

Cook Islands National Environment Service  
 GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS

PO Box 371 Rarotonga Cook Islands Phone (682) 21256 [www.environment.gov.ck](http://www.environment.gov.ck)

**TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)**

**GEF 7 Senior Project Officer**

**POSITION SUMMARY**

Job Title:	GEF 7 Senior Project Officer
Division:	Environmental Partnerships
Responsible To:	Manager Environmental Partnerships
Responsible For:	Nil
Job Purpose:	<p>Effective and efficient delivery of the Service's aid programme "GEF-7" to support the successful operations of the National Environment Service.</p> <p>The GEF 7 Senior Project Officer will ensure project activities are executed according to plan and that M&amp;E supports the optimized adaptive management of the project.</p>
Job Classification:	
Jobwise Code:	
Job Band:	Band E-F
Date updated:	March 2023

**AGENCY VISION**

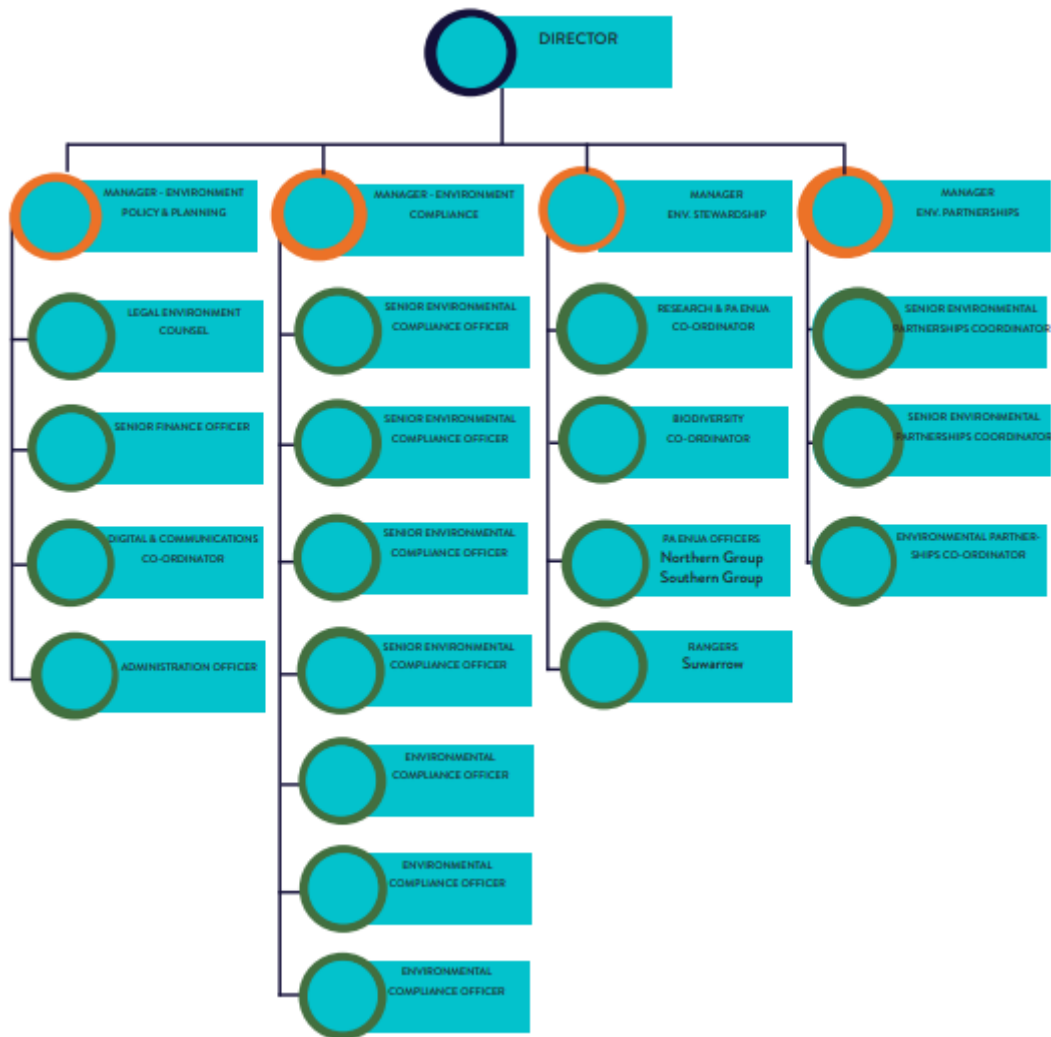
Vision – To transform the Cook Islands into a regional leader in environmental sustainability.

Mission – The National Environment Service provides a powerful leadership role and is a fit-for-purpose organisation that enforces a coherent environmental movement in the Cook Islands.

**ORGANISATIONAL STAFFING STRUCTURE<sup>1</sup>**

---

<sup>1</sup> Approved Organisation Structure (2022) by the Public Service Commissioner.



**PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The National Environment Service (NES) has spent the last 3 years developing a biodiversity project through the Global Environment Facility’s 7<sup>th</sup> funding cycle (GEF-7), with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The project begins in 2023 for a 5 year period, with a total project budget of \$US3.5 million.

The project aims to reduce and mitigate negative environmental impacts of the key development sectors (agriculture, infrastructure, tourism), which are the main national drivers of biodiversity and habitat degradation. This will be achieved through mainstreaming integrated, sustainable management of land and coastal waters across key partners, including the National Environment Service (NES), Infrastructure Cook Islands (ICI), Cook Islands Tourism Corporation (CIT), and the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), as well as private sector and communities through policy development and communications and awareness. Building upon the achievements and lessons learnt of the GEF-5 ridge-to-reef (R2R) project, the GEF-7 project strategy also includes improving management effectiveness of targeted protected areas, as well as expansion of the protected area system through establishment of a 118-ha community conserved area safeguarding globally significant biodiversity within the cloud forests of Rarotonga.

Project results are expected to generate multiple environmental benefits, including 2,401ha of priority catchments under improved management, improved management of 1,260ha of terrestrial protected areas and 14,453ha of marine protected areas. An estimated 9,588 people (75% of the resident population of the country), of whom 51% are women, are expected to

directly benefit as a co-benefit of the GEF investment. This includes local communities living within and benefiting from the ecosystem services provided by the priority catchments, people benefitting from the biodiversity resources and ecosystem services of the target protected areas, and management and staff members of NES, MoA, CIT, and ICI, as well as other stakeholders benefitting from strengthened capacities.

Further information about the GEF-7 project can be found within the full Project Document, which is available upon request from the Environmental Partnerships Manager [Hayley.weeks@cookislands.gov.ck](mailto:Hayley.weeks@cookislands.gov.ck)

## DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Engage with local government officials and community-based groups, facilitating involvement in project activities.
- Visit project sites as and when required to appraise project progress on the ground and validate written progress reports.
- Supporting the development of quarterly and annual work plans and budgets.
- Monitor project progress and provide inputs to the annual Performance Indicator Report (PIRs) and other progress reports ensuring that the necessary reporting requirements and standards are met.
- Monitor and track progress against the GEF Core indicators.
- Ensure project's Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) meets the requirements of the Government, the UNDP, and the GEF.
- Oversee and ensure the implementation of the project's M&E plan, including periodic appraisal of the project's theory of change and results framework with reference to actual and potential project progress and results.
- Assist the Project Coordinator, Project Manager and Chief Technical Advisor in supporting mid-term and terminal evaluations of the project, including management responses.
- Facilitate annual reviews of the project and produce analytical reports from these annual reviews, including learning and other knowledge management products.
- Support project site M&E and learning missions.
- Carrying out monitoring and evaluation field visits, ensuring activities are executed in compliance with UNDP SES, and providing feedback to the Project Manager, Chief Technical Advisor and Gender-Safeguards Officer.
- Identifying opportunities for synergies on complementary initiatives.
- Review project expenditures and ensure that project funds are used in compliance with the Project Document and governmental financial rules and procedures.

## REQUIRED SKILLS AND EXPERTISE

- Cook Islands resident or eligible for Cook Islands residency;
- At least a bachelor's degree in environment, natural sciences, project management or other related fields;
- Strong organisational, coordination and team-building skills;
- Self-motivated and ability to work under the pressure;
- Strong computer skills;

- Flexible and willing to travel as required;
- Excellent communication, inter-personal and writing skills in English, especially in timely and accurate responses to emails;
- Ability to administer budgets, train and work effectively with counterpart staff at all levels and with all groups involved in the project;
- Strong drafting, presentation and reporting skills.

#### DESIRABLE SKILLS AND EXPERTISE

- Communication skills in Cook Islands Maori;
- Minimum 3 years of experience in project management;
- Minimum 3 years of experience on biodiversity conservation, protected area management, sustainable land management, landscapes, invasive alien species (IAS) and related subjects;
- Experience of working with communities;
- Experience with UNDP or other international agencies would be an advantage;
- Minimum 1 year of experience facilitating consultative processes, preferably in the field of natural resource management;
- Proven ability to promote cooperation between and negotiate with a range of stakeholders across sectors and at all levels, and to organize and coordinate multi-disciplinary teams, preferably work experience with ministries, local authorities and NGOs that are concerned with natural resources and/or environmental management;
- Demonstrable ability to organize, facilitate, and mediate (technical teams) to achieve stated project objectives;
- Previous experience working with a GEF-supported project;
- Good understanding of the requirements and approaches for gender mainstreaming;
- Familiarity with logical frameworks and strategic planning;
- Demonstrated ability to effectively coordinate the implementation of large multi-stakeholder projects, including financial and technical aspects.

#### APPLICATION PROCESS

Individuals interested in this position should submit:

1. Updated CV including names and contacts of three (3) references;
2. A cover letter that describes how the applicant fulfils the required skills and experiences

The above documents should be submitted to [Hayley.weeks@cookislands.gov.ck](mailto:Hayley.weeks@cookislands.gov.ck) via email

The deadline for applications is **4pm, Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March** (Cook Islands time). Late submissions will not be considered.