

EIGHTH MEETING OF THE PACIFIC METEOROLOGICAL COUNCIL

PMC-8

Nuku'alofa, Tonga • 10, 11, 14 September 2026

Eighth Meeting of the Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC-8)

Weather Ready for a Secured and Sustainable Pacific

10, 11, 14 September 2026 | Nuku'alofa, Tonga

Agenda Item 8.4: Proposal for a Unified Steering Committee for the Pacific Meteorological Council

Purpose:

1. The purpose of this paper is to explore the opportunity to establish a Unified Steering Committee for Pacific Meteorological Council.

Objectives:

1. Provide the Council with a background on the recommendation for a Unified Steering Committee (USC).
2. To present to the Council the results of the Survey Undertaken for the USC by Weather Ready Pacific and
3. Provide recommendation to the Council on options and Governance Framework for establishing a Unified Steering Committee.

Background:

At the 4th Weather Ready Steering Committee deliberated on the challenges in coordinating projects and measuring progress in the work PMC. It also discussed that significant time of the Directors is spent on Project Meetings and the high costs of hosting meeting. Following on from those discussions a survey was conducted by Weather Ready Pacific to gauge the views of partners and Members Countries on the feasibility of establishing a Unified Steering Committee for all the Projects implemented under the PMC Framework.

1. Results of the Unified Steering Committee Survey

1. 30 Participating Countries and Organisations (23 Members, 7 Partners)

- 1 Republic of Naoero, National Emergency Services (NES)/NMHS
- 2 Tonga Meteorological and Coast Radio Service
- 3 Kiribati Meteorological Service
- 4 Niue
- 5 Cook Islands
- 6 UNESCO
- 7 Solomon Islands
- 8 Australia - DFAT
- 9 Tokelau

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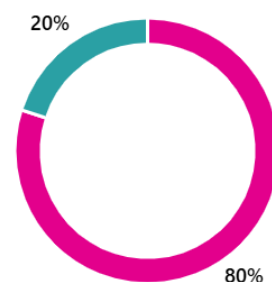
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- 10 Vanuatu Meteorology & Hydro-meteorological Services.
- 11 Tuvalu
- 12 Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)
- 13 New Zealand
- 14 Solomon Islands Meteorological Service
- 15 METEO-FRANCE FRENCH POLYNESIA
- 16 Nouvelle-Calédonie / Météo-France Nouvelle Calédonie et Wallis-et-Futuna
- 17 NZ - MFAT
- 18 Bureau of Meteorology - COSPPac
- 19 Australia, Bureau of Meteorology
- 20 The Pacific Community
- 21 Fiji
- 22 PNG National Weather Service
- 23 Fiji Meteorological Service
- 24 Tonga
- 25 Geohazards
- 26 United Kingdom
- 27 Palau
- 28 Papua New Guinea National Weather Service
- 29 Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI)
- 30 SPREP (WRP)

2. Remain in Status quo, Go to Hybrid Unified Steering Committee or Go to one Unified Steering Committee?

- status quo - each program/project remains having its own steering committee meeting and TOR 0
- Hybrid - one unified Steering Committee meeting, but with separate Terms of Reference at the... 24
- Fully Unified Model - one Steering Committee meeting with a single shared Terms of Reference... 6



1. Status quo – NIL
2. Hybrid – 24 (7 Partners, 17 Members)
3. One fully unified model – 6 (1 Partners, 5 Members)

3. Rank the advantages of the Model chosen?

Advantage	Not important (%)	Slight important (%)	Moderate important (%)	Very important (%)	Critically important (%)
Cost reduction	0	3.3	23.3	40	33.3
Improving coordination across programs	0	0	0	43.3	56.7

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Greater Donor Visibility	0	0	16.7	46.7	36.7
Tailored governance at project/program level	0	3.3	10.0	40	46.7
Flexibility for donor & individual projects or programmes	0	0	16.7	46.7	36.7
Faster project-level decision-making	0	3.4	3.4	48.3	44.8
Reduced governance burden on country representatives	0	0	16.7	33.3	50
Familiarity with the existing model	0	13.3	30.0	40.0	16.7
Better strategic alignment across PMC	0	0	6.7	30.0	63.3
Whole-of-portfolio oversight	0	0	6.7	53.3	40.0
Stronger Pacific-led governance	0	0	10.0	30.0	60.0
Stronger resource mobilisation capacity	3.4	0	10.0	33.3	53.3
Consistent standards (e.g. procurement, MERL, GEDSI, communications)	0	0	16.7	41.4	43.3

4. Other advantages of the unified steering committee not yet listed

- Connection to national activities and strategic plans
- There is an opportunity for an annual PMC at significant cost reduction as well
- All project reporting will be in sink

5. How significant are the following potential disadvantages in selecting the preferred model?

Advantage	Not important (%)	Slight important (%)	Moderate important (%)	Very important (%)	Critically important (%)
Governance fragmentation across portfolio	6.7	16.7	13.3	40.0	23.3
Director fatigue from too many	10.0	16.7	13.3	30	30
Higher costs	3.3	20.0	26.7	33.3	16.7
Duplication of efforts	3.3	20.0	3.3	40.0	33.3
Reduced strategic alignment	10.0	16.7	6.7	40.0	26.7
Inconsistent decision making across projects and programs	6.7	6.7	16.7	40.0	30.0
More complex governance to manage	0	16.7	16.7	40.0	26.7

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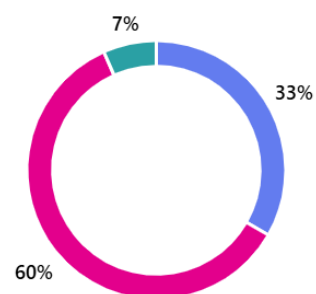
Additional coord burden on PMC	0	6.7	30.0	43.3	20.0
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6. And other disadvantages NOT listed above.

- There are projects with slightly different stakeholders e.g. Lands, NDMO, Geohazards, WMO etc
- A Fully Unified Steering Committee, might mean only a few Directors are making the decisions
- Larger projects/programs maybe dominated by bigger ones
- Additional burden on PMC Secretariat
- A Unified SC meeting might mean longer meetings

7. If you selected Hybrid or Fully Unified Steering Committee, when would you like to see it implemented?

- As soon as possible — present options at PMC8 and implement during the WRP/COSPPAC Steering... 10
- Pilot in Niue (2027) — test the model, gather lessons learned, and bring it for final approval at PMC9 in... 18
- No preference 2



2. Cost (in USD) of recent Steering Committee Meetings in 2026

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Country	WRP	CLIMSA	COSPPAC	CISPAC-5	DREW (WMO) Honiara	SIEWAP (WMO) Apia	Totals
1 Cook Islands	7,105.57	-	9,571.43	7,768.86	304.94	2,543.41	27,294.21
2 Federated States of Micronesia	12,600.73	-	9,571.43	-	-	6,492.29	28,664.45
3 Fiji	15,563.74	2,718.00	9,571.43	-	-	1,965.12	29,818.29
4 Kiribati	6,376.45	11,958.49	9,571.43	-	301.85	-	28,208.22
5 Nauru	8,895.02	2,761.00	9,571.43	-	-	4,936.45	26,163.90
6 Niue	8,868.88	-	9,571.43	14,171.94	-	2,119.60	34,731.85
7 Palau	-	-	-	22,846.85	-	-	22,846.85
8 Papua New Guinea	9,655.98	-	9,571.43	-	301.85	3,218.66	22,747.92
9 Republic of Marshall Islands	18,764.95	-	9,571.43	25,870.83	-	-	54,207.21
10 Samoa	4,760.52	-	9,571.43	-	301.85	-	14,633.80
11 Solomon Islands	-	-	9,571.43	-	-	3,504.23	13,075.66
12 Tokelau	10,251.76	-	9,571.42	-	304.94	1,327.41	21,455.53
13 Tonga	12,412.42	9,459.00	9,571.43	-	-	2,185.06	33,627.91
14 Tuvalu	8,680.84	-	9,571.43	28,602.29	304.94	2,680.71	49,840.21
15 Vanuatu	18,493.50	-	9,571.42	-	304.94	2,637.34	31,007.20
16 Regional	63,446.21	6,036.24	58,169.00	10,278.46	4,372.00	2,084.28	144,386.19
	205,876.57	32,932.73	192,169.00	109,539.23	6,497.31	35,694.56	582,709.40
Number of Days	7	3	5	4	1	5	25

A unified steering committee would significantly reduce the costs above related to travel. One of the biggest logistical costs in coordinate work in the region. I will provide the platform for cost sharing between projects and programs. A saving in the order of 170K in travel expenses could have been made above.

Potentially as well PMC can become an annual event at the back end of the USC with significant cost reduction if the Council should choose to do so.

Recommendations:

The meeting is invited to:

- I. **Note** the continuous effort in seeking to improve the cost-effective governance of the Programs and Projects implemented under PMC.
- II. **Note** the key advantages of having a Unified Steering Committee
- III. Substantially reduce the number of regional Steering Committee meetings and travel costs.
- IV. Reduce the meeting burden on NMHS Directors.
- V. Improve coordination between programmes and alignment with PIMS.
- VI. Allow donors to see the broader PMC investment landscape.
- VII. Preserve programme-specific accountability and existing donor agreements.
- VIII. Allow specialised programme membership and protect decision rights.
- IX. Reduce duplication and create opportunities for joint investment.
- X. Strengthen the role of PMC Panels and Pacific-led portfolio governance.
- XI. **Agree** in principle to establish a Hybrid Unified PMC Steering Committee arrangement under which major PMC programmes and projects convene their respective governance meetings through a single coordinated annual PMC Steering Committee meeting. Each participating programme or project shall retain its approved Terms of Reference, membership, quorum, decision-making authority, fiduciary responsibilities and donor obligations, while participating

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in common strategic, portfolio, reporting and coordination sessions. PMC8 requests the Secretariat, in consultation with programme Steering Committees, donors, PMC Panels and Members, to develop the detailed governance arrangements and transitional roadmap for implementation.

- XII. **Approve** the piloting of a hybrid unified steering committee (HUSC) approach in Niue in 2027 in May/June/July 2027.
 - XIII. **Approve** in principle the Draft Governance Framework attached as Annex 1 for piloting the Hybrid Unified Steering Committee (HUSC).
 - XIV. **Direct** the Secretariat to pilot the HUSC in consultation with Project Steering Committees Managers, Donors, PMC Panels and Members and report back to the PMC Management Group with recommendations to improve and or finalise the HUSC.
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Annex 1

Hybrid Unified Pacific Meteorological Council Steering Committee

Draft Governance Framework

1. Purpose

The Hybrid Unified PMC Steering Committee (Unified PMC SC) will provide a single, coordinated governance platform for major programmes and projects operating under the Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC), while preserving the specific mandates, Terms of Reference, membership, fiduciary responsibilities and decision-making requirements of individual programmes and projects.

One meeting - one regional governance platform - multiple programme mandates.

The framework is intended to reduce duplication, meeting costs and demands on Pacific National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs), while ensuring that programmes and donors retain the level of oversight and accountability required by their respective agreements.

2. Core Governance Principle

The Unified PMC SC would not abolish individual programme/project Steering Committees in a legal or governance sense. Instead, participating programmes would convene their respective Steering Committees within a single combined PMC Steering Committee meeting.

- a) Each programme/project retains its own approved TOR.
- b) Each retains its own membership and voting/decision-making rights.
- c) Each retains its own Chair or designated decision-making arrangement.
- d) Donor representation is retained where applicable.
- e) Fiduciary and financial responsibilities remain programme-specific.
- f) Programme objectives, results frameworks and reporting requirements remain distinct.
- g) Conflict-of-interest, quorum and financing-agreement obligations remain applicable.
- h) The meeting itself is unified, but legal, fiduciary and programme accountability remains distinct where required.

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3. Proposed Structure

Pacific Meteorological Council

(overall regional policy direction and endorsement)



PMC Management Group

(strategic coordination and intersessional guidance)



Unified PMC Steering Committee Meeting

4. Sessions of the Unified PMC Steering Committee Meeting

A single meeting would comprise several formally recognized programme/project governance sessions.

Session	Governance mechanism
Session 1	Whole-of-PMC Strategic and Portfolio Session
Session 2	Weather Ready Pacific Steering Committee
Session 3	COSPPac/Climate Services Programme Steering Committee
Session 4	Regional Observations/Infrastructure Programme
Session 5	Other major PMC programme/project
Session 6	Joint Portfolio Decisions and Forward Work Programme

5. Membership

A. Core Unified PMC SC Members

Core members participate throughout the overall meeting and provide continuity across the PMC portfolio.

- PMC Chair and Vice-Chair

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- b) Representatives of Pacific NMHSs
- c) SPREP Secretariat
- d) Relevant PMC Panel representatives
- e) Representatives of regional organisations, where appropriate
- f) Other members determined by the PMC

B. Programme/Project-Specific Members

Additional members participate in the sessions for programmes for which they have formal governance responsibilities. For example, the WRP session would continue to comprise the members specified under the WRP Steering Committee TOR, including relevant donor representation.

NOTE: Everyone does not automatically become a member of every programme Steering Committee. Participants may attend the overall meeting, but formal decision-making rights apply according to the relevant programme/project TOR.

6. How the Single Meeting Would Work

A Unified PMC SC could be held over approximately 5 days, depending on the portfolio.

Day 1 - Whole-of-Portfolio Strategic Session

- a) Implementation of PIMS and regional priorities
- b) Major risks and emerging issues
- c) Progress across the overall PMC portfolio
- d) Financing and resource mobilisation
- e) Regional infrastructure and cross-programme coordination
- f) Common MERL results, GEDSI and environmental/social safeguards
- g) Sustainability, maintenance and regional capacity development
- h) Issues requiring collective PMC direction

Days 2-3 - Programme/Project Sessions

Dedicated sessions are held sequentially. During the WRP Steering Committee Session, only members identified under the WRP TOR exercise formal WRP decision-making authority.

- a) Annual work plan and budget
- b) KRA implementation
- c) Pooled fund and procurement
- d) Programme risks and MERL
- e) Donor requirements and resource mobilisation
- f) Infrastructure investments and programme-specific decisions

Days 4 - Final Session - Integrated Decisions

- a) Common priorities and sequencing of investments
- b) Duplication and shared infrastructure

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- c) Regional capacity and joint missions
- d) Common procurement opportunities
- e) Data and digital systems
- f) Resource mobilisation, maintenance and communications
- g) Recommendations to PMC

Day 5 - Could be a PMC Meeting

7. Decision-Making

A unified meeting does not create unified authority over funds or programmes unless that authority has explicitly been delegated.

Category A - PMC Portfolio Decisions

Decisions affecting the overall PMC portfolio are considered collectively by the Unified PMC SC, including regional coordination, PIMS alignment, common technical standards and recommendations to PMC.

Category B - Programme-Specific Decisions

Decisions concerning an individual programme are made only by members authorised under that programme's TOR. For example, WRP funding decisions remain WRP Steering Committee decisions even though they are taken during the Unified PMC SC meeting.

Category C - Joint Decisions

Where two or more programmes need to collaborate, the affected programme Steering Committees may make a joint decision or aligned decisions during the same meeting.

7. Meeting Papers

The Secretariat would prepare one consolidated Unified PMC SC meeting package containing, as appropriate:

1. Strategic PMC Portfolio Report
2. Consolidated Financial Overview
3. Portfolio Results Dashboard
4. Regional Risk Register
5. WRP Programme Report
6. Other programme/project reports
7. Technical Panel Reports

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8. Resource Mobilisation Report

9. Draft Decisions and Recommendations

Programme-specific confidential or donor-sensitive papers could remain restricted to the relevant members.

8. Decisions Record

The meeting should produce one consolidated Record of Decisions, while clearly identifying the governance authority for each decision.

Decision UPMC-01: Unified PMC SC endorses regional priorities for 2027-2028.

Decision WRP-01: WRP Steering Committee approves the WRP Annual Work Plan and Budget.

Decision CSP-01: Climate Services Programme Steering Committee approves its annual implementation plan.

Joint Decision UPMC-02: WRP and the Climate Services Programme agree to jointly support national climate and early warning system strengthening.

9. Financial Governance

Programme finances should not automatically be merged. They should still have,

- a) Separate financial accounts where required
- b) Separate donor agreements
- c) Separate budget approvals
- d) Separate audit requirements
- e) Separate eligible expenditure rules
- f) Separate financial reporting

The Unified PMC SC should nevertheless receive a portfolio-level financial dashboard showing the overall investment flowing through the PMC system: Regional priority → existing investment → financing gap → potential funding source.

10. Role of PMC Technical Panels

PMC Panels should remain the principal technical advisory mechanisms. Rather than each programme creating separate technical advisory structures, programmes should increasingly seek technical advice through the relevant PMC Panels.



↓ *policy direction*

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Unified PMC Steering Committee

↓ *programme governance and investment oversight*

PMC Panels

↓ *technical advice*

Programmes/Projects

↓ *implementation*

SPREP and implementing partners

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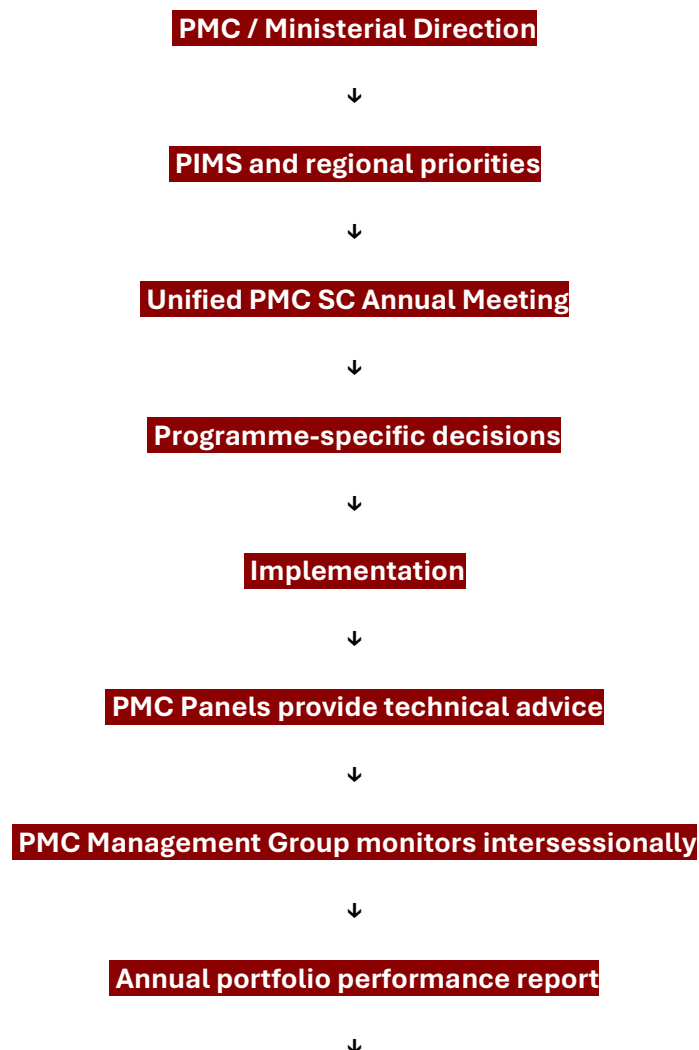
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11. Secretariat Arrangements

SPREP could provide a single Secretariat function for the Unified PMC SC and:

- a) Coordinate the annual meeting and agendas
- b) Consolidate programme reports and prepare the portfolio dashboard
- c) Maintain the decision register and track implementation
- d) Coordinate programme-specific sessions
- e) Maintain governance records
- f) Report progress to the PMC Management Group and PMC
- g) Programme managers would remain responsible for preparing and presenting their programme-specific reports.

12. Proposed Annual Governance Cycle



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Next Unified PMC SC

13. Safeguards

Programme autonomy: No programme loses its contractual governance arrangements simply by joining the Unified PMC SC.

Protected donor accountability: Donor-specific fiduciary and reporting requirements remain enforceable.

Protected decision rights: Only authorized programme members can make programme specific decisions.

Protected technical integrity: PMC Panels retain responsibility for independent technical advice.

Clear subsidiarity: Decisions should be taken at the lowest appropriate governance level; the Unified PMC SC should not make operational decisions that properly belong to programme management.

14. Transition Approach

Phase 1 - Coordination

Existing Steering Committees retain their TORs but agree to meet consecutively at the same venue and during the same week.

Phase 2 - Unified Meeting

A common agenda, opening session, portfolio report, Secretariat and consolidated Record of Decisions are introduced.

Phase 3 - Portfolio Governance

Common reporting, risk management, MERL, investment planning and resource mobilisation functions are progressively harmonised where beneficial.

15. Governance Principles

- a) **ONE MEETING** - Reducing cost, travel and administrative burden
- b) **ONE PMC PORTFOLIO VIEW** - Providing strategic visibility across all investments
- c) **MULTIPLE TORs** - Protecting the mandates of individual programmes
- d) **MULTIPLE MEMBERSHIPS** - Ensuring the right countries, donors and partners govern each programme

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- e) **SEPARATE DECISION RIGHTS** - Protecting fiduciary and contractual accountability
- f) **ONE CONSOLIDATED RECORD OF DECISIONS** - Providing transparency and institutional continuity

The framework provides one coordinated governance meeting without forcing every programme into one governance structure.