

# Concept Note

Project/Programme Title: Organic Agriculture – Meeting the Challenges of Climate Change

Country(ies): Cook Islands

National Designated Authority(ies) (NDA): Ministry of Agriculture

Accredited Entity(ies) (AE): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of first submission/  
version number: [2018-11-09][V.1]

Date of current submission/  
version number: [2018-11-09][V.1]



Please submit the completed form to [fundingproposal@gcfund.org](mailto:fundingproposal@gcfund.org),  
using the following name convention in the subject line and file name:  
“CN-[Accredited Entity or Country]-YYYYMMDD”



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### Notes

- The maximum number of pages should **not exceed 12 pages**, excluding annexes. Proposals exceeding the prescribed length will not be assessed within the indicative service standard time of 30 days.
- As per the Information Disclosure Policy, the concept note, and additional documents provided to the Secretariat can be disclosed unless marked by the Accredited Entity(ies) (or NDAs) as confidential.
- The relevant National Designated Authority(ies) will be informed by the Secretariat of the concept note upon receipt.
- NDA can also submit the concept note directly with or without an identified accredited entity at this stage. In this case, they can leave blank the section related to the accredited entity. The Secretariat will inform the accredited entity(ies) nominated by the NDA, if any.
- Accredited Entities and/or NDAs are encouraged to submit a Concept Note before making a request for project preparation support from the Project Preparation Facility (PPF).
- Further information on GCF concept note preparation can be found on GCF website [Funding Projects Fine Print](#).



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A. Project/Programme Summary (max. 1 page)			
<b>A.1. Project or programme</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Programme	<b>A.2. Public or private sector</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Public sector <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private sector
<b>A.3. Is the CN submitted in Response to an RFP?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, specify the RFP: _____	<b>A.4. Confidentiality<sup>1</sup></b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Confidential <input type="checkbox"/> Not confidential
<b>A.5. Indicate the result areas for the project/programme</b>	<p><b>Mitigation:</b> Reduced emissions from:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Energy access and power generation <input type="checkbox"/> Low emission transport <input type="checkbox"/> Buildings, cities and industries and appliances <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forestry and land use <p><b>Adaptation:</b> Increased resilience of:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Most vulnerable people and communities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health and well-being, and food and water security <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure and built environment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ecosystem and ecosystem services		
<b>A.6. Estimated mitigation impact (tCO<sub>2</sub>e over lifespan)</b>		<b>A.7. Estimated adaptation impact (number of direct beneficiaries and % of population)</b>	
<b>A.8. Indicative total project cost (GCF + co-finance)</b>	Amount: USD _____	<b>A.9. Indicative GCF funding requested</b>	Amount: USD _____
<b>A.10. Mark the type of financial instrument requested for the GCF funding</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Reimbursable grant <input type="checkbox"/> Guarantees <input type="checkbox"/> Equity <input type="checkbox"/> Subordinated loan <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Other: specify _____		
<b>A.11. Estimated duration of project/ programme:</b>	a) disbursement period: b) repayment period, if applicable:	<b>A.12. Estimated project/ Programme lifespan</b>	This refers to the total period over which the investment is effective.
<b>A.13. Is funding from the Project Preparation Facility requested?<sup>2</sup></b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other support received <input type="checkbox"/> If so, by who: _____	<b>A.14. ESS category<sup>3</sup></b>	<input type="checkbox"/> A or I-1 <input type="checkbox"/> B or I-2 <input type="checkbox"/> C or I-3
<b>A.15. Is the CN aligned with your accreditation standard?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>A.16. Has the CN been shared with the NDA?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>A.17. AMA signed (if submitted by AE)</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If no, specify the status of AMA negotiations and expected date of signing: _____	<b>A.18. Is the CN included in the Entity Work Programme?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>A.19. Project/Programme rationale, objectives and approach of programme/project (max 100 words)</b>	<p>Brief summary of the problem statement and climate rationale, objective and selected implementation approach, including the executing entity(ies) and other implementing partners.</p> <p>Current agricultural practices in the Cook Islands are un sustainable and are highly vulnerable to climate impacts. For example, mono cropping, intensive use of agricultural chemicals, intensive tilling and ploughing. There is a corresponding loss of use of traditional more resilient agricultural practices and biodiversity. The project aims to build more sustainable and climate resilient food production systems through promotion of and building capacity in regenerative organic and agro ecological practices including</p>		

<sup>1</sup>Concept notes (or sections of) not marked as confidential may be published in accordance with the Information Disclosure Policy ([Decision B.12/35](#)) and the Review of the Initial Proposal Approval Process ([Decision B.17/18](#)).

<sup>2</sup>See [here](#) for access to project preparation support request template and guidelines

<sup>3</sup> Refer to the Fund's environmental and social safeguards ([Decision B.07/02](#))



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	<p>traditional practices such as swamp taro management. Developing corresponding market linkages will ensure practices are maintained by farmers not only due to improved understanding and commitment to sustainable practices and resilience building, but also through market incentives. The project will be implemented through Natura Kuki Airani, an organic farmers association.</p>
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### B. Project/Programme Information (max. 8 pages)

#### B.1. Context and baseline (max. 2 pages)

*Describe the climate vulnerabilities and impacts, GHG emissions profile, and mitigation and adaptation needs that the prospective intervention is envisaged to address.*

*Please indicate how the project fits in with the country's national priorities and its full ownership of the concept. Is the project/programme directly contributing to the country's INDC/NDC or national climate strategies or other plans such as NAMAs, NAPs or equivalent? If so, please describe which priorities identified in these documents the proposed project is aiming to address and/or improve.*

The project addresses issues identified in the Food and Agriculture Sector Plan Cook Islands 2015. The agricultural sector in the CKI operates in a sensitive environmental environment and will need to prepare itself to cope with the longer-term effects of climate changes. Most environmental projects and climate change programmes envisaged in the CKI are based on the assumption that the CKI will engage in a sustainable agriculture. At present the prevailing monoculture/plantation type agricultural system is a high input driven model which has major impacts on the environment and is directly impacted by the on-going climate changes.

Although the Cook Islands are isolated and only have a total land area of 23,990 hectares, the terrestrial landscape supports high ecosystem diversity and endemism. These island ecosystems are increasingly exposed to anthropogenic impacts that threaten this biodiversity, such as deficient land conversion, pollution, poorly treated wastewater releases, invasive species, overexploitation (freshwater, fisheries, etc.), agricultural practices, habitat loss or conversion for tourism, and climate change. These anthropogenic threats result in loss of 'ecosystem services' throughout the country.

*Describe the main root causes and barriers (social, gender, fiscal, regulatory, technological, financial, ecological, institutional, etc.) that need to be addressed.*

The agricultural sector as it stood in 2015 has a considerable local impact on the environment (polluting coastal/marine areas) through:

- inefficient water management and soil conservation practices
- importance of mono-crop tree plantation
- inefficient livestock sector (large numbers)
- plantation type unsustainable agricultural practices,
- overuse of pesticides and fertilizer, contaminating surface and groundwater supplies

The issues to be addressed include capacity building for more sustainable production practices, improved awareness of the impacts of agricultural practises on ecosystems, strengthened governance of the organic certification system, and provision of appropriate organic and agro ecological technologies and inputs and development of organic value chains for the local market.

*Where relevant, and particularly for private sector project/programme, please describe the key characteristics and dynamics of the sector or market in which the project/programme will operate.*

Demand for Organically certified produce and products in the Cook Islands is expanding. For many years organically certified Noni has been exported but development of the local market was restricted due to the high cost of organic certification and lack of awareness amongst consumers. In 2018 Natura Kuki Airani and the Ministry of Agriculture through an IFAD funded project implemented by the Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community (POETCom) in SPC developed a low cost locally managed organic certification system known as a Participatory Guarantee System (PGS). "Organic Pasifika" certified products are now coming available in the market and demand is growing in particular in the tourism sector. This demand is aligning with international growth in demand for organically produced, sustainable and ethical products and with increased consumer concern regarding the impact of chemicals on health. *The World of Organic Agriculture*. The *Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL)* and *IFOAM – Organics International* 2018 statistical yearbook reports in 2016 there were 57.8 million hectares of organic agricultural land and organic products with a total value of almost 90 billion US dollars were sold globally. Consumer demand is increasing and 178 countries report organic farming activities. In New Zealand, the Cook Islands closest market, the New Zealand Organic Market Report 2018 reports the sector has grown 30 per cent since 2015 and shows retail sales of organic products are growing twice as fast as conventional products, up 8.8% to \$245 million. There are significant market opportunities for Cook Island farmers that will also ensure environmental and ecosystem benefits.

**Commented [KM1]:** This information needs to come for your Government – maybe you can ask for assistance in this area

#### B.2. Project/Programme description (max. 3 pages)



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*In terms of rationale, please describe the theory of change and provide information on how it serves to shift the development pathway toward a more low-emissions and/or climate resilient direction, in line with the Fund's goals and objectives.*

Agriculture has been a contributor to climate change - the degradation of soil through unsustainable farming has released huge amounts of carbon into the atmosphere and use of petro chemical based fertilizers has increased agriculture's negative impact. At the same time agriculture is highly vulnerable to climate change impacts and this directly threatens food security in the Pacific where the majority of the populations are subsistence or semi subsistence producers. Soil salinity caused by rising sea levels affect fertility of soils and therefore inevitably affects crop yields for exports and local food security.<sup>4</sup> An increase in natural disasters across the region also further exacerbates the issues of food security as the Cook Islands is now also facing droughts and water shortages due to climate change.<sup>5</sup> One such solution for both climate change mitigation and adaptation is through the sustainable farming practices used in Organic Agriculture.

A key part to organic farming practices is soil management -maintaining tight nutrient and energy cycles through organic management of soils which also encourage the sequestration of carbon. By not using chemical fertilizers and organic farming practices such as minimum tillage, returning crop residues to the soil through composting and mulching, the use of cover crops and rotations, encouraging agro-forestry farming systems, and the greater integration of nitrogen fixing legumes, increase the return of carbon to the soil. Organic practices also protect soil from erosion and associated loss of soil organic matter.

Furthermore, a study<sup>6</sup> shows that with the "use of cover crops, compost, crop rotation and reduced tillage, we can actually sequester more carbon than is currently emitted, tipping the needle past 100% to reverse climate change." Organic farming also provides strategies that will assist farmers to adapt to the impacts of climate change, for example by establishing farming systems are drought resistant and support the conservation of water resources; that lessen the impacts of wind, e.g. through providing shelter for land, farms and people and encourage use of locally adapted varieties and in situ-adaptation of crop species.

Organic Agricultural farming methods provide adaptation solutions that will help ensure food security for affected Pacific Island countries whilst also contributing toward combating climate change globally.

### Theory of Change:

**Project Goal:** The Cook Island has resilient and healthy ecosystems for food and nutritional security  
*This will be achieved through 3 components of Capacity Building, MEL and Advocacy and Governance.: Their contributions are described under each outcome below*

*Describe the expected set of components/outputs and subcomponents/activities to address the above barriers identified that will lead to the expected outcomes*

### Outcome one: Governance and management of the organic sector strengthened

Components include:

- Governance: Establishment of a project governance mechanism established including MAF and NKA
- Governance: Organic and agro ecology policy developed
- Capacity Building: Strengthening NKA as the manager of the PGS to ensure all farmers participating in the programme are complying with the organic standards including requirements for soil management, eco system biodiversity, water management etc. It also ensures sustainability of outcomes post project as capacity, management systems, skills etc will be institutionalised within an existing organisation.
- MEL and Advocacy: NKA will also be placed to advocate to conventional farmers on the benefits of organic and agro ecological practices expanding impact of the project by increasing the number of certified organic farmers but also by encouraging adoption of resilient agriculture practises developed in Outcome Two by conventional farmers.

### Outcome two: Sustainability and climate resilience of Agricultural production is improved.

Components include:

- Capacity building: This involves promoting and building capacity in organic and ecological practices, for example no till farming, utilisation of organic matter and compost, increasing biodiversity of farms – this

<sup>4</sup> *Climate Change Impacts – Pacific Islands* (2009) Washington, DC: IFAD

<sup>5</sup> *SPREP: Fact Sheet – Pacific Climate Change* (2008) Apia, Samoa: SPREP

<sup>6</sup> *Regenerative Organic Agriculture and Climate Change: A Down-to-Earth Solution to Global Warming* (2015) Kutztown, USA: Rodale Institute



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includes introduction of salt and drought resilient crops from the Centre for Pacific Crop and Trees (CePaCT) and development of local nurseries and seed banks.

- MEL and Advocacy: Documentation and promotion of relevant traditional practices and promotion of traditional agro forestry will be an important activity.
- Capacity Building: Activities will also support access to organic inputs such as compost, organic pest management and other soil amendments including use of livestock waste. Protected cropping and improved water management for irrigation will also be addressed. Capacity of farmers will be built to assess and measure their resilience.
- MEL and Advocacy. Out reach to schools and youth groups and rehabilitation programmes through the correctional facility will help ensure the next generation of farmers are equipped for agriculture under climate change scenarios.

**Outcome three:** Availability of local organic products and produce improved.

- Capacity Building. Value chains to local markets will be developed to facilitate availability of organic produce and products. This includes organising supply (farmers groups, PGS), capacity building in post harvest handling, value adding and processing using low emission energy sources such as solar drying. Specific value chains to the tourism and hospitality industry will also be developed using the Pacific Organic Tourism and Hospitality standard and certification as leverage. The basis of all activities will be climate and gender sensitive value chain analysis. Innovations in markets will also be promoted including night markets, organic basket delivery schemes.

*Describe how activities in the proposal are consistent with national regulatory and legal framework, if applicable.*

*Describe in what way the Accredited Entity(ies) is well placed to undertake the planned activities and what will be the implementation arrangements with the executing entity(ies) and implementing partners.*

*Please provide a brief overview of the key financial and operational risks and any mitigation measures identified at this stage.*

There are 2 risks that have been identified:

1. Climate impact's such as cyclone. This will be mitigated by the practices promoted in the project its self and implementing of the project on several islands spreading risk.
2. The capacity of NKA as anew NGO will need to be supported. Implementation in partnership with the Ministry of agriculture will mitigate this risk as will project components to build their institutional capacity.

**Commented [KM2]:** You will need to get advice form yor govt of this part.

**B.3. Expected project results aligned with the GCF investment criteria (max. 3 pages)**

*The GCF is directed to make a significant and ambitious contribution to the global efforts towards attaining the goals set by the international community to combat climate change, and promoting the paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways by limiting or reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the impacts of climate change.*

*Provide an estimate of the expected impacts aligned with the GCF investment criteria: impact potential, paradigm shift, sustainable development, needs of recipients, country ownership, and efficiency and effectiveness.*

**B.4. Engagement among the NDA, AE, and/or other relevant stakeholders in the country (max ½ page)**

*Please describe how engagement among the NDA, AE and/or other relevant stakeholders in the country has taken place and what further engagement will be undertaken as the concept is developed into a funding proposal.*

**Commented [KM3]:** This will take time to develop and we wont get your deadline – I suggest you discuss with your government an extension for developing this. See if they can give you feedback so far and then assist with this – or we can assist but we need more time.

**C. Indicative Financing/Cost information (max. 3 pages)**

**C.1. Financing by components (max ½ page)**

*Please provide an estimate of the total cost per component/output and disaggregate by source of financing.*

Component/Output	Indicative cost (USD)	GCF financing		Co-financing		
		Amount (USD)	Financial Instrument	Amount (USD)	Financial Instrument	Name of Institutions

**Commented [KM4]:** You need to talk to your Govt about this



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<b>Indicative total cost(USD)</b>				
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*For private sector proposal, provide an overview (diagram) of the proposed financing structure.*

**C.2. Justification of GCF funding request (max.1 page)**

*Explain why the Project/ Programme requires GCF funding, i.e. explaining why this is not financed by the public and/ or private sector(s) of the country.*

*Describe alternative funding options for the same activities being proposed in the Concept Note, including an analysis of the barriers for the potential beneficiaries to access to finance and the constraints of public and private sources of funding.*

*Justify the rationale and level of concessionality of the GCF financial instrument(s) as well as how this will be passed on to the end-users and beneficiaries. Justify why this is the minimum required to make the investment viable and most efficient considering the incremental cost or risk premium of the Project/ Programme (refer to Decisions B.12/17; B.10/03; and B.09/04 for more details).The justification for grants and reimbursable grants is mandatory.*

*In the case of private sector proposal, concessional terms should be minimized and justified as per the Guiding principles applicable to the private sector operations (Decision B.05/07).*

**C.3. Sustainability and replicability of the project (exit strategy) (max. 1 page)**

*Please explain how the project/programme sustainability will be ensured in the long run and how this will be monitored, after the project/programme is implemented with support from the GCF and other sources.*

*For non-grant instruments, explain how the capital invested will be repaid and over what duration of time.*

**D. Supporting documents submitted (OPTIONAL)**

- Map indicating the location of the project/programme
- Diagram of the theory of change
- Economic and financial model with key assumptions and potential stressed scenarios
- Pre-feasibility study
- Evaluation report of previous project
- Results of environmental and social risk screening

**Self-awareness check boxes**

Are you aware that the full Funding Proposal and Annexes will require these documents? Yes   
No

- Feasibility Study
- Environmental and social impact assessment or environmental and social management framework
- Stakeholder consultations at national and project level implementation including with indigenous people if relevant
- Gender assessment and action plan
- Operations and maintenance plan if relevant
- Loan or grant operation manual as appropriate
- Co-financing commitment letters



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Are you aware that a funding proposal from an accredited entity without a signed AMA will be reviewed but not sent to the Board for consideration? Yes  No