputs given that this objective (component 1) was underspent by over USD\$2 million. Given the project was extended by a year it would have been useful for the ICR to more specifically illustrate how COVID-19 prevented construction of the center and achievement of other outputs.



Revised Rating

Modest

OBJECTIVE 2

Objective

Strengthen the shared management of selected Pacific Island coastal fisheries.

Rationale

Theory of Change (ToC) Objective 2: The ToC defined in the ICR (see above) proposes that the project contribute a long-term outcome to enhance livelihoods, habitats and fish stocks in the Solomon Islands as described under objective 1. Outputs in the project's design that sought to contribute to scale up these co-management practices throughout the country were assessments of the coastal fisheries, coastal fisheries monitoring, management of targeted coastal fisheries, national management measures for coastal fisheries, small goods and works to increase local value added, identification of areas to link coastal fish products to regional markets.

As described under Objective 1 the theory of change key assumptions of the commitment, coordination and cooperation between different implementing agencies is not unpacked in the PAD, weakening the link and the ability to demonstrate that outputs can lead to outcomes relevant at the regional level.

Outputs pre 2018 restructuring (ICR paragraphs 50-53)

By April 2017 it was reported that activities under component 2 had yet to commence. According to the ICR, as of the of restructuring by July 2018 none of the original indicator targets were achieved, though three coastal assessments had been undertaken as outline below

- i) No additional coastal fisheries were legally managed by stakeholders in the Solomon Islands, with support from the Government before restructuring
- ii) No direct project beneficiaries were identified before restructuring
- iii) Three coastal fish resources assessed as the basis for improved management against a target of seven before restructuring
- iv) No national coastal fisheries management plans were implemented for coastal export fisheries

The project increased its outputs post-restructuring (as detailed under revision 1), by completing management plans and undertaking additional activities, such as, stock assessments.

Progress to this objective across the entire project is rated as modest. Though plans were gazetted, that does not mean they were implemented, which and so there remains a gap between outputs and the overall outcome.



Rating
Modest

OBJECTIVE 2 REVISION 1

Revised Objective

Strengthen the shared management of selected Pacific Island coastal fisheries.

Revised Rationale

Outputs post 2018 restructuring (ICR paragraphs 54-60)

In the restructuring of 2018 the scope of the project was reduced through the removal of outputs related to (i) monitoring coastal fisheries; (ii) stakeholder management of targeted coastal fisheries and empowering communities to legally manage defined coastal fisheries; and (iii) activities designed to support the linkage of coastal fish products to regional markets. The outputs achieved and targets related to coastal fisheries are outlined below:

- i) Two management plans for key coastal fish species implemented were in the Solomon Islands, against a target of two
- ii) Three coastal fish resources were assessed as the basis for improved management, against a target of two
- iii) Three coastal fisheries management plans designed for key species in the Solomon Islands were defined against a target of three.

These outputs met all of the targets and undertook additional activities. In addition, as described in the ICR stock assessments of key economically and culturally significant marine stocks (coral and giant clam) were conducted at 13 sites in six provinces and summarized in two reports issued by the MFMR in 2019 and 2020 and fed into management plans. Further the ICR highlights that the MFMR reported that the project supported the expansion of the Community Based Resource Management program in 39 additional communities encompassing eight provinces through the support of plans. The management plans were formally gazetted under the country's Fisheries Management Act and now regulate the harvesting of these species and their export.

Yet even with these expanded outputs there are some shortcomings against post-restructuring targets. As the ICR notes, once a plan was 'gazetted' the project treats it as implemented and does not describe evidence for implementation which would have demonstrated 'improved management of coastal fisheries and the critical habitats upon which they depend. Consequently conservation and livelihood development outcomes are yet to be observed. Further, with the removal of activities designed to support the linkage of coastal fish products to regional markets, no systematic processes are evident that link enhancements in coastal fisheries with the strengthened shared management across the region.

Progress to this objective post-restructuring is rated as modest.



Revised Rating

Modest

OVERALL EFFICACY

Rationale

The overall efficacy of this project for the entire life-cycle is rated as Modest, in alignment with the ICR. Though the restructuring process did help support the achievement of many of the restructured project targets there remains a gap between the outputs delivered and the intent of the PDO to strengthen the shared management of selected Pacific Island oceanic and coastal fisheries, and the critical habitats upon which they depend. Further details of evidence limitations are contained below.

Overall Efficacy Rating

Modest

Primary Reason

Low achievement

OVERALL EFFICACY REVISION 1

Overall Efficacy Revision 1 Rationale

Though the project was restructured a new PDO was not introduced to reflect a more limited ambition and so we continue to review progress against a regional ambition. With the project restructured we did not have evidence on the implementation of management plans and the project did not complete the one remaining structural investment project the Noro MCS Center. Further although targets were achieved there was not an assessment of their contribution to the overall PDO as a result of the gaps in measurement achievement can only be identified at the country level.

The strengthening of the compliance program through training of 24 project-supported compliance officers and the recruitment of 16 of these into the staff compliment does strengthen oceanic compliance monitoring services. The fitting and subsequent use of 9 electronic monitoring systems for long-line vessels was an improvement over the human monitoring as shown by the systems continued use during COVID-19. Finally, the enhanced managerial decision-making about coastal fisheries is supported through the completion of frame surveys and stock assessments.

Overall Efficacy Revision 1 Rating

Modest

Primary Reason

Low achievement

5. Efficiency

Economic Analyses: The project is estimated over its lifetime to have yielded net benefits of US\$4 million and an internal rate of return estimated to be 32 percent. No net benefits specific to the Solomon Islands were calculated at design, while the estimated internal rate of return estimated of 32 percent at closure falls short of 45 percent which was cited at design. The economic analysis of the program was based on a cost benefit analysis that took a conservative approach by solely focusing on the benefits from the purse seine tuna fishery



under Objective 1 and noting that additional benefits would accrue from the long-line fishery. The main economic benefits were due to the increase in revenue from the purse seine fishery over the six years of program implementation because of the program and a strengthened income from the vessel a day scheme. No benefits from the achievement of targets under objective 2 are included in these estimates.

The main asset developed and sustained are the new compliance officers, which as they are on the staff compliment remain an ongoing benefit of the project.

There are shortcomings in this economic analysis. First, as indicated under efficacy the assets of the project were realized incrementally, with the emonitoring system only coming online in the last two years. This means the contribution of the project to the benefits from the purse seine tuna fishery will be limited for much of the project to the role of compliance officers. Second, there is a poor connection between the results measured for the project and the overall objectives, as noted in the ICR and in the efficacy section.

Implementation Efficiency: The project was inadequately designed for the context and appears to have insufficient support during initial implementation leading to delays in the first two years that were not fully mitigated even after the restructuring. The original project design made a range assumptions on adequacy of support from the regional body the FFA on procurement, technical, fiduciary, monitoring and implementation support which did not hold when tested. The supervision from FY15-FY17 could have been more intense to help pickup and mitigate issues, for example, the supervision during this period is less than 9 weeks in total from staff, which is half the amount received in FY18 alone. Following restructuring support increased. Although the increase support was reported to have helped mitigate the project management issues, the project was not able to make up implementation fully, for example the completion of the Noro MCS Center and the revision downwards of the intended emonitoring system from 50 boats to 25 and finally to 9.

Efficiency Rating

Modest

a. If available, enter the Economic Rate of Return (ERR) and/or Financial Rate of Return (FRR) at appraisal and the re-estimated value at evaluation:

	Rate Available?	Point value (%)	*Coverage/Scope (%)
Appraisal	✓	45.00	0 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
ICR Estimate	✓	32.00	0 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

* Refers to percent of total project cost for which ERR/FRR was calculated.

6. Outcome

The Outcome Rating is based on a split evaluation of the performance of the project's objectives.



1) **Substantial rating for relevance**, both the oceanic and coastal objectives of the project are relevant for the World Bank's country strategy of the Solomon Islands where fisheries are an area targeted for interventions by both the World Bank and IFC. Support to fisheries, is an very important area of development for the Solomon Islands in the CPF, regional and national forums and documents. The continued relevance of the objective is demonstrated by the implementation of the second phase project of the project, which became effective in July 2022 (P177239). Yet, the project objective does not include a focus on gender inequality, which is a relevant area. The project objective also does not reflect the fragility of the context as indicated by the World Bank identifying the Solomon Islands as a fragile and conflicted affected situation.

2) **Modest rating for efficacy**, following restructuring the project was able to meet many of its targets. Yet, the link between the targets and strengthening the shared management of selected Pacific Island oceanic and coastal fisheries is not demonstrated by the evidence provided.

3) **Modest rating for efficiency**, as there are shortcomings with economic and implementation efficiency. The connection to the results of the project, economic efficiency indicators and overall objective of the project are weak. The implementation efficiency was hindered by the quality of the design of the project and even with the restructuring and attempts to support the project was not able to fully realize the more modest targets that were defined.

As the ratings for the full project duration and the restructured project are the same, based on the project's substantial relevance, modest ratings for efficacy against the original and revised outputs and modest rating for efficiency this project is rated as 'Moderately Unsatisfactory'. The overall rating is aligned to the ICR.

a. Outcome Rating

Moderately Unsatisfactory

7. Risk to Development Outcome

The main risks to development outcomes arise from gaps in the theory of change, which assumed sufficient coordination capacity and commitment from regional and national bodies in policy development and implementation and does not fully reflect the fragility of the context. The extent to which changes for example in Fisheries monitoring can be sustained relies upon the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources in the Solomon Islands continued adaptation to support the changes that have been initiated. The ongoing risks cited in the ICR are suggestive that any follow-up requires an institutional development partnership that was beyond the scope of this project. As cited in the ICR (paras 117-119), the monitoring, fishing management limits and implementation challenges for community based resource management require substantive policy engagement by government Ministries.



8. Assessment of Bank Performance

a. Quality-at-Entry

The strongest feature of the World Bank's performance for quality at entry was the strategic relevance of the project. The project attempted to undertake new levels of regional collaboration. In 2014, at the time of project preparation, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat had just begun to develop a new strategic framework to streamline the development agenda and prioritize the key challenges for the region (ICR paragraphs 109 & 110). Further the project was aligned to the CPF and the strategies of the Solomon Island's government.

Yet, as documented throughout this review the technical, financial, fiduciary, institutional, implementation and M&E arrangements were not aligned and hindered project performance initially and needed increased focus after restructuring from the World Bank team. The disbursement linked indicators needed to be replaced, for long periods in the life of the project implementation progress was rated as moderately unsatisfactory (e.g. from June 2017 to June 2020), the project coordinator position was unavailable or unfilled for over a year, and financial reporting rated as unsatisfactory in March 2018. Issues and risks related to these areas were not identified at appraisal as the focus of the assessment did not accurately reflect the regional bodies readiness and did not consider appropriately the country's systems. Further coordination arrangements with the New Zealand government's Mekem Strong Solomon Islands Fisheries Programme were not well defined.

The project components were designed in a manner that would contribute to the project objectives, though as highlighted under the section 2, the monitoring indicators before restructuring were disconnected from project implementation. Following restructuring the reduction in scope and the measurement of output level indicators meant there was a disconnect between demonstrating country results and the regional level intent of the objectives.

Quality-at-Entry Rating

Unsatisfactory

b. Quality of supervision

The World Bank's supervision came to identify and resolve issues that would constrain the achievement of relevant development outcomes three years into the project, which may have meant that it was too late to ensure it met its objectives. The project became effective in April 2015. During the first years of the project supervision there was a little under 8 weeks of supervision from staffing in fiscal years 16 and 17. From FY18 the project had a dedicated task team leader who led a restructuring mission in March 2018, with the restructuring completed by June 2018. This restructuring reshaped the procurement, implementation and monitoring and evaluation processes to be undertaken by the country rather than regionally and this reduced the scope of implementation. Though these changes were made, implementation did not accelerate with new procurement support and project implementation manuals were needed. Consequently the mid-term review was only completed in May 2019 where emonitoring system installations were reduced from 25 to 9, having previously been reduced from 50. A sign of the challenges around implementation is that though the mid-term review reported that worked had commenced on the



Noro Monitoring Compliance and Surveillance Center, this output had not been completed even after a project extension in September 2020 to September 2021.

As reported by the ICR (paragraph 115) the team intensified its support following the 2018 restructuring in a range of areas. In Safeguards, additional support was provided since no safeguards instruments nor documentation had been prepared for any of the subprojects. The World Bank fulfilled its fiduciary role with aide memoires providing evidence of consistent financial monitoring, review and support and remediation where needed. Further performance improvement plans were implemented for PMU staff where needed.

The project reporting provides useful assessment of these performance and supportive interventions undertaken, though was consistently over optimistic of the ability of the project to reach targets. From April, 2017 various procurements and process were often said to be progressing only for expectations to be reduced later, as in the case of the emonitoring system and the Noro Monitoring Compliance and Surveillance Center.

Quality of Supervision Rating

Moderately Unsatisfactory

Overall Bank Performance Rating

Unsatisfactory

9. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization

a. M&E Design

The project originally had 10 indicators. Three PDO indicators and seven intermediate results indicators. For Objective 1 there was one PDO and five intermediate results indicators. The full set of results indicators for Objective 1 were revised as part of the first restructuring in 2018. For Objective 2 there were two PDO indicators and two intermediate results indicators. In the 2018 restructuring only one indicator was kept unchanged, with two revised and one PDO indicator dropped (ICR paragraph 53).

The weaknesses in the M&E system design, together with a lack of M&E capacity, resulted in repeated delays with reporting requirements (ICR paragraph 100). At no stage in the project were indicators designed that were appropriate to assess the link between project outputs and intended regional outcomes implemented, even after restructuring. At design the indicators were defined at an outcome level and would not report upon project level outputs. Following restructuring, indicators reflected only the delivery of outputs and not the quality of implementation. For example, indicators were defined to focus on the number of compliance officers, rather than the actions of compliance officers in their role (ICR paragraph 46).

The disbursement linked indicators were to incentivize reforms in the government, but were a limited proxy for improving the performance in becoming a more transparent partner in the regional Vessel a Day Scheme (ICR paragraph 41), and were removed through restructuring. The disbursement link indicators were externally audited and triggered payment of 13 percent of the total restructured project budget (ICR paragraph 96).



b. M&E Implementation

The challenges in M&E implementation reinforced that there were weakness in project design. It was assumed that the regional Forum Fisheries Agency would be able to coordinate M&E, but it only attempted to fulfill its agreed responsibility for coordinating the verification of DLIs. Coordination of capacity strengthening in project M&E at the country level did not materialize (ICR paragraph 94). This meant that monitoring data before restructuring was collected and analyzed in a methodologically sound manner in relation to the DLIs through a clear, methodology, but not clearly linked to country deliverables for Objective 1.

After restructuring in 2018 M&E responsibility shifted to the country, and again reflect project implementation challenges. The ICR reports (paragraph 95) that project progress reports were rarely prepared by the Project Management Unit despite repeated task team follow-up and implementation support to help the PMU deliver them. Therefore, progress against other indicators had to be sought out by the task team through informal channels.

No evidence of the implementation of an evaluation study, beyond the ICR is provided.

c. M&E Utilization

The evidence presented in the ICR is that the absence of systematic progress and results data collection, documentation, and reporting, the M&E utilization is consequently low. The indicators before restructuring did not provide evidence upon which the country or World Bank could make decisions, after restructuring the indicators captured project management information. A more useful system would have demonstrated how outputs delivered were utilized to help assess the quality of implementation. This would have assisted in better understand project success.

M&E Quality Rating

Modest

10. Other Issues

a. Safeguards

Environmental and social safeguards. All safeguards policies were complied with. The project was classified as a Category B (partial assessment) at appraisal, triggering the following World Bank operational policies: (a) OP 4.01 - Environmental Assessment was triggered because some planned investments, particularly construction of the Noro MCS building, may generate minor to moderate site specific and time-bound adverse environmental impacts. Activities were screened for environmental and social impacts and mitigation measures were put in place to address potential site-specific impacts such as noise, waste, health and safety risks for workers and discharges to the marine environment.



(b) OP 4.04 - Natural Habitats was triggered because the program activities took place in marine areas (coastal and ocean), which are known sites rich in biodiversity. All program activities were designed to enhance positive and sustainable returns to these important habitats.

(c) OP 4.36 - Forests was triggered because the broader PROP includes TA to support the development of financing mechanisms for marine protected areas and ocean finance mechanisms (through the FFA PROP), both of which could influence conservation incentives for coastal communities to conserve mangrove habitats. The project had no reported impact on mangroves in the Solomon Islands.

(d) OP 4.10 - Indigenous Peoples was triggered because specific sites and activities were not identified at the project preparation stage, and it was deemed possible that the project will affect indigenous peoples to some extent. Because the project beneficiaries were expected to be mostly indigenous peoples, the approach adopted was to incorporate the elements of an indigenous peoples plan into the overall project design.

(e) OP 4.12 - Involuntary Resettlement was triggered because project activities may have required small-scale coastal land acquisition. However, this was not required during the project as no resettlement was required. The site of the Noro MCS building was already government owned and vacant.

The project activities (small works and TA) were assessed to have environmental impacts that are site specific, temporary, and readily manageable through the project's ESMF application. With the World Bank's environmental and social specialists' continued guidance to the PMU and the PMU's international safeguards consultant, the environmental and social risk management for the project progressed well. The Contractor's Environment and Social Management Plan (CESMP) for the construction of the Noro MCS Center has been completed and is available for application during the follow-on PROPER Phase II project. A training program on safety at sea for the MFMR's fisheries team has been prepared and will continue to be used for the PROPER Phase II project.

To assist with compliance as stated above, following restructuring the World Bank safeguards team held a session with the PMU and MFMR staff to explain use of the ESMF screening forms since no safeguards instruments nor documentation had been prepared for any of the subprojects.

b. Fiduciary Compliance

The World Bank fulfilled its fiduciary role with aide memoires providing evidence of consistent financial monitoring, review and support and remediation where needed. Further performance improvement plans were implemented for project management unit staff where needed.

c. Unintended impacts (Positive or Negative)

No unintended impacts, positive or negative were identified in the ICR.



d. Other

11. Ratings

Ratings	ICR	IEG	Reason for Disagreements/Comment
Outcome	Moderately Unsatisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory	
Bank Performance	Moderately Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Bank quality at entry was unsatisfactory, which lowers the overall assessment.
Quality of M&E	Modest	Modest	
Quality of ICR	---	Substantial	

12. Lessons

This review reiterates the lessons provided in the ICR (paragraphs 120-126), with some minor additions

1. Long-term engagement. Pacific Islands Regional Oceanscape Program needs to be considered as a long-term multiphase process and engagement. From this ICRR we noted that regional projects can benefit from being grounded first in a diagnostic of country issues rather than overall regional issues. Where this project in the Solomon Islands made the most advances is where it connected to issues where there was a local demand, such as, monitoring, compliance and surveillance.

2. Region-specific challenges and implementation readiness. PROP was the World Bank’s first engagement in Pacific Islands oceanic and coastal fisheries. Participating countries and institutions had little to no experience with managing World Bank-financed projects. Region-specific challenges, in part due to the fragile institutional context there are capacity constraints, significant hands-on-support needed, and the overall challenges of reaching stakeholders beyond capital cities due to the dispersed nature of the countries must also be considered at design.

3. The theory of change was overly complex, not well articulated at design and employed a hub and spoke regional model where a country led approach could have avoided the need for restructuring in 2018. The program’s theory of change was demanding, complex, and ambitious given the institutional capacity, time, political, geographical, and financial constraints by the client country. The idea of leveraging regional institutional capacities (from the FFA, SPC, and others) for effective implementation of national project results chains was weakly developed, poorly understood, and/or owned by countries and thus operationalized suboptimally.

4. The adoption of CBRM as the national strategy to conserve coastal fishery resources, including coral reefs, requires a lot of investment both in time and resources. While empowering and training communities to effectively manage coastal fisheries through development of CFMPs will improve and maintain the productivity of coastal resources in the medium term, communities are more likely to support management and conservation goals when these are supported by income generating



activities that materialize in the short term, including from local value chain investments and diversification of livelihood opportunities.

5. There very limited consideration of gender equality in the project design, which is a critical dimension when implementing effective CBRM. Continued financing of the CBRM process through the MFMR and project can be informed by (a) new research and lessons learned about the adoption of CBRM in the region; (b) consultation with SPC's 'Pacific Framework for Action on Scaling up Community-based Fisheries Management: 2021–2025', to assess how to best engage in either direct community-based fisheries management or/and its enabling work; and (c) recent analytical work about gender inequalities in access to productive resources, assets, services, and opportunities, such as the Country Gender Assessment of Agriculture and the Rural Sector in Solomon Islands, conducted by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and SPC in 2019.2

6. Foster improved project management. The PMU had challenges meeting reporting requirements. In a new project phase, improved project performance management and oversight systems can be incorporated early on and agreed rules and procedures consistently applied. These issues could be addressed by (a) supporting the MFMR in strengthening its performance management, (b) aligning future results targets with the MFMR's institutional results targets, and (c) strengthening fiduciary capacity within the MFMR.

13. Assessment Recommended?

14. Comments on Quality of ICR

The ICR provided relevant details and explanations on the development and implementation of the project. The ICR is candid on shortcomings in implementation. Two areas where the ICR could have provided more details are: i) what outputs were achieved before restructuring and how these influenced or were incorporated post restructuring; and (ii) the procurement delays throughout the project, aide memoire's consistently report confidence that important procurement processes will be completed only for them to be delayed or downscaled. Commenting on these could have helped identify further lessons on development commitment, cooperation and coordination arrangements for the second phase project.

a. Quality of ICR Rating

Substantial

