



PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT

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FORUM ECONOMIC MINISTERS MEETING

01 – 02 August, 2024

Suva, Fiji

AGENDA ITEM 11B: REVIEW OF THE FEMM CHARTER

Purpose and Recommendations

Purpose

This paper presents a proposed review to the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting (FEMM) Charter as part of the Review of Regional Architecture (RRA) work to support the implementation of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

Summary

The Review of the Regional Architecture will support the operationalisation of the 2050 Implementation Plan which encompasses strengthened CROP coordination, targeted partnerships, and coherent governance and reporting structures for the various thematic areas.

This will include the Resource and Economic Development thematic area where Forum Economic Ministers provide oversight on the implementation of the regional collective actions through the Pacific Roadmap for Economic Development (PRED).

As part of the RRA process to ensure coherent governance and reporting structures, all Forum Meetings' Charters will be reviewed. The 2017 FEMM Charter has been reviewed and is hereby presented to Forum Economic Ministers for consideration.

The revised FEMM Charter 2024 is attached as *Annex 1*.

Problem/Opportunity Identification

The 2050 Strategy and its Implementation Plan have been endorsed by Leaders and are widely supported across the region and by development partners. As implementation commences, it is critical that the 2050 Strategy is aligned to national level priorities and objectives, and that the regional architecture supports the priorities and outcomes in the Strategy, including by enabling productive partnerships and resourcing.

2. The 2050 Strategy presented an opportunity for the region to reorient and reorganise the region's priorities and regional mechanisms to effectively and efficiently implement the 2050 Strategy. That reorientation requires reviews of regional systems and processes, including the FEMM Charter, to ensure that they are fit for purpose. This is particularly critical when there is a growing number of sub-groups including sub-committees, technical working groups, and informal working groups that needs to be better organised to provide clear lines of reporting to appropriate decision making bodies.

Background (Context)

3. The RRA will support the operationalisation of the 2050 Implementation Plan, which encompasses strengthened CROP coordination, targeted partnerships, and coherent governance and reporting structures for the various thematic areas. The RRA builds on the findings of the past regional reviews undertaken between 2004 and 2024.

4. Phase 1 of the RRA has focused on understanding the regional architecture as it currently stands, and identifying the key issues that need to be addressed to support the implementation of the 2050 Strategy.

5. Since April 2024, work has progressed on Phase 2 of the RRA, which is focused on addressing strengthened coordination, coherence and collaboration across the regional system through a review of the existing regional governance platforms, the supporting coordination mechanisms and the Pacific Islands Forum processes that inform and guide the Leaders discussions.

6. As discussed at the 5th Meeting of the Pacific Economic Sub-Committee (PESC) on 11 June 2024, Phase 2 of the RRA is primarily focused on strengthening the regional systems and processes to ensure that the 2050 Strategy, its Implementation Plan and the PRED are central to the region's collective pursuits across each of the thematic areas of the 2050 Strategy.

7. The review of the FEMM Charter is one of the key recommendations on the regional governance structure for the Resource and Economic Development (RED) Thematic Area.

Linkages and Alignment

8. To ensure strengthened oversight at the sector level on sectoral matters, the charters for all Forum Meetings will be updated to recognise the primacy of the 2050 Strategy and to standardise the processes that inform the convening of Forum Ministerial Meetings.

Policy Analysis

9. The draft revised FEMM Charter 2024 provided at [Annex 1](#) provides greater clarity on the scope and oversight of the FEMM and details the key engagements that inform FEMM related initiatives and decisions, moving forward. The Economic Informal Working Group (EIWG) met and discussed the proposed review to the FEMM Charter and agreed to the following key high level recommended changes:

- i. **Strategic Context** – in strengthening coherence across regional systems, providing a standard strategic context across all the Forum Meetings' Charters is important to highlight the Leaders' Vision for the Pacific;
- ii. **Scope of the FEMM** – emphasises the role of FEMM in providing oversight and leadership on all regional economic development issues, including development financing agenda pertaining to climate change, natural resources, blue economy and other relevant areas;

- iii. **Governance Arrangements** – FEMM is to be supported by the “Sub-Architecture” of Forum meetings and processes whereby sub-groups including working groups, taskforces and technical working groups, report to FEMM through the PESC as the primary advisory body to FEMM, and the Forum Economic Officials;
- iv. **Partnership Engagement** – convening an annual Roundtable with Development and Dialogue Partners to institutionalise the Forum Leaders decision in 2017 where they encouraged donors and partners to the region to align their resources, including through a regular regional donor roundtable linked to the FEMM; and
- v. **Review Arrangements** - incorporating a review mechanism and for this Charter to be reviewed every six years or as directed by Forum Economic Ministers or Leaders.

Consultation

10. The progress on the RRA work with the recommendation to review all Forum Meeting Charters was presented to the PESC in June and was further discussed by the EIWG¹. The proposed revisions were discussed by the EIWG with an agreement to present it to the PESC and to the Forum Economic Officials Meeting (FEOM) for their consideration.

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
23 July 2024

¹ EIWG comprises the following Member countries: Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa and Tonga.



PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT

FORUM ECONOMIC MINISTERS MEETING (FEMM) CHARTER 2024

A. Strategic Context

1. The mandate of the Pacific Islands Forum is to strengthen regional cooperation and integration, including through the pooling of regional resources of governance and the alignment of policies, in order to further Forum members' shared goals of economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security (2005 Forum Agreement).
2. The Leaders' Vision in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent (2050 Strategy) is for a resilient Pacific Region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion and prosperity, that ensures that all Pacific peoples can lead free, healthy and productive lives.
3. The 2050 Strategy sets out Members' long-term approach to working together as a region to achieve this vision through key values and seven key thematic areas, and its Implementation Plan further articulates goals, outcomes and regional collective actions.

B. Purpose of the FEMM

4. The Forum Economic Ministers have a critical role in deepening regional economic cooperation and integration through strengthening policy cohesion on agreed regional economic priorities and policy positions, and advocating these in other regional and international fora.
5. Accordingly, FEMM constitutes an important annual standing meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum for Forum Finance, Economic Development and Planning Ministers to assist and inform Forum Leaders of relevant regional and international economic and development issues, challenges and opportunities facing the region.

C. Scope of the FEMM

6. Forum Economic Ministers play a lead role in advancing regional economic cooperation and integration through the Resources and Economic Development (RED) thematic area outcomes and priorities in the 2050 Strategy. In light of this and the purpose of their meeting, Forum Economic Ministers will oversee and take leadership in:
 - All economic policy issues affecting Forum priorities and the pursuit of deeper regional economic cooperation and integration;
 - All regional economic development issues, including the development financing agenda pertaining to climate change, natural resources, blue economy and other relevant areas as included in the RED thematic area;

- The oversight and tasking of Ministerial or Officials’ level groups as needed to advance, advocate, protect and implement the Forum’s regional economic policy agenda, including the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan and the Pacific Roadmap for Economic Development (PRED);
- The oversight and leadership of Forum priorities to strengthen regional norms and standards, and meet associated international obligations, on relevant economic development issues;
- Monitoring Pacific regional economic, financial, poverty and other relevant trends in support of the implementation of regional economic cooperation and integration priorities; and
- Identifying opportunities presented by regional and international high-level meetings to engage and advocate for the agreed Forum priorities and driving engagement to foster greater regional influence at significant global fora.

D. Governance Arrangements

7. The FEMM will be convened by the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat every 12 months (or as close to 12 months as may be necessitated by unforeseen events), hosted at the Secretariat with a member country hosting on a triennial basis, or as otherwise may be agreed.
8. Each FEMM will be chaired by the relevant Minister (or representative) of the incumbent Forum Chair when FEMM is convened at the Forum Secretariat Headquarters, Suva. However, when FEMM is hosted by a Member country, FEMM will be chaired by the host country and hosting costs associated with the FEMM, excluding Members participation, will be borne by the host country.
9. In the event that a face-to-face meeting cannot be convened as a consequence of unforeseen events, an online meeting may be held instead with the agreement of Members. Such a meeting will be Chaired as if it were face-to-face, unless agreed otherwise by Members.
10. Where an urgent matter, as may be declared by the current FEMM Chair in consultation with the Secretary General, within the FEMM mandate requires a Ministerial decision between regular meetings, such a decision may be sought by email circulation or by convening an online meeting specifically for the purpose.
11. The FEMM is to be supported by the “Sub-Architecture” of Forum Meetings and processes set out in Figure 1, which shall report to and support the Forum Economic Ministers:



Figure 1: FEMM Meetings Architecture

12. Permanent Observers of the FEMM shall include CROP Agencies, Forum Associate Members and Forum Observers and others as may be agreed by FEMM in plenary session.

E. CSO and Private Sector Engagement

13. The FEMM will include an annual dialogue with Civil Society and Private Sector representatives, where issues of mutual importance will be discussed, aligned to the FEMM agenda. Participation in such dialogue shall be decided in consultation with relevant regional bodies representing Civil Society and the Private Sector.

F. Partnership Engagement

14. The FEMM will convene an annual Roundtable with Development and Dialogue Partners, Observers, and other invited guests to discuss issues related to the resourcing and support of the region's priorities and actions as reflected through the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, the 2050 Implementation Plan, the PRED and FEMM agenda.

G. Resourcing Arrangements

15. The travel and associated costs of attending FEMM either in Suva or in a Member country will be the responsibility of Member countries.
16. The FEMM Agenda and meeting arrangements will continue to be reframed and streamlined to foster focused Ministerial discussions on emerging economic issues of the region as guided by FEMM.

H. Review Arrangements

17. This Charter will be reviewed every six years, or as directed by Forum Economic Ministers or Leaders.