**5th PCREEE STEERING COMMITTEE (PSC) VIRTUAL MEETING**

**18th NOVEMBER 2020**

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**MEETING MINUTES**

**The meeting papers and presentations can be seen here -** [5th PCREEE Steering Committee Meeting | PCREEE](https://pcreee.org/event/5th-pcreee-steering-committee-meeting)

**Agenda 1: Opening and Introduction**

The 5th Pacific Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (PCREEE) Steering Committee Meeting (SCM) was convened on the 18th of November 2020. The meeting was conducted virtually via Zoom due to the travel restrictions posed by covid19.

As the meeting was conducted virtually, invitation for attendance were not extended to Steering Committee members only but was opened to all the member countries of SPC and PCREEE including other development partners and donors.

The meeting was chaired by Dr Tevita Tukunga, Director of the Tonga Department of Energy. It was well attended by 27 participants. Meeting agenda and participants list is attached under section 1.5 below.

**1.1 Prayer**

The meeting was called to order by the Chair person at around 10:30am Tonga time and a word of prayer was offered by Mr Jesse Benjamin of the PCREEE.

**1.2 Welcome**

The welcome statement was delivered by Mr Solomone Fifita, Manager PCREEE. He thanked all the participants around the Pacific Region for attending and make special appreciation of the UNIDO colleagues who are joining from Europe at odd hours of the night.

**1.3 Statement by Mr Stein Hansen – UNIDO Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific**

Mr Stein Hansen delivered his remarks on behalf of UNIDO reaffirming UNIDO’s support towards PCREEE and the region. He outlined UNIDO’s strategic alignment to the SAMOA Pathway and the support towards the Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centres in addressing the imminent pandemic of covid19. Copy of Mr Hansen’s statement is attached below.

**1.4 Opening Remarks by Akuila Tawake,** **Deputy Director, Georesources and Energy Programme, SPC**

The opening remarks was delivered by Mr Akuila Tawaka, Deputy Director GEP, SPC. In his address, he emphasized the importance of the PSC meeting to the members, emphasising the need to urgently endorse the PCREEE Business Plan 2020 – 2030 as some donors are awaiting the endorsement so they can use the BP as the basis for their support to the PCREEE. Full copy of statement is attached below.

**1.5 Meeting Agenda and Participants list**

See the PCREEE website.

**Agenda 2: Adoption of the 4th PSC Meeting Minutes**

The 4th steering committee (SC) meeting in 2019 was held on 4th December in Vavau, Kingdom of Tonga. It was conducted back to back with the Tonga Energy Sector Stakeholder and Joint Development Partners Meeting.

The SC provides strategic guidance to the annual work plans and budgets, progress reports and financial statement of the Centre before recommending them for the approval of the SPC Executives and CRGA.

**2.1 The meeting noted the following outcomes:**

* The PSC membership currently comprised of Director of Tonga Energy Department being the chair and host, Director of Vanuatu Department of Energy representing the Melanesia, Director of Energy, RMI representing the Micronesia, Director of Cook Islands Renewable Energy Division representing Polynesia and New Caledonia representing Francophone.
* The 4th PSC Meeting noted and endorsed the following:

1. Manager’s Progress Report;
2. PCREEE’s Strategic and Future Direction;
3. PCREEE’s Institutional Structure;
4. Capacity Building;
5. Update on the Global Network – Sustainable Energy Centres Initiatives and;
6. 2020 Annual Work Plan and Budget

* Need to rotate the current country members who have served on the board for two years (2019-2020) already.
* The PSC Meeting draft Minutes was ready and circulated to PSC members attending in February 2020 via email of which it was acknowledged and accepted virtually. Copy of 4th PSC Meeting minutes is attached under section 2.4 Meeting Papers below.

**2.2 The meeting also noted the following issues:**

* Due to the Covid19 pandemic travel restrictions in Europe, UNIDO, Austria and Norway all of which are major development partners to PCREEE were not able to attend the 4th PSC Meeting. Apologies were sent in advance of the meeting.
* The travel restrictions imposed by COVID19 and other work commitments contributed to the non-participation of other SC members. Apologies were sent in advance of the meeting.
* The 4th PSC Meeting noted the need to rotate the current country members who have served on the board for two years (2019-2020) already

**2.3 Recommendations**

The following recommendations were presented to the committee:

1. Note and endorse the 4th PSC meeting minutes
2. Endorse the replacement of 3 new PSC members being Director of Fiji Department of Energy representing the Melanesia Region, Director of Energy Department, Tuvalu representing the Polynesia and Director of Energy, Kiribati representing the Micronesia Region.

**The SC5 endorsed the recommendations as they were presented.**

**Agenda 3: PCREEE Progress Report 2020**

The 4th PSC meeting endorsed a budget of 692,000 Euro for 2020. In June 2020, UNIDO and SPC signed a funding agreement for 600,000 Euro to deliver on the 2020 Work Plan. The key planned activities in the work plan included support to local businesses and entrepreneurs, the conduct of an Energy Dialogues in the North, the conduct of energy investment forums and support to the national energy industry associations. The work plan included the development of the e-mobility programme and the PCREEE Business Plan. These were largely to be delivered through face to face meetings and cross border travels.

By March, countries were closing their borders because of the COVID pandemic. The delivery of the 2020 Work Plan was very much affected. Activities were then delivered virtually and was largely dependent on the ability of each PIC to coordinate the logistics for in-country activities.

A PCREEE Progress Report for January-June 2020 was submitted and accepted by UNIDO and is attached under section 3.5 Meeting Papers below.

**3.1 The meeting noted the following outcomes:**

* Given the border closure, the host country has completed more activities in the work plan as compared to others. For instance, a safety workshop was conducted for the electrical contractors in April, several joint public awareness events were completed, a TA to finalize the Tonga Energy Efficiency Master Plan was completed, the development of the national qualification on sustainable energy is progressing well and a year-long technical assistance to the Tonga Electricity Commission will be completed at the end of November without the consultant setting foot in Tonga.
* A series of webinars on Accelerating investments in Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency &  
  Smart Mobility in the Pacific Islands was completed jointly with partners such as NZMFAT, EU, GET.Invest and ElectriFi.
* Two roundtables on Energy Access & Private Financing in Fiji were completed jointly with PFAN, the Fiji RE Fund, DoE and others.
* A regional consultation on the e-mobility programme and the PCREEE Business Plan was conducted on 4th June and further follow-up national consultations were completed in Niue, Nauru, Palau, Solomon Is, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.
* Worked with the International Solar Alliance on designing workshops on solar for the Pacific Islands.
* Developed a low carbon transport proposal for Vanuatu and established its Sustainable Energy Association.
* Prepared public awareness and promotional materials to support relevant activities of the PICs.
* Signed Agreement with Superfly Ltd for the use of the Pacific Sustainable Energy Entrepreneurship Facility to support sustainable energy investments in Solomon Islands

**3.2 The meeting also noted the following issues:**

* A lot of the activities planned for 2020 will be carried over to 2021.
* Given the uncertainty with the pandemic, it would be safe to prepare for the mixed delivery of the 2021 PCREEE work plan to be done virtually and to be done nationally.
* Given the savings in the 2020 budget, PCREEE is fabricating a conference room to be equipped with state of the art teleconference facilities to facilitate the virtual delivery. Expected completion by 1st Qtr 2021.
* For the delivery of the national activities in 2021, engaging local consultants and stronger local coordination by the recipient authorities would be needed.

**3.3 Recommendation:**

The following recommendations were presented to the committee;

1. Endorsed the Minutes of SC 3
2. Noted the progress with the implementation of matters arising from SC 3
3. Acknowledged the highlights of PCREEE’s deliverables in 2019

**The SC5 endorsed the recommendations as they were presented.**

**Agenda 4: PCREEE Business Plan / Technical Report**

The Second Meeting of Pacific Ministers of Energy and Transport, held from 2 to 4 April 2014, in Nadi, Fiji, endorsed the establishment of the PCREEE as regional centre of excellence. PCREEE focuses on private-sector relevant regional interventions in the areas of policy implementation, capacity development, knowledge management, as well as investment and business promotion on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency. The Centre is co-hosted by the Pacific Community (SPC), CROP agencies and the Government of Tonga.

PCREEE was then inaugurated on 26 April 2017 in Nuku’alofa, Tonga, at the margins of the Third Pacific Regional Energy and Transport Ministers’ Meeting.

The First Operational Phase (FOP) of PCREEE is from 2017 – 2020 and is guided by a Project Document agreed to by UNIDO, SPC and the PICTs. Key FOP activities were the establishment of the office, recruitments and staffing and the development of a 10-year PCREEE Business Plan (BP).

**4.1 The 5th PSC noted the following outcomes:**

* In mid-2019 UNIDO contracted Trama Techno Ambiental (TTA) from Spain to draft the BP. The BP established the vision and mission, scope of mandate, long-term planning and resource framework and sustainability scenario(s) for the Centre. In line with the directions of the Pacific Energy Ministers, the BP maintains a strong focus on the private sector and industry dimension of sustainable energy in the areas of RE & EE Business Start-ups & Entrepreneurship, RE & EE for Sustainable Mobility, RE Mini-grids and Energy Efficiency Investment.
* The first regional consultation and validation workshop on the PCREEE Business Plan 2020 - 2030 was conducted on 4 June. Due to the Covid19 pandemic, the consultation was done virtually via Zoom. Attendees were from the public sector, the private sector, NGOs, regional and international organizations including donors and development partners.
* National Consultations and validation workshops were also conducted for Solomon Islands (10th July), Tuvalu (12th August), Nauru (4th August), Niue (18th August), Palau (1st September), Tonga (20th October) and Vanuatu (21st October). The rest were invited to download the BP and comment using track and changes. The Business Plan is annexed under section 4.4 meeting papers below.
* The BP has four priority strategic areas for its SOP:

1. RE&EE Business Start-Up and Entrepreneurship;
2. RE&EE for Sustainable Mobility;
3. RE Mini-grids and;
4. Energy Efficiency Investment

**4.2 The meeting also noted the following issues:**

* It is important that the PCREEE is guided by a document with a long-term vision, governance, staffing and funding strategy that reflects the priorities and remains relevant to the needs of its member countries.
* The PCREEE BP is consistent with the BP of the Geoscience Energy and Maritime Division of SPC, the new Framework for Energy Security and Resilient Development in the Pacific 2021-2030 and supports the national energy roadmaps and plans as well as the PICs’ Nationally Determined Contributions.
* The BP is currently being used by a major donor as the basis for its financial support to the PCREEE during its Second Operational Phase (SOP): 2021 – 2025.
  1. **Recommendations**

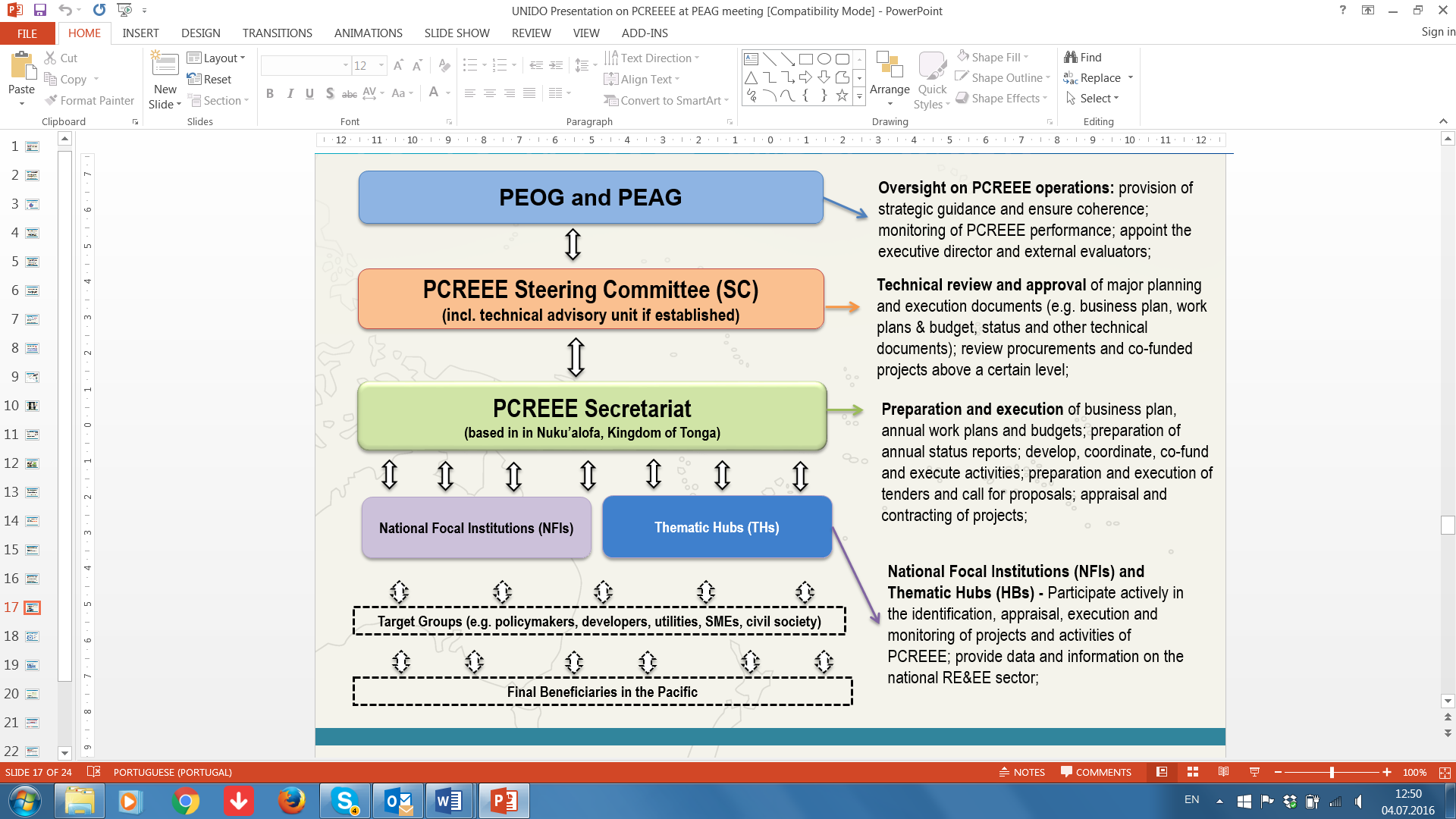
The following recommendations were presented to the committee:

1. Note PCREEE’s effort and the consultations conducted in developing the Business Plan 2020 - 2030;
2. Note the importance of the Business Plan in guiding PCREEE’s future services to the PICTs as well as building donor and partner confidence;
3. Endorse the PCREEE Business Plan 2020 - 2030

**The SC5 endorsed the recommendations as they were presented.**

**Agenda 5: Institutional Structure**

The PCREEE was established with the governance structure below. The future of the PEOG and PEAG is currently being considered in the context of the new Framework for Energy Security and Resilience in the Pacific.



The PCREEE operates under the HR and Financial rules and policies of the SPC. SPC is an accredited entity of the EU and the GCF and this is proof of the compliance of SPC’s management and governance structure with internationally accepted standards and norms.

In terms of the Secretariat, the PCREEE has 4 full time staff – Manager, Programme Delivery Officer, Pacific Island Junior Professional (PIJP) and a Programme Assistant. The PIJP will soon become vacant and will be advertised.

The PCREEE Staff are complemented by two support staff from the Tonga Department of Energy, International Volunteers and International Students on attachment.

The NFIs and the THs play a key role in the appraisal and monitoring of PCREEE’s performance but also in the coordinating of PCREEE’s activities with their respective activities with other partners and donors.

**5.1 The 5th PSC noted the following outcomes:**

* PCREEE continues to operate effectively under the rules and policies of SPC. As of  30 October, SPC is subject to the competence of the ILO Administrative Tribunal for the settlement of employment disputes lodged by staff members. A staff member may lodge up an appeal with the ILOAT up to 60 days after they have exhausted all internal means of resolution.
* All Volunteers and Interns have been repatriated out of Tonga due to the Covid19 pandemic by March this year.
* The PCREEE acknowledges how busy the THs are and always welcome their participation.
* The PCREEE steering committee members from the PICTs are selected for a term in office of two years. The current members are as in the table below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NO** | **STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP** | |  |
| **Existing Members in 2018** | **New Members in 2019** | **Proposed for 2020** |
| 1. | Melanesia – Solomon Is | Vanuatu | Fiji |
| 2. | Micronesia – Palau | Republic of Marshall Is | FSM / Kiribati |
| 3. | Polynesia – Samoa | Cook Island | Tuvalu |
| 4. | Francophone – Wallis & Futuna | New Caledonia | French Polynesia |
| 5. | Host Country – Tonga | Tonga | Tonga |
| 6. | Chair | Tonga |  |

**5.2 The meeting also noted the following issues:**

* The PCREEE is operating successfully under the institutional and governance structures of SPC and there is no need to consider any autonomous set up under the current financial and donor climate.
* It is important to have face-to-face meetings and to have the PSC meetings back to back with other related regional and national events thereby maximizing benefits from the PSC meetings.
* Given the uncertainty with the pandemic, it would be safe to prepare for the mixed delivery of the 2021 PCREEE work plan to be done virtually and to be done nationally. There is also no certainty in future engagements of International Volunteers and Interns in light of the COVID19 restrictions.

**5.3 Recommendations**

The following recommendations were presented to the committee:

1. Endorse the new NFIs to the PSC.
2. Acknowledge the effective operation of the PCREEE under SPC’s roles and policies.
3. Acknowledge the contribution of the NFIs and THs to the PCREEE.

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**The SC5 endorsed the recommendations as they were presented.**

**Agenda 6: PCREEE’S Financial Structure**

A cornerstone to the effective operation of any organization is the effectiveness of its financial structure, ensuring that resources are effectively utilized and they are accounted for in a timely manner.

The PCREEE operates under the Financial rules and policies of the SPC. SPC is an accredited entity of the EU and the GCF and this is proof of the compliance of SPC’s financial structure with internationally accepted standards and norms.

Funds received from PCREEE’s donors are deposited at a PCREEE account with SPC. To facilitate spending in Tonga, a SPC Project account was opened with ANZ Bank in Tonga. Funds are then transferred from Suva to Tonga based on PCREEE’s work plan. The signatories were the Manager of PCREEE, the Finance Manager and the Deputy Director General from SPC in Suva plus the Director of Energy and CEO of MEIDECC in Tonga. Two (2) signatories were needed for every payment of which one (1) must be from SPC.

At the end of every month, PCREEE will submit a financial report to be cleared from SPC in Suva. Requests for advance / top up were also submitted to be cleared from Suva too.

**6.1 The 5th PSC noted the following outcomes:**

* The above arrangement proved to be too cumbersome, time consuming and delays were always experienced.
* In March 2020, SPC Finance introduced some changes whereby the ANZ TOP account was added to a Transactive System which then enabled SPC Finance to view the Tonga account online and do the top up and payments accordingly.
* The SPC account was therefore opened to all SPC payments in Tonga, regardless of programme and projects, and Suva Finance will record each payment in Tonga to the appropriate project and programme account in Suva. All payments are now done through internet banking. This has proven to be more efficient and involve less work for all concerned, while maintaining and strictly complying with SPC’s Financial rules and procedures.

* To ensure PCREEE continues to operate efficiently, a Petty Cash has been set up to cater for small and urgent payments needed by the office.
* To strengthen PCREEE’s accountability, an Asset Register is maintained by the office and is updated and submitted to Suva on a monthly basis and attached to the progress reports to donors.

**6.2 The meeting also noted the following issues:**

* The PCREEE has experienced some delays to payments, particularly on the catering and venue costs for the conduct of national consultations on the Business Plan and e-mobility programme. This is an issue that is continuously raised through meetings of the Georesources and Energy Programme.
* As PCREEE plan to carry out its 2021 activities virtually and with the involvement of local consultants and coordinators, it is very important that delays to payments of local goods and services are minimized. In-country support are assured if payments are made quickly and received on time.

**6.3 Recommendations**

The following recommendations were presented to the committee:

1. Note the change to the financial structure of the PCREEE.
2. Request SPC Finance to address delays in the payments of local services and personnel to ensure efficient delivery of the PCREEE’s 2021 work plan.

**The SC5 endorsed the recommendations as they were presented.**

**Agenda 7: 2021 Work Programme and Budget**

PCREEE focuses on private-sector relevant regional interventions in the areas of policy implementation, capacity development, knowledge management, as well as investment and business promotion on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency. The Centre is co-hosted by the Pacific Community (SPC), CROP agencies and the Government of Tonga.

The First Operational Phase (FOP) of PCREEE is from 2017 – 2020. During the FOP , the PCREEE was initially funded with 1.44 million Euros from UNIDO and the Government of Austria. In 2018, the Government of Norway provided 1.57 million Euro. Spending during the FOP is estimated at 1.2 million Euro.

The Second Operational Phase (SOP) will cover for 2021 – 2025 and will focus on four strategic areas as outlined in the PCREEE Business Plan 2020 - 2030. These are i) RE&EE Business Start-ups & Entrepreneurship, ii) RE&EE Sustainable Mobility, iii) RE Mini-grids and iv) Energy Efficiency Investment. The funding of the SOP will be from the rollover balance from the FOP, estimated at 1.8 million Euro plus a .8 million Euro collaboration with the government of Austria

**7.1 The 5th PSC noted the following outcomes:**

* The PCREEE 2021 Work Plan has been divided into five Outcome areas. The first outcome area focused on the effective and efficient management and operation of PCREEE while the other four outcome areas are extracted from the PCREEE BP.

* The 2021 Work Plan has an estimated budget of Euro 626,500. The budget for 2021 according to the outcome areas are as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Budget (Euro)** | **%** | **Outcome Areas** |
| 67,000 | 10 | Effective and Efficient Management and Operation of PCREEE |
| 75,000 | 12 | RE&EE Business Start-Up and Entrepreneurship Support |
| 70,000 | 11 | RE and EE for Sustainable Mobility |
| 65,000 | 10 | Sustainable RE mini-grid systems that support the social and economic development of PICs |
| 67,000 | 11 | Energy Efficient Investment |
| 282,500 | 45 | Staffing |
| **626,500** | **100** | **Total** |

* The budget is being done in light of the continuing COVID19 pandemic and on the understanding that travel restrictions will continue and most meetings and trainings will be conducted virtually. Similarly, the delivery of technical assistance in-country will increasingly involve the participation of local consultants. **Annex 1** is the budget by outputs and activities.
  1. **The meeting also noted the following issues:**
* The PCREEE 2021 Work Plan and Budget is skewed towards virtual coordination and implementation in light of the COVID19 pandemic restrictions.
* PCREEE will heavily depend on the active support of its member countries to deliver on its Work Plan if the travel restrictions persist.
* The COVID19 pandemic may improve and the restrictions uplifted in 2021. This would allow for face to face meetings and improved coordination and implementation. Consequently, the budget may change depending on the circumstances at hand.
* There is a need for the PCREEE to strengthen its resource mobilization / collaboration effort for the SOP.

**7.3 Recommendations:**

The following recommendations were presented to the committee:

1. Note that the PCREEE 2021 Work Plan and Budget is developed in light of the COVID 19 pandemic restrictions;
2. Endorse PCREEE 2021 Work Plan;
3. Endorse PCREEE 2021 Budget and.
4. Encourage PICTs to jointly carry out and fund PCREEE’s 2021 Work Plan.

**The SC5 endorsed the recommendations as they were presented.**

**Agenda 8: Update from the Global Network of Sustainable Energy Centres**

UNIDO was established in 1966 and became a specialized agency of the United Nations in 1985. Its primary objective is the promotion of inclusive and sustainable industrial development (ISID) in developing countries and economies in transition.

THE GN-SEC Mission and Vision is the development of an integrated and inclusive regional market of RE&EE products and services by addressing the barriers for the use and supply of RE&EE products and services through regional tools and methodologies with an ultimate aim to contribute to national and global policy objectives and priorities.

* 1. **The 5th PSC noted the following outcomes:**

UNIDO supports the establishment of the Global Network of regional sustainable energy centres (GN-SEC). The following updates have been noted:

* Eight (8) regional sustainable energy centres have been established and operational covering 108 countries mostly LDCs and SIDS
* The GN-SEC acts as regional accelerators for the energy and climate transition
* UNIDO implement activities through the Networks for National Focal Institutions
* The Regional Centres have received high level approvals by Minister and/or Heads of State
* Works in five official languages including Portuguese
* SIDS-SIDS cooperation on EV issues under GN-SEC and SIDS DOCK
* Online Capacity Building Programmes for SIDS
  1. **The meeting also noted the following issues:**
* UNIDO is working 24hrs around the clock to support the GN-SEC
* Time difference can be a challenge to joint capacity building initiatives and activities
* Support of countries can be challenging in securing regional projects

**8.3 Recommendations**

The following recommendations were presented to the committee:

1. Note the support offered through UNIDO to the GN-SEC including PCREEE
2. Note the new development initiatives offered through the GN-SEC

**The SC5 endorsed the recommendations as they were presented.**

**Agenda 9: Other Business & Date and Venue of the next Meeting**

There were no other agenda to be discussed under Other Business. The meeting was therefore closed with a closing remark from Mr Solomone Fifita, Manager PCREEE. Mr Fifita thanked the chair on his leadership in successfully steering the meeting to a close, he thanked the development partners, the SC members, the private sector participants and everyone that joined the meeting.

**Meeting Ended at 13:30 (Tonga time)**