SECOND QUADRENNIAL PACIFIC SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT REPORT

2022

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADB: Asian Development Bank
AML & CTF: Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Terrorism Finance
AP-DEF: Asia-Pacific Development Effectiveness Facility
BBNJ: Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction
BPA: Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
CROP: Council of Regional Organizations of the Pacific
CBID: Community Based Inclusive Development
CEDAW: Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRPD: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DDPG: Donor and Development Partners Group
DPOs: Disabled Peoples Organizations
DCRP: Disaster and Community Resilience Programme
DRP: Disaster Resilience Programme
DFA: Development Finance Assessment
DRR: Disaster Risk Management
ECOSOCC: United Nations Economic and Social Council
ESCAP: The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
EEZ: Exclusive Economic Zone
ECHO: Pacific Ending Childhood Obesity Priority
EVAWG: Ending Violence against Women & Girls
FIC: Forum Island Countries
FPR: Framework for Pacific Regionalism
FEMM: Forum Economic Ministers Meeting
FPO: Framework for Pacific Oceanscape
FRDP: Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific
FADs: Fish Aggregating Devices
FFA: Forum Fisheries Agency
FAO: UN food and agriculture organization
GPI: Gender Participation Indices
HLPF: High Level Political Forum
HPV: Human Papillomavirus Virus
HIES: Household Income and Expenditure Survey
IANZ: Indicators Aotearoa New Zealand
ILO: International Labor Organization
IAEG: The Inter-Agencies Expert Group
IOM: The International Organization for Migration
IUU: Illegal Unregulated &Unreported
IMO: International Maritime Organization
IDMC: International Displacement Monitoring Centre
JICA: Japan International Cooperation Agency
JICA: Japan International Cooperation Agency
LGBTQI: Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer & Intersex
MDGs: Millennium Development Goals
MICS: Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MNE: Monitoring & Evaluation
MTOs: Money Transfer Operators
MTR: Mid term Review
MSW: Municipal Solid Waste
NCDs: Non -Communicable Diseases
NHRI: National Human Rights Institutions
NPS: National Payment Systems
NDMO: National Disaster Management Offices
NSDS: National Sustainable Development Strategy
NMDI: National Minimum Development Indicator
OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
ODA: Official Development Assistance
OPOC: Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner
PHPC: Pacific Humanitarian Pathway for COVID19
PFRPD: Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
PLGED: Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration
PAPRI: Pacific Payment Remittance and Securities Settlement Initiative
PICTs: Pacific Island Countries and Territories
PacREF: Pacific Regional Education Framework
POA: Pacific Ocean Alliance
PSDR: Pacific Sustainable Development Report
PARIS21: The Partnership for the Development of Statistics in the 21st Century
PRP: Pacific Resilience Partnership
PRM: Pacific Resilience Meeting
PIEMA: The Pacific Islands Emergency Management Alliance
PFSD: Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development
PCRIC: Pacific Catastrophe Risk Insurance Company
PSMB: Pacific Statistics Methods Board
PPE: Personal Protective Equipment
PDH: Pacific Data Hub
PRSD: Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development
SPC: Pacific Community
SREM: Strategic Roadmaps for Emergency Management
S.A.M.O.A: SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action
SPTO: South Pacific Tourism Organization
SMEs: Small Medium Enterprises
TVET: Technical and Educational Vocational and Training
TYPSS: Ten-Year Pacific statistics strategy
TWG: Technical Working Groups
UNFPA: United Nations Population Fund
UNDESA: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund
ULABS: Used Lead Acid Batteries
UNFCCC: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNCTAD: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
VNR: Voluntary National Review
VAWG: Violence Against Women and Girls
VDS: Vessel Day Scheme
VDS: Vessel Day Scheme
WEO: World Economic Outlook
WTO: World Trade Organization
WCPO: Western and Central Pacific Ocean
WCPFC: Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
WBG: World Bank Group

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Acknowledgements

As Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum, I thank all who have worked to produce this report. I thank the hard work of our member countries, the Pacific Steering Committee for Sustainable Development and the support provided by technical advisers from the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) agencies, the United Nations System in the Pacific, Private Sector and Civil Society.

The table below outlines Agencies' that have contributed to the Briefs for each of the Regional Thematic Issues shown:

Sustainable Development Pillars	Regional Thematic Issue	Agency's
People	Poverty Reduction/Social Protection, Reducing Inequality	SPC, PIFS, UNESCAP, UNDP, UNFPA
	Gender Perspectives on Sustainable Development in the Pacific	SPC, PIFS, UN Women, UNESCAP, UNFPA, IOM
	Human Rights	SPC, PIFS, OHCHR, UNWomen, UNFPA, IOM
	Health, NCDs and COVID-19	WHO, UNFPA
	Quality Education	PIFS, USP, UNESCO
	Food Security	SPC, PIFS, FAO
	Water and Sanitation	SPC, UNICEF, WHO
	Youth	SPC, PIFS, OHCHR, UNFPA
	Sports for Sustainable Development	SPC, ONOC, PIFS, UNESCO, Sports Matters
	Culture	SPC, UNESCO
Planet	Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management	PIFS, SPREP, SPC, UNESCAP, UNDP, IOM
	Oceans Management and Fisheries	PIFS, SPREP, FFA, SPC, UNDP, UNESCAP, IOM
	Waste Management, Sustainable Consumption & Production & Biodiversity	SPREP, UNEP, UNESCAP
Prosperity	Equitable Economic Growth	PIFS, UNESCAP, UNDP
	Connectivity (ICT, transportation – shipping, aviation)	PIFS, UNESCAP, UNDP
	Energy	SPC, UNESCAP, UNDP
	Tourism	SPTO, ESCAP
Means of Implementation	Financing	PIFS, ESCAP
	Effective Institutions, Capacity Building and South-South Cooperation	PIFS, UNESCAP, UNFPA
	Science and Technology	PIFS, UNESCAP
	Multi-stakeholder Partnerships	PIFS, UNDP, UNESCAP, UNFPA
	Trade	PIFS, UNESCAP
	Data Monitoring	SPC, UNESCAP, UNFPA
	Peaceful, Safe Communities & Migration	PIFS, IOM, UNESCAP, OHCHR, IOM

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SG's Foreword

The 2022 Pacific Quadrennial Report is a regional report on progress under the 2030 Agenda and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway. The report provides a high-level snapshot of where we are and allows us to identify solutions to our challenges and vulnerabilities.

What is clear is that our actions must be guided by our rich 50-year history of collective action and leadership. We have seen the benefits of moving as one region on oceans governance, on nuclear disarmament, securing our nuclear-free Blue Pacific, and our climate change ambitions.

The relationship between climate change-related sea-level rise and maritime zones, including economic and strategic considerations, is of key importance to our Pacific region and to all coastal States.

Pacific Island Forum Leaders recognize this and continuously reaffirm climate change as the single greatest threat to our region. The ground-breaking 2021 Pacific Islands Forum *Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the face of Climate Change-related Sea-level rise* further reinforces the Blue Pacific's call to world leaders to urgently commit to decisive climate action that limits global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. We strongly urge our global family to do all that is necessary to achieve this target.

The rising debt levels across the region are an issue of serious concern, especially for Forum Island Countries. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated our debt levels and placed unprecedented pressures on our debt servicing capabilities.

Given the urgency of this prevailing situation, we must prioritise strengthening economic recovery in the Pacific; we must develop urgent, innovative and transformational solutions that are fit for purpose and address our unique vulnerabilities; and we must strengthen our human and technical capacity to ensure that we have the appropriate infrastructures in place to respond effectively to crises'.

We cannot do this alone. We need strengthened collaboration and genuine partnerships that support our priorities. We call on all development partners to recognize and work in complementarity with our existing Pacific mechanisms.

The decision of Pacific Island Forum Leaders to develop a long-term *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* reaffirms our commitment to harness the power of our collective resilience. It will leverage our shared political strength, human and natural resources in new and innovative ways, to address our present and future challenges that will lead to transformative change for present and future generations.

The 2050 Strategy will not replace national commitment to the 2030 Agenda, but rather complement national efforts by collectively addressing a range of development issues, where working together is seen to be socially, economically and environmentally advantageous for all. Like the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, it is a regional strategy to be owned by countries, to protect and secure our Pacific people, place and prospects which is reflective of the Blue Pacific narrative, and an expression of our regional solidarity.

As Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum, I thank all who have worked to produce this report. I thank the hard work of our member countries, the Pacific Steering Committee for Sustainable Development and the support provided by technical advisers from Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) agencies, the United Nations(UN), private sector and civil society.

XX August 2022

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Key Messages and Recommendations

With less than a decade remaining until 2030, there is an urgent need to accelerate progress towards the achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs.) Despite the impacts of COVID-19, Pacific countries remain committed to ensuring zero poverty, improving the lives of all and ensuring a safe and healthy planet. Efforts to achieve the targets set for all seventeen goals are interrelated and consistent with the commitment to Leaving No One Behind.

All countries have incorporated the SDGs into national policies and strategies. However, none of the 21 targets expected to be achieved by 2020 were achieved. It is also unlikely that the Pacific will achieve even 20% of the SDG targets by 2030.

Key Messages

People

Weakening traditional systems and a lack of comprehensive social protection mechanisms means that many communities are struggling to recover from COVID-19 and other disasters. As a consequence, there are rising levels of hardship and poverty; increased rural-urban migration which strains public service delivery in urban settings; and an increased number of school dropouts and rising crime, drug and alcohol abuse. The small population size, remoteness and enduring impacts of disasters, hinders the ability of countries to generate and sustain economic growth.

A positive response to COVID-19 has been an increase in local food supply and micro-business participation. Women's participation in agriculture and marketing has become even more evident and is considered vital to food security across the region.

Women make up nearly 80% of our small businesses. COVID-19 and the associated border closures, lockdowns, school closures and social distancing have had an extended supply-side shock on many businesses, particularly in the female dominated informal sector. Overall unemployment rates have increased in the Pacific, with youth unemployment at more than 23 percent compared with the global average of 13 percent. The main reasons for high youth unemployment rates are low economic growth, high population growth and skills mismatches.

The drivers of NCDs are complex and multifactorial and despite a number of global and regional agreements and commitments there has been limited translation into concrete local action.

The agenda for education in the Pacific is changing to recognize the increasing need to develop non-cognitive skills in young people to respond to changing communities, labour markets and the broader impacts of climate change change under global warming of 1.5 and 2*C on the region.

Despite revised laws and strengthened legislative frameworks, violence against women and girls in the Pacific remains at unacceptable levels

While Pacific Islands State are engaging in continued dialogue with the international human rights mechanisms, including the treaty bodies, universal periodic review and special procedures of the Human Rights Council, more is required to ensure implementation of their human rights commitments at national level.

Approximately half of the Pacific population lives without access to basic drinking water facilities, and more than two thirds live without access to basic sanitation. Despite this, there are persistent low levels

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of engagement in water security compared to other sectoral issues, and inadequate consideration of water security issues in regional frameworks and decision-making fora.

There remains a lack of targeted investment required to meet the needs of all young people in the Pacific. The resulting impact has been minimal change in the overall status of youth. Many of the issues facing youth, such as unemployment and Non-Communicable Diseases(NCDs), are complex. A new conceptual framework of youth indicators has been developed to support national and regional reporting of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, and other regional priorities.

Planet

While the Pacific continues to deal with climate-induced disasters with annual economic losses of USD500 million, COVID-19 has worsened the stress on small public administrations.

Many of the voluntary commitments made at the 2017 Ocean Conference appear not to have been fulfilled. With progress on many of them unknown because of inadequate information and reporting.

The Blue Pacific Ocean Report 2021 pointed to a lack of coordination in the implementation of ocean initiatives, especially when it comes to documenting progress and called for a better integration to inform a coordinated policy development (OPOC, 2021).

New coastal fisheries governance arrangements have been established, and have supported regional action on coastal fisheries and aquatic biosecurity since 2019.

Impacts of climate change and natural disasters will add pressure on fisheries, therefore mobilizing investments for access and management of data on coastal fisheries is critical. Also, it was identified that the sanctity of the traditional and customary ties that Pacific peoples share with the Ocean as their endowment fund, inherited from their ancestors and for which we must hold in trust for future generations – must be acknowledged. COVID-19 has affected the ability of the Pacific Islands Countries to effectively manage, control and undertake surveillance exercises. The important role that fisheries observers play in the purse seine fishery was significantly affected.

There is a need to continue regional and global efforts to address the lack of data, methodologies and limited statistical capacity in the region to monitor SDG14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development) progress.

The Pacific has the highest petroleum fuel dependency of any region or sub-region in the world, as a consequence, oil price volatility greatly undermines energy security, with increasing oil prices disproportionately affecting low-income countries, undermining macro-economic stability, the balance of trade and the financial situation of major end-users such as power utilities, and household disposable income.

The development of the Framework for Energy Security and Resilience in the Pacific (FESRIP) 2021-2030 and its subsequent endorsement by the Leaders are a milestone achievement for the region, it aims to bring about long-term improvements to the infrastructure, capacity, technical knowledge and strengthen collaboration across key stakeholders in the renewable energy sector.

Prosperity

Remittances play an important role in Pacific economies and communities - accounting for approximately 35 percent, of nominal GDP in some countries. Besides being an important source of

income for families and foreign reserves for governments in the region, remittance can be a significant buffer during periods of both economic shocks and disasters in the region.

The majority of Pacific countries have relatively weak fiscal positions, with high levels of indebtedness. COVID-19 has only made things worse as the Pacific has among the most vulnerable countries to climate change and disasters. This is in addition to the continuing challenges of NCDs, poor health facilities and staffing, poor infrastructure and service delivery, etc., which all contribute to the overall situation.

In response to COVID-19 and the significant disruptions to international travel and country lockdowns, a revised policy on tourism in the Pacific has been created – the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework (2021-2030). The development of the Framework was an opportunity to reflect, rethink and plan the pathway to recovery for the entire tourism system. Balancing economic, social and environmental needs while also being conscious, regenerative and restorative for our people, our culture, our islands and ocean ecosystems and for those who enjoy visiting the region.

To address the under-performance of the longline fishery, a Regional Longline Strategy has been adopted that includes the establishment of zone-based limits for longline fishing within Economic Exclusive Zones (EEZ) and action within the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) to constrain longline fishing activity on the high seas with ongoing work to explore the use of new technology in the fight against IUU fishing,

Means of Implementation

Partnerships are the defining characteristic of the S.A.M.O.A Pathway, and the SIDS Partnership Framework serve two purposes: i) to ensure that SIDS development work remains at the forefront of the international agenda; and, ii) to monitor the progress of existing, and stimulate the launch of new, genuine and durable partnerships for the sustainable development of SIDS.

The importance of inclusive, transparent and accountable partnerships are acknowledged at national and regional levels. In some countries, there are dedicated financing facilities to help the private sector and civil society contribute to national development. Despite this, there remains a need to shift government engagement with civil society and the private sector from consultation to working in partnership at national and regional levels.

Freedom of expression, information, assembly and association as well as participation are key rights in this regard and have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic through measures taken in PICs that constrained public consultation and engagement, freedom of movement, the work of parliaments, media or other independent bodies holding executive government branches to account.

Pacific countries are at different statistical development stages, with a number of data gaps. Establishing a complete set of Pacific SDGs indicators remains a work in progress. Despite being a core need for robust evidence-based policies and strategies, Statistical Agencies do not have the same priority ranking as other Government Agencies that compete for scarce resources.

Building back better from the pandemic requires statistical data for measuring impacts on vulnerable communities and devising human rights-based policies. COVID-19 has demonstrated the value of having up-to-date data to enable targeted assistance packages that are effective and efficient.

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Recommendations

The report highlights a range of sustainable development issues that require nuanced national-level commitment and approach. However, there are also a number of areas where strengthened sustainable development action would benefit from complementary regional or sub-regional interventions. These are:

People

1. A comprehensive analysis of **employment options** across the region, that considers in detail the labour and training situation in each PICT, in particular for youth; the role of education and training initiatives such as TVET; the potential intra-regional employment opportunities that include issues linked to visas and work permits; and the economic and social costs and benefits of labour mobility schemes for both source and recipient countries.

2. Expanded research and development and capacity in the region to design, implement and monitor **formal social protection systems** to best address the impact on vulnerable communities in the region most impacted by climate change, disasters and health pandemics/epidemics.

3. Strengthened existing **youth** councils and networks and ensure representation of the diversity of young people in the public sphere to bring about a better tailored, needs-based and human rights-based approach in dealing with development issues in the region.

4. Continued advocacy and programmes for the promotion, respect for, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, without distinction of any kind to ensure that no one is left behind. Ratify core international human rights treaties and establish or strengthen national mechanisms for reporting and follow-up (NMRFs); review legislation and national policies to align them with the international standards as required under the core human rights treaties; and take concrete steps towards the establishment of National Human Rights Institutions and/or to strengthen existing National Human Rights Institutions to ensure human rights action on the ground.

5. Address **gender equality** in PICTs by implementing the 14th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women Outcomes Statement, endorsed at the inaugural Pacific Island Forum Women Leaders Meeting, with a focus on women's economic empowerment, gender-based violence and gender-responsive climate justice; while continuing to promote women in leadership and decision-making; their role in addressing crises and disasters; and the importance of sex, age and disability-disaggregated data.

6. Advocacy for the ratification of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No.159), which provides better opportunities for persons with disabilities to have access to decent employment opportunities. Strong engagement with the Pacific Disability Forum and national Organisations of Persons with Dsabilities (PWD) to ensure the implementation of existing binding obligations under the Convention on the Rights of PWD, which many PICs have ratified.

7. Despite the existence of several global and regional agreements and commitments related to **NCDs,** there is a necessity for continued and more concerted and innovative implementation of whole-of-government multi-sector strategies and actions to address the complex and multifaceted drivers of NCDs.

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8. A regional approach for the procurement and increased awareness of the availability of HPV vaccines for cervical cancer, that includes an effective data and monitoring system, is critical for improving pricing and enabling evaluation of implementation and outcomes is critical.

9. Urgent and sustained response is required to address the region's **water and sanitation** issues. There is a need for more accurate data and information; strengthened local capacities to maintain safe, secure, appropriate and affordable systems and practices, paying particular attention to the needs of isolated communities and vulnerable groups and the role of women and girls; and strengthened communication, partnerships and utilisation of scientific understanding, citizen science and traditional knowledge of water resources in order to manage risks associated with water quality, overuse and extreme events. sector, and civic, religious and political leaders.

10. Increased investments, commitment and recognition is required to ensure the contribution of the region's cultures are appropriately valued and celebrated and that the contribution of physical education and sport is fully reflected in national and regional development frameworks.

Planet

11. Implementation of the Blue Pacific Ocean Report 2021 which, amongst other things, called for stronger coordination and collective management of **ocean initiatives** and engagement with development partners, while continuing to make progress in achieving the targets of SDG14.

12. Continued regional advocacy to seek the global commitment to decisive **climate action** that limits global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius together with continuing advocacy for the ground-breaking 2021 Pacific Islands Forum Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the face of Climate Change-related Sea-level rise.

13. Increased capacity, particularly amongst key national response agencies to improve **coordination with international and regional humanitarian partners and donor governments** in response efforts to disaster events in the Pacific region.

14. Strengthened partnerships for **energy security and resilience** in the region, including between SIDS to address issues of: Utilities Grid Readiness for High Penetration of variable renewable energy; financial and management mechanisms for the sustainability of outer island and remote rural electrification; **Land and sea transport decarbonisation** through non-motorised transport, E-mobility, etc; enhancing Independent Energy Regulation through the Office of the Pacific Energy Regulators Alliance (OPERA); strengthening the Productive use of Energy to Support Economic Growth and well-being; and the development of Pacific Renewable Energy Standards for Hurricanes and Natural Disasters.

15. Support for the development of national systematic management plans, systems and enforcement measures for solid waste management and marine litter prevention, management and clean up/recovery.

16. Strengthened efforts to increase **climate adaptation** and **biodiversity** knowledge and Pacific capacity for Pacific-led management of the region's climate adaptation and biodiversity, incorporating local and traditional knowledge and practice.

Prosperity

17. Support the outcomes of the Pacific Regional Debt Conference which included the need for more innovative and climate friendly revenue generating initiatives; increased public private

dialogue on SOE reforms; exploration of lessons learned on sustainable financing mechanisms to prevent a drain on fiscal resources; and the potential for multiple funding sources to be harmonised and aligned to members' needs.

18. Continued commitment to the implementation of the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework (2021-2030) which calls for a holistic approach to tourism development, management and monitoring.

19. Continued implementation of the Regional Sustainable **Fisheries** Roadmap and the Regional Longline Fisheries Strategy, noting the forthcoming updated report to Leaders on the independent review of the Roadmap's goal to increase economic returns from fisheries.

Means of Implementation

20. Implement Pacific Leaders' commitment to the Teieniwa vision to develop and maintain **anti-corruption** measurement tools and data within our SDG and national plan reporting and address implementation gaps in relation to SDG16 on peace, justice and strong institutions.

21. Development of **Innovation, Science and Technology** for and by the Pacific, which includes: accessible protocols for free prior, informed consent, intellectual property rights and access and benefits-sharing; a regional mechanism or organization to be the custodian of and facilitate open access to scientific knowledge; explicit and cross-cutting safeguards and protocols for moving to gender equality in all stages of innovation, science and technology, as well as for people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples; programmes that recognize and foster grassroots innovations; and environmental safeguards to ensure stewardship of the Pacific Ocean and its Islands.

22. Importance of **inclusive, transparent and accountable partnerships** that include civil society, private sector and development partners by: increasing the use and capacity of country systems in the delivery of development cooperation; enabling south to south cooperation and peer to peer learning across the Pacific; addressing an effective enabling environment and legislative and regulative barriers; and having a strengthened focus on systematic dialogue and engagement with all stakeholders in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development initiatives.

23. Freedom of information (FOI) should be strengthend in the Paciific in relation not only to free speech or media freedoms, but also access by the public to government information and services as well as information held about individuals by government agencies. FOI laws can contribute to openness and accountability, and help prevent and combat corruption, thereby enhancing good governance, e.g. accessing crucial government information such as the national budget or expenditures. Digitalization is a key means of innovation to enhance communication infrastructure and bureaucratic processes that makes it difficult to readily access such information. .

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Section 1: Introduction

1. The report tells our Pacific Development Story by providing a high-level view of where we stand in terms of strengthening our people, and identifies solutions to our challenges and vulnerabilities.

2. In this report, we continue to emphasize the importance of regional cooperation through the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, Boe Declaration on Regional Security, and Kainaki II Declaration on Climate Change.

3. Section 2 addresses the impact of COVID-19 on the region as well as outlines some of the measures introduced to curb its spread and address some of the challenges that have been encountered at the community, country and regional levels.

4. Section 3 describes the centrality of the Blue Pacific continent and the ongoing work to produce a 2*050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, which* reaffirms the region's commitment to harness the power of its collective resilience and leverage its shared political strength, human and natural resources in new and innovative ways, to address present and future challenges that will lead to transformative change for present and future generations.

5. Section 4 provides an update on the progress made in Pacific Voluntary National Reviews.

6. Section 5 is organized according to the 2030 development dimensions of People, Planet, and Prosperity and provides an update on progress made in the region across all seventeen SDGs as well as action taken by the region and its partners on the recommendations made in the 2020 Biennial Report.

7. Section 6 provides an update on frameworks and ongoing challenges related to Means of Implementation – Development effectiveness and partnership (AAAA, SAMOA Pathway, GPEDC).

8. Section 7 provides an overview of the recent review of the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration.

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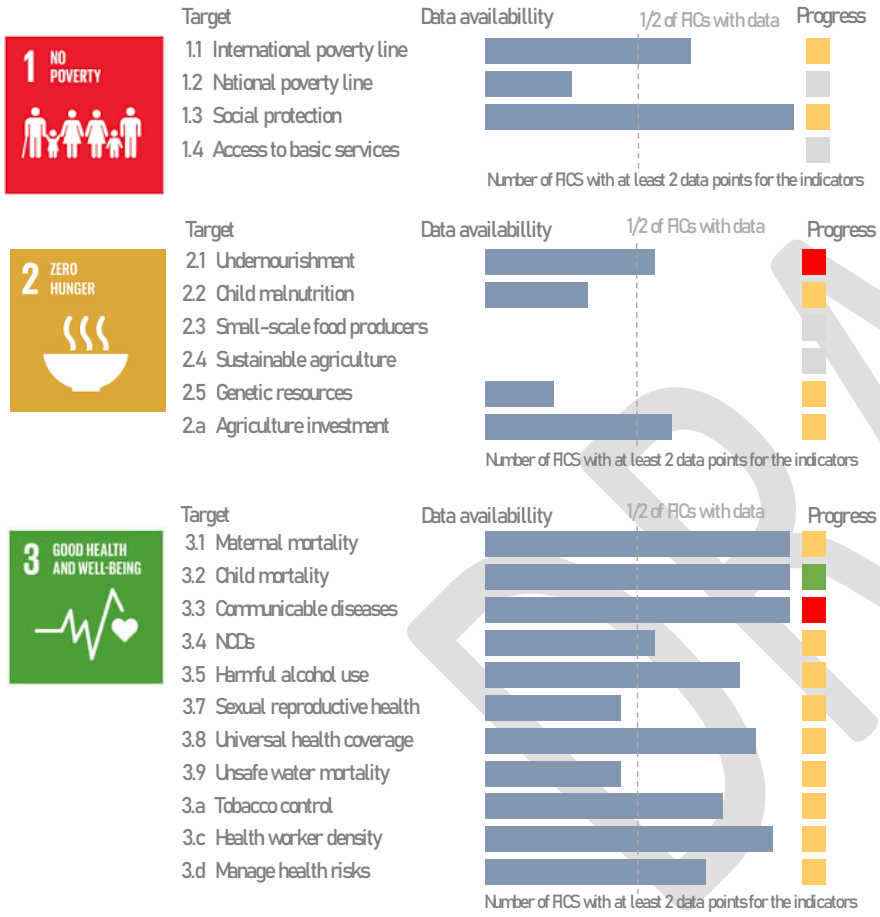
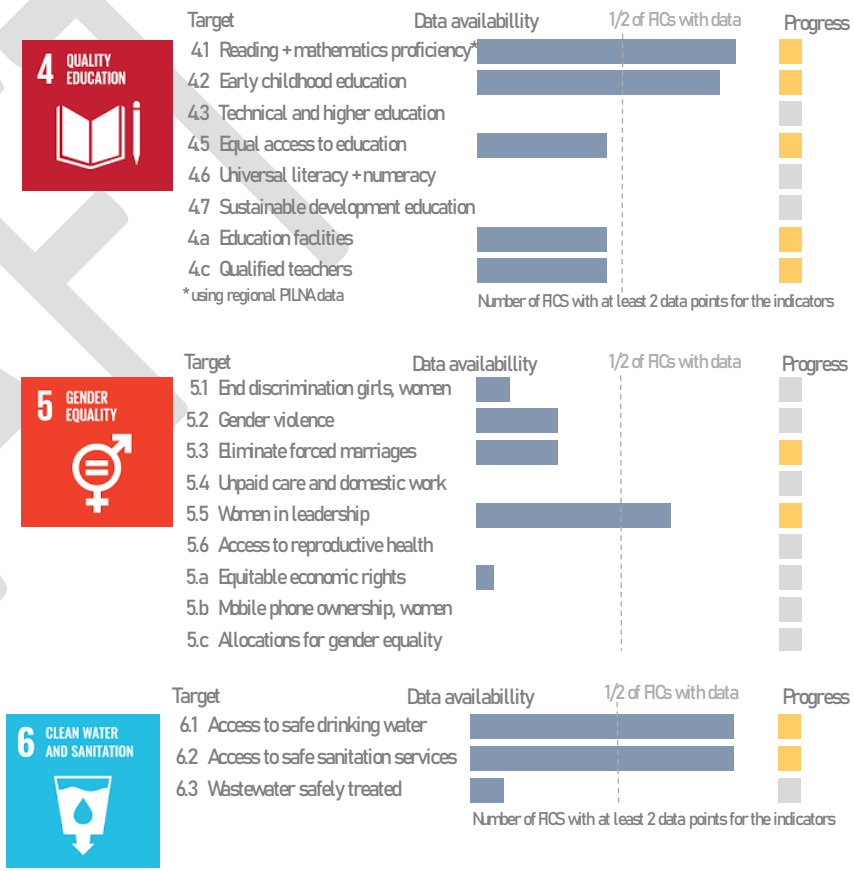
Data availability and progress against SDG Targets are based on the 131 SDG indicators in the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development

These graphs show the availability of indicator data in the 18 Forum members (including Australia and New Zealand), plus an assessment of progress against the relevant Target using a traffic light scale of red (worsening situation) to green (on track to achieve the 2030 target). These results are subject to constant change and revision as new data becomes available. Generally, two data points are required for a country to be judged as having data available. For some targets, however, only one value is necessary, for example, Yes/No indicators on the existence of a Strategy or legislation.





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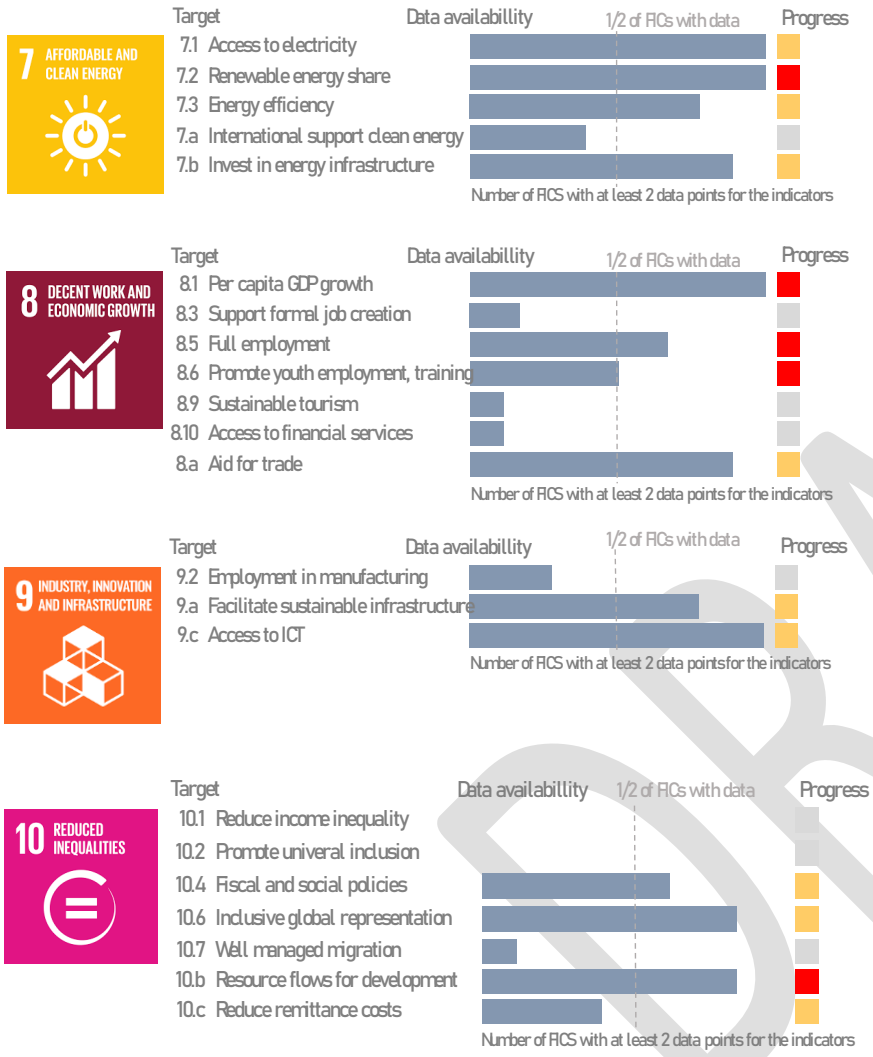
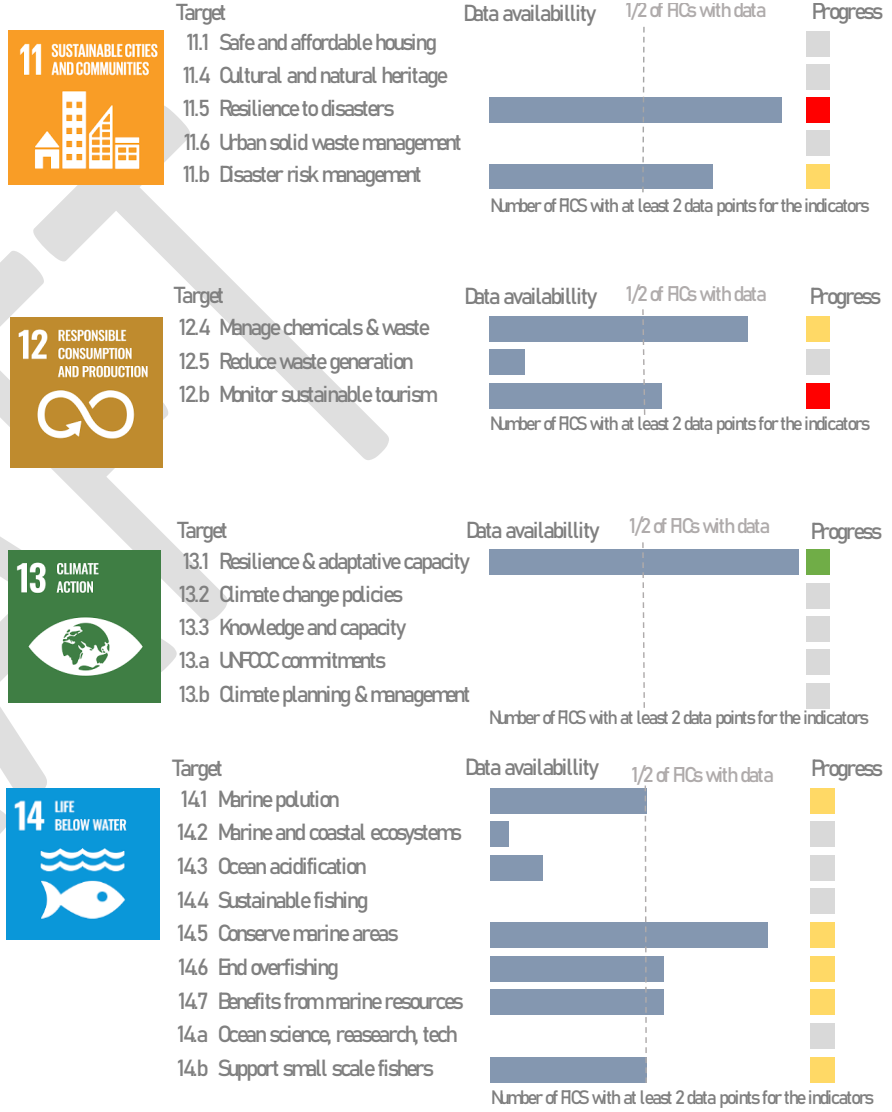

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
Target
Data availabillity
1/2 of FICs with data
Progress
7.1 Access to electricity
7.2 Renewable energy share
7.3 Energy efficiency
7.a International support clean energy
7.b Invest in energy infrastructure
Number of FICS with at least 2 data points for the indicators
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
Target
Data availabillity
1/2 of FICs with data
Progress
8.1 Per capita GDP growth
8.3 Support formal job creation
8.5 Full employment
8.6 Promote youth employment, training
8.9 Sustainable tourism
8.10 Access to financial services
8.a Aid for trade
Number of FICS with at least 2 data points for the indicators
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
Target
Data availabillity
1/2 of FICs with data
Progress
9.2 Employment in manufacturing
9.a Facilitate sustainable infrastructure
9.c Access to ICT
Number of FICS with at least 2 data points for the indicators
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
Target
Data availabillity
1/2 of FICs with data
Progress
10.1 Reduce income inequality
10.2 Promote univeral inclusion
10.4 Fiscal and social policies
10.6 Inclusive global representation
10.7 Well managed migration
10.b Resource flows for development
10.c Reduce remittance costs
Number of FICS with at least 2 data points for the indicators


11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
Target
Data availabillity
1/2 of FICs with data
Progress
11.1 Safe and affordable housing
11.4 Cultural and natural heritage
11.5 Resilience to disasters
11.6 Urban solid waste management
11.b Disaster risk management
Number of FICS with at least 2 data points for the indicators
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
Target
Data availabillity
1/2 of FICs with data
Progress
12.4 Manage chemicals & waste
12.5 Reduce waste generation
12.b Monitor sustainable tourism
Number of FICS with at least 2 data points for the indicators
13 CLIMATE ACTION
Target
Data availabillity
1/2 of FICs with data
Progress
13.1 Resilience & adaptative capacity
13.2 Climate change policies
13.3 Knowledge and capacity
13.a UNFCCC commitments
13.b Climate planning & management
Number of FICS with at least 2 data points for the indicators
14 LIFE BELOW WATER
Target
Data availabillity
1/2 of FICs with data
Progress
14.1 Marine polution
14.2 Marine and coastal ecosystems
14.3 Ocean acidification
14.4 Sustainable fishing
14.5 Conserve marine areas
14.6 End overfishing
14.7 Benefits from marine resources
14.a Ocean science, reasearch, tech
14.b Support small scale fishers
Number of FICS with at least 2 data points for the indicators

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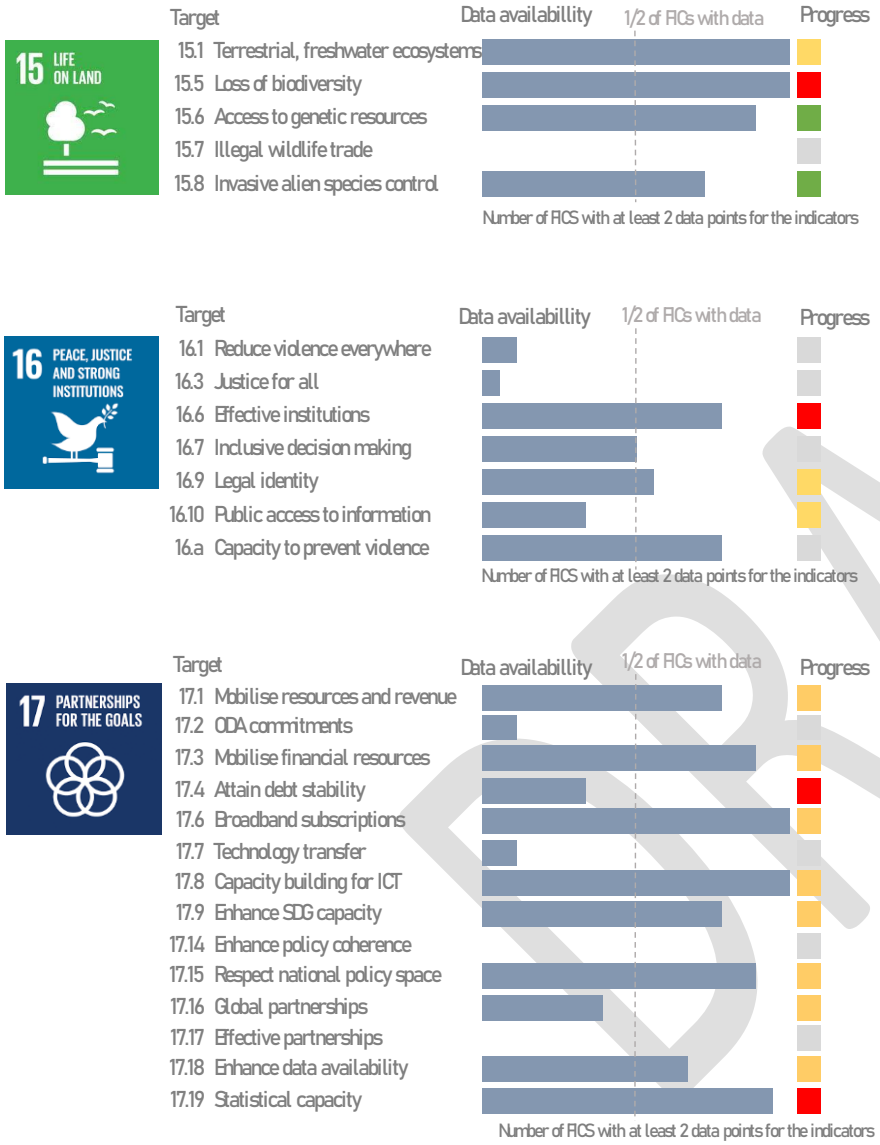

Legend

- Achieved or on track to achieve by 2030
- Some progress but acceleration required to reach 2030 target
- Moving away from the 2030 target
- Insufficient data or method to measure progress
- Number of countries with indicator data

Source: SPC

The Pacific is on track to achieve four Targets based on current indicator data. Some progress is evident in a further 50 Targets, but the rate of progress needs to increase in the period to 2030 if we are to meet the stated 2030 benchmark.

The Pacific is regressing against 13 SDG Targets. Some of this reflects the effects of the pandemic, but in many cases, the indicator data is not recent enough to record the full impact of COVID19 and we might reasonably expect more Targets to fall into this category as data is updated.

Progress against 44 SDG Targets remains unmeasurable, either due to a lack of baseline and current indicator values, or because the SDG Target itself does not have a clear benchmark. Sustained financial and technical support is required in the statistics space to ensure that the Pacific region can continue to improve the availability of timely and relevant data to monitor sustainable development.

Disclaimer: this assessment by Target summarises country data reported against the official SDG indicators. It should be noted that these indicators may not fully reflect the activities, programs, investments and achievements within Pacific countries and communities that support progress in these development areas. Analysis used national (total) values, and disaggregation by characteristics such as age, sex, and location was included only when explicit in the indicator title.

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Section 2: COVID-19 Impact and Response

9. The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization on 11 March 2020 and in 2022 continues to present a significant challenge for the Pacific region. The Pacific socio-economic impacts assessment report for 2021 highlights that the economic and social implications of COVID-19 are widespread.

10. Pacific Islands Forum leaders responded to the pandemic by invoking the Biketawa Declaration in April 2020 given the prioritisation of human security and humanitarian assistance under the Boe Declaration. This included the establishment of the Pacific Humanitarian Pathway on COVID-19 as the regional response mechanism and to ensure coordination among PICTs and regional and international development partners. It involved funding and support for medical and humanitarian needs, including national preparedness for vaccines.

11. At the time of this report, the region's vaccination rates showed that six PICTs had reached more than 80percent vaccination for the first and second dose. Five PICTs were still tracking below 50 percent vaccination rate with vaccine hesitancy, access to vaccines and logistical issues making it hard for citizens to get vaccinated.

12. As of June 2022, the pandemic had infected over 331,000 people across 21 PICTs and caused the death of nearly 2500 people living in the Pacific. While this infection rate is considerably lower than in other regions like Europe and Asia, the strain on already under resourced public health systems and essential services is catastrophic.

13. Health services were disrupted and the limited resources available for health were often redirected towards COVID-19 prevention, containment, and treatment. With lockdowns and isolation measures put in place, additional challenges were encountered in ensuring that the delivery and use of essential life-saving supplies reached not just the main islands and cities, but also to the outer islands and remote rural communities. This left many Pacific people unable to access other public health services. With the region already recording high Non-Communicable Disease(NCD) levels, COVID-19 has only heightened associated risks, potentially leading to increased mortality rates in some countries.

14. Domestic violence against women and children in the region increased significantly during the pandemic. PNG reported that 63 percent of women were subjected to physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. In Tonga, during the 15-day lockdown, Tonga's Women and Children Crisis Center documented twice as many family abuse instances. In Samoa, domestic violence had increased by 48 percent, according to the Samoa Victims Support Group (SVSG). And for Fiji, Government reported a 606 percent increase in calls to helplines during the lockdown period February-April 2020.

15. Sexual and reproductive health, mental health and psychosocial support measures were found to be inadequate. For example, surveys in the private sector, show that over 60 percent of small businesses have encountered negative mental health impacts. However, more recent reports suggest that mental health problems have reduced as businesses have stabilized[1].

[1] PTI Business Monitor, 2021

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16. Where communities lack access to clean water and have been further impacted by natural disasters, they face even more serious health problems. Access to health services is even more challenging for persons living with disabilities and the elderly.

17. The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified existing vulnerabilities faced by PICTs, the pandemic exposed the vulnerabilities of the Pacific food system to external shocks and exacerbated food security and nutrition challenges. Whilst initial concerns about the stability of national food stocks did not translate into acute food shortages, lockdowns and movement restrictions had some immediate food and nutrition security impacts, including through market and transport restrictions disrupting local food distribution (FAO, et al., 2021a).

18. UNICEF reports that the region is estimated to have 800,000 learners from early childhood education to the higher levels who would have experienced learning disruptions and delays. Education programmes were implemented online and through media such as TV and radio. Online learning was difficult in countries such as PNG, Fiji, Samoa, and Tonga, with high rates of children with impairments across all countries being the most affected.

19. With key industries impacted by COVID-19, a focus on Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes is recommended in addition to labour market policy reforms and programming to respond to shortages in areas such as agriculture, and value-adding in fisheries and aquaculture, ICT, construction and technical trades.

20. In 2020 tourism earnings represented significant declines for Fiji (84.8percent), PNG (72.9percent), Samoa (88.4percent), Solomon Islands (79.7percent) and Tonga (67.8percent) compared with 2019. In 2020, the tourism industry saw 150,000 workers lose their jobs in Fiji; Vanuatu reported a 70 percent loss and Samoa 26 percent.

21. The fisheries sector, with a decline in revenue and reduced activity of domestic fleets, has also been impacted by job losses and reduced income for individuals and their households. With the same seen for labour mobility, especially for countries where seasonal workers make up an estimated 6 percent for Samoa, 14 percent for Tonga and 8 percent for the Vanuatu workforce. Travel restrictions for those scheduled for overseas work programmes were seriously impacted, while for workers that were still on work schemes abroad, reduced hours meant reduced remittances for their families and children.

22. Although remittances for labour mobility may have been low, some Pacific countries reported that annual remittances increased for 2020 by 9.4 percent, 10.8 percent and 14.4 percent for Fiji, Samoa and Tonga respectively when compared to 2019. This is most likely from family support, networks and diaspora communities abroad seeking to assist families at home.

23. As part of response packages, all PICTs allocated special budgets and stimulus packages for health care, unemployment, business operations, social insurance and other assistance. Traditional social protection systems, social structures and community safety nets were also active in supporting communities and families experiencing difficulties.

24. In total 14 categories of social protection measures were implemented at varying levels across the region. Many were created during the pandemic to provide immediate and short -term assistance for the unemployed, elderly, informal sector and small business operators and students. Some countries

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offered more cover than others. This effort involved governments, CSOs, churches and community networks, alumni associations, and the private sector.

25. The pandemic has shown that innovative solutions and increased investments are needed to address social vulnerabilities and inequalities in the areas of health and wellbeing; economic recovery; education; employment pathways; inclusive social protection systems; sustainable livelihoods; and food systems as well as access to justice.

26. The negative impacts of COVID-19 on food security and nutrition in the region are further compounded by the effects of climate change and climate-related disasters. For example, the humanitarian response to Tropical Cyclone Harold in Vanuatu and Fiji was limited and cautious due to the COVID-19 threat. The impact of the 2019 measles outbreak in Samoa was further worsened by COVID-19 since 2020 and left the country's economy in a vulnerable state.

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Section 3: 2050 Strategy and Link to the 2030 Agenda and SDGs

27. At their meeting in 2019, Pacific Island Forum Leaders recognized that the region's existing vulnerability was seriously threatened by the escalating impacts of climate change and the intensification of geostrategic competition. They noted that securing the future of the Blue Pacific could not be simply left to chance, but required a long-term vision, a regionalism strategy, and most importantly a collective commitment to achieving the vision. Consequently, they agreed that a 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent would be developed.

28. Leaders tasked the Forum Secretariat to work closely with Members to develop the 2050 Strategy and accordingly the FOC Sub-Committee on the 2050 Strategy was established, and Fiji and Vanuatu were nominated as Co-Chairs by the Sub-Committee. In July 2020, the Sub-Committee endorsed the methodology for the development of the 2050 Strategy.

29. A 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent was endorsed by Forum Leaders at their 51st meeting in July 2022. It sets out the Leaders' vision for the region, values for Pacific regionalism, and Leaders' commitments to the region towards 2050. There are seven thematic areas with each having levels of ambition for 2050 which will be achieved through the following five interrelated strategic pathways.

30. There is close alignment between the intentions of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and those of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is a global plan of action for people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership. It also recognized the importance of working together to implement the 2030 Agenda within countries and at regional, sub-regional and global levels. Acknowledging that regional and sub-regional frameworks can facilitate the effective translation of sustainable development policies into concrete action at the national level.

31. The 2030 Agenda sets out 17 Sustainable Development Goals with 169 associated targets which were described as integrated and indivisible. Over 200 potential performance indicators were also identified for monitoring progress towards achievement by 2030. The targets were described as global in nature and universally applicable, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities. As a consequence, each Government was encouraged to set its own national targets guided by the global level of ambition but taking into account national circumstances.

32. While Pacific Islands Forum Leaders joined the rest of the global community in 2015 in committing to the 2030 Agenda, they determined to chart their own sustainable development pathway, calling for the SDGs to be contextualized to Pacific realities, with a regional set of targets and indicators that accounted for national priorities to jointly monitor the region's progress against the 2030 Agenda, the SIDS Accelerated Modalities for Action (S.A.M.O.A) pathway, the Framework for Pacific Regionalism and other key global and regional commitments, including the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration (PLGED). This decision by the Forum Leaders led to a Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development and 132 Pacific Sustainable Indicators to guide regional efforts and support countries in their efforts to meet commitments under the 2030 Agenda.

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33. The development of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, is further evidence of the commitment of Pacific Island Forum Leaders to chart their own sustainable development pathway, recognizing that "Securing the future of the Pacific cannot be left to chance, but requires a long-term vision, strategy and commitment"2 This commitment is not an abandonment of the 2030 Agenda commitments, but recognition of the need to refocus attention on the issues of paramount importance to the region and its people, with a longer-term horizon of 2050.

34. As can be seen below, there is a strong correlation between the seven Thematic Areas of the 2050 Strategy, their Levels of Ambition and the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals.

Thematic Area	**Level of Ambition**[3]	**Relevant SDGs**
Political Leadership and Regionalism	All Pacific Peoples benefit from Forum Leaders working together to safeguard and secure the Blue Pacific Continent, to achieve regional priorities through a united and cohesive political leadership that is supported by a responsive regional architecture and global partnerships aligned to the region's values and priorities.	**SDG16**: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.
		SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.
People-Centered Development	Effective regional cooperation and the inclusion of Non-State Actors to strengthen national efforts to ensure all peoples have access to affordable, quality education, health, sport and other services, while respecting the diversity of the region's faiths, cultural values, and traditional knowledge.	**SDG3:** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
		SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
		SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
		SDG6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
		SDG8: Promote sustained, inclusive economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.
		SDG10: Reduce inequality within and among countries.
		SDG11: make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
Peace and Security	A flexible and responsive regional security system, that respects national sovereignty, and which addresses climate change and the broad range of security threats, while contributing to global peace and security to ensure a peaceful, safe and secure Blue Pacific Region.	**SDG10:** Reduce inequality within and among countries.
		SDG16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

[2] Pacific Islands Forum Leaders, 2019 Communique

[3] The levels of Ambition language is currently still in draft.

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Thematic Area	Level of Ambition[3]	Relevant SDGs
Resource and Economic Development	Through increased regional integration, the region has a sustainable and resilient model of economic development, that includes enabling public policy and a vibrant private sector and others, to ensure expanded opportunities for employment, entrepreneurship, trade, and investment in the region.	**SDG 1:** End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
		SDG2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
		SDG8: Promote sustained, inclusive economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
		SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
		SDG10: Reduce inequality within and among countries.
		SDG12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
Climate Change	The region continues to play a leadership role in global climate action to ensure that Pacific People are resilient to the impacts of climate change and disasters and are able to lead safe, secure and prosperous lives.	**SDG 7**: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
		SDG11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
		SDG13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
Ocean and Environment	Effective regional coordination and cooperation on transboundary ocean and land-based environmental policy, regulatory and legislative measures to ensure all Pacific peoples to live in a fully protected Blue Pacific Continent.	**SDG14:** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
		SDG15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
Technology and Connectivity	Effective regional arrangements, partnerships and regulations to strengthen transport and ICT connectivity, within the region and globally, for the economic and social benefit of all Pacific peoples.	**SDG9**: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
		SDG10: Reduce inequality within and among countries
		SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

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Section 4: Voluntary National Review Progress in the Pacific

35. Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) are a key tool for accountability for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at both the national and global levels. VNRs provide an important opportunity for countries to share progress, experiences, lessons learned and challenges in implementing the 2030 Agenda. The preparation and consultation processes envisaged in producing VNRs are also valuable opportunities to involve their citizens in reporting on the implementation of the SDGs. It is also clear that in adopting the VNR process, countries are able to consider their existing policy, planning and implementation procedures and reflect on potential improvements for the future. This is especially important for members of civil society and the private sector who are important partners in the design, delivery and reporting on the national development agenda.

36. A total of 14 PICTs have presented voluntary national reviews since 2016, with Tuvalu being the most recent in 2022. Samoa is the only PICTs that has completed two VNR reports. In all cases, the timing for beginning the VNR process has been driven by individual national requirements, with most PICTs deciding to embark on the process to coincide with a review of an existing National development strategy/plan or when beginning the preparation of a new national development strategy/plan. In other cases, the VNR timing has been linked to the availability of new data following a national census or a new HIES. The VNR reports show that PICTs have built on the foundations of their existing national reporting processes while adding new and innovative elements.

37. While countries have chosen different methods for reporting depending on their national circumstances, all the reports outlined steps taken and ongoing processes to integrate and align where appropriate the 2030 Agenda and SDGs to national development plans and strategies. All countries included analysis and reviews addressing all SDGs and some countries also included a set of goals of their own choosing, based on national priorities. Some countries organized the SDGs according to nationally defined focus areas, while others utilized the 2030 Agenda's "5 Ps", People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnerships, to guide their national integration of the SDGs.

38. Leaving no one behind, considered as a key principle of the 2030 Agenda, was addressed by all countries, either in dedicated sections or in the reporting of progress on specific goals. Some of the groups mentioned as being at risk of being left behind include persons with disabilities, youth, victims of domestic violence and older persons. In their reports countries have identified approaches that will allow for targeted support measures to the vulnerable groups, or that focussed on achieving equal access and availability of services.

39. Through the VNR process, the majority of PICTs have showcased changes to the institutional arrangements for SDG implementation, including newly established mechanisms for coordination or adjusting existing frameworks. The VNRs are seen as a norm-building process and best practices identified can be replicated across other Pacific countries.

40. The VNRs have forced countries to focus on the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of an unprecedented amount of reliable administrative and official data while also focusing on the aspect of availability of disaggregated data. As a consequence of the VNR process, substantial efforts have been reported at the national level in assessing data availability, sources, methodologies, coverage, and dissemination. While addressing the identified gaps in data and

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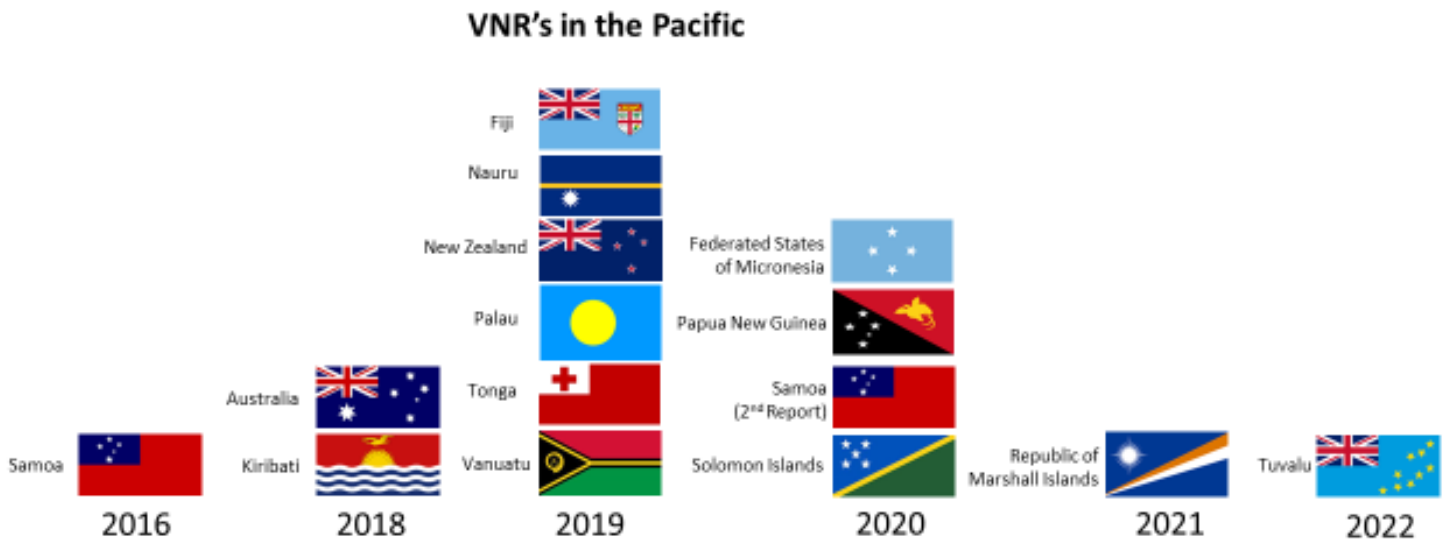
methodology, countries are actively looking for solutions that best fit their national context, including defining national targets and indicators.

41. The top three challenges highlighted by reporting countries include the lack of disaggregated data, the lack of capacity in data collection and management, and insufficient financial and technical support. Despite these challenges, countries have, to the best of their abilities, taken various measures to strengthen their statistical systems to meet the needs of follow-up and review, including: the establishment of clear governance structures for data and monitoring; the use of technology to strengthen data collection, analysis and dissemination; branching out to new data sources; involving stakeholders; and mobilizing resources through multi-stakeholder partnerships.

42. Overall, the VNRs have shown a strengthening of national ownership of the SDGs, promote transparency, inclusiveness and participation in reporting on the development priorities, and support more effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda.



Section 5: Regional progress, trends and challenges in achieving sustainable development

5.1 People

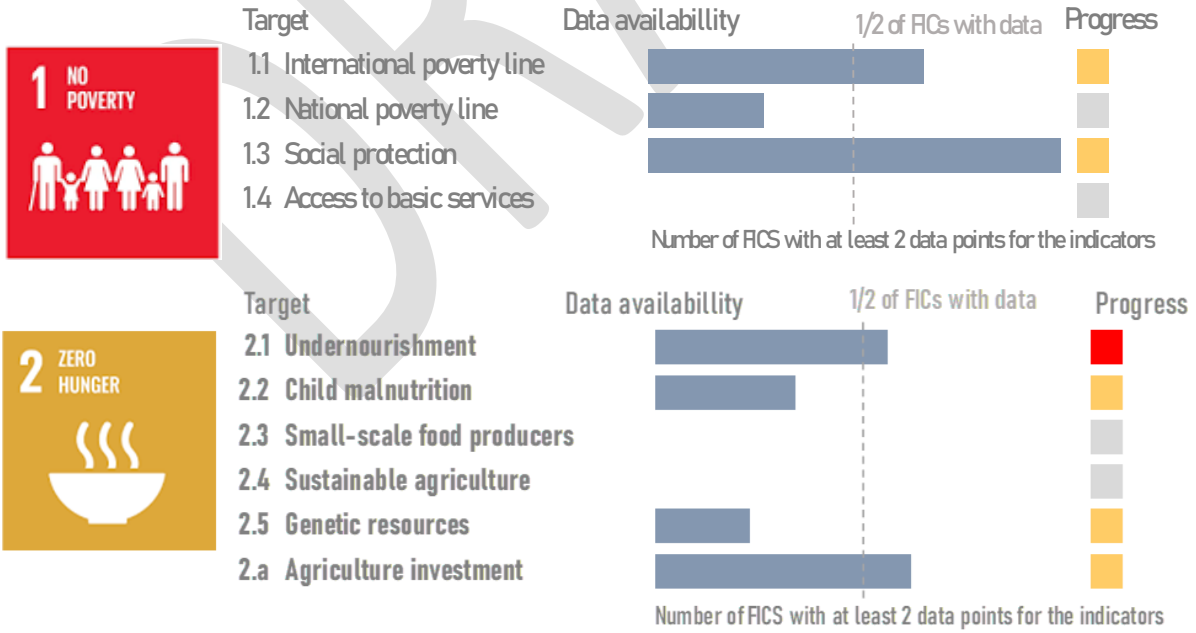
Link to 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent

The commitment to **people and leaving no one behind** under the 2030 Agenda is very closely aligned to the focus of the draft 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, where Pacific Leaders acknowledge that the health, wellbeing, human rights and equity for all Pacific people are at the heart of their deep connection to their community, natural environment, faiths, resources, livelihoods, cultures and traditional knowledge.

Data Availability

The following illustrates the availability of data across the Pacific subset of SDG Targets that are relevant to the People Pillar. The bars represent the number of countries having at least 2 data points for the indicators.

For 27 (50 percent) of the 54 targets identified below, more than ½ of FICs have at least 2 data points for the indicators. 13 targets have less than ½ of FICs with 2 data points and 14 targets don't have data available. Most concerning is SDG 5 on Gender Equality which has 9 targets, 5 of which have no data available and only 1 with more than half of FICs with 2 data points currently able to measure progress.



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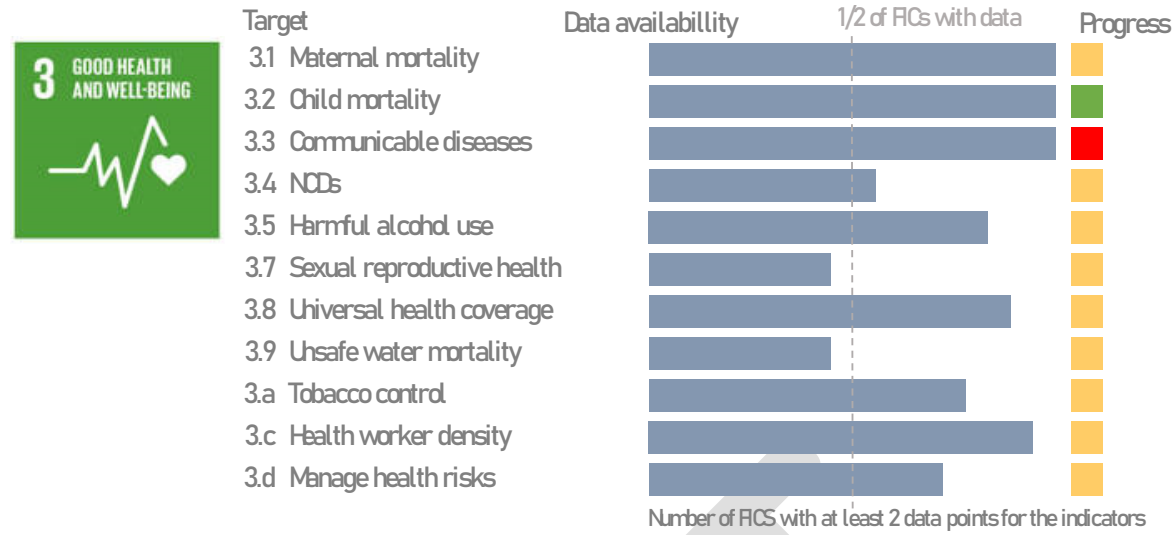
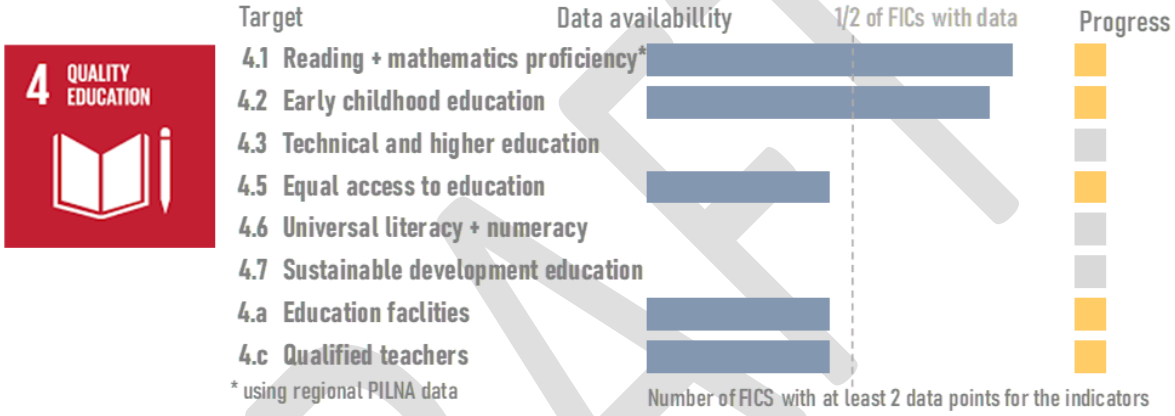
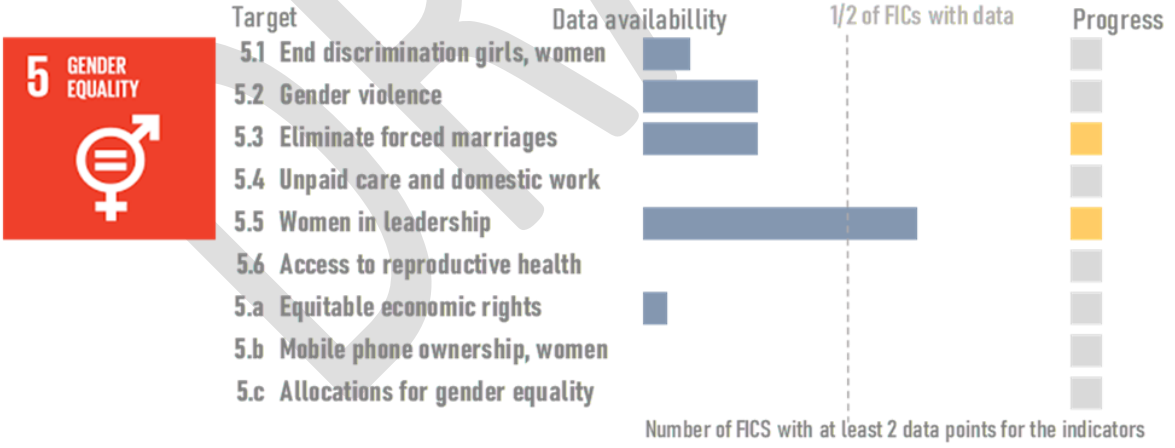
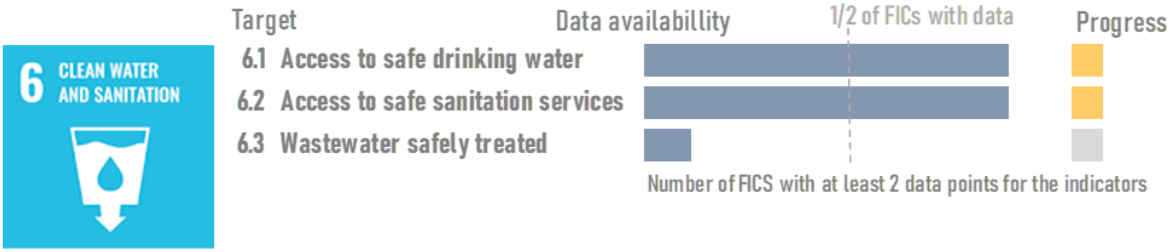

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
Target
Data availabillity
1/2 of FICs with data
Progress
3.1 Maternal mortality
3.2 Child mortality
3.3 Communicable diseases
3.4 NCDs
3.5 Harmful alcohol use
3.7 Sexual reproductive health
3.8 Universal health coverage
3.9 Unsafe water mortality
3.a Tobacco control
3.c Health worker density
3.d Manage health risks
Number of FICS with at least 2 data points for the indicators


4 QUALITY EDUCATION
Target
Data availabillity
1/2 of FICs with data
Progress
4.1 Reading + mathematics proficiency*
4.2 Early childhood education
4.3 Technical and higher education
4.5 Equal access to education
4.6 Universal literacy + numeracy
4.7 Sustainable development education
4.a Education faclities
4.c Qualified teachers
* using regional PILNA data
Number of FICS with at least 2 data points for the indicators


5 GENDER EQUALITY
Target
Data availabillity
1/2 of FICs with data
Progress
5.1 End discrimination girls, women
5.2 Gender violence
5.3 Eliminate forced marriages
5.4 Unpaid care and domestic work
5.5 Women in leadership
5.6 Access to reproductive health
5.a Equitable economic rights
5.b Mobile phone ownership, women
5.c Allocations for gender equality
Number of FICS with at least 2 data points for the indicators


6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
Target
Data availabillity
1/2 of FICs with data
Progress
6.1 Access to safe drinking water
6.2 Access to safe sanitation services
6.3 Wastewater safely treated
Number of FICS with at least 2 data points for the indicators

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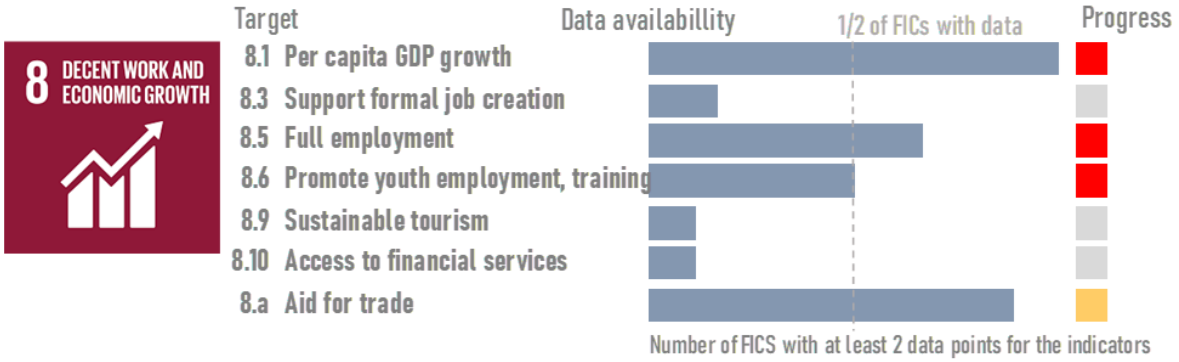

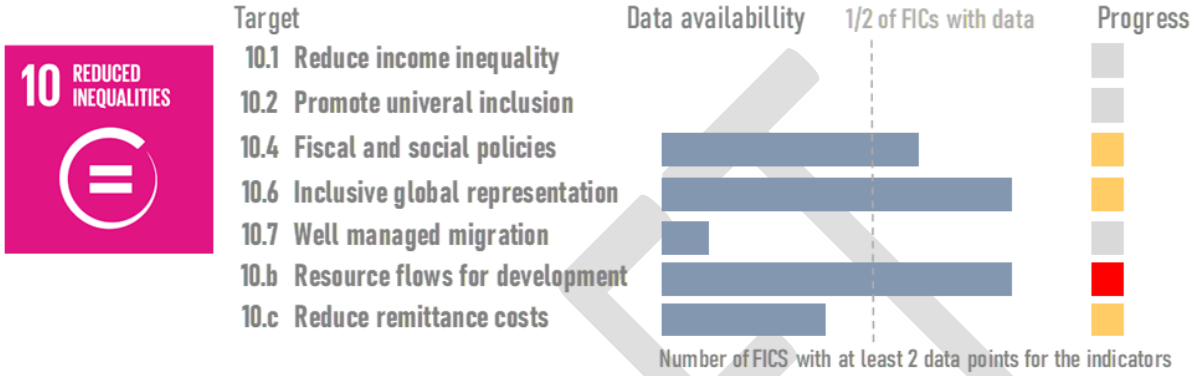

Progress against the 2020 Biennial Recommendations

The 2020 Biennial Report includes recommendations to address (i) vulnerability and increasing inequality; (ii) gender gaps in employment and high youth unemployment; and (iii) the intensification of multisector efforts to address the impacts of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). The recommendations are summarized as:

a. Review and, where appropriate, strengthen existing social protection and economic empowerment measures with a specific focus on the most vulnerable in the community;
b. Develop education policies and programs to promote disability inclusive education;
c. Mainstream an inclusive approach to ensure all development (including COVID-19 response and recovery) delivers shared benefits that include vulnerable groups;
d. Ratify the 2019 ILO Convention on Violence and Harassment in the World of Work (Convention 190), a new international law providing protection, particularly for women workers;
e. Strengthen economic opportunities for all employees, including women and youth, by advocating for decent work opportunities for all; by undertaking comprehensive reviews of employment policies; and by identifying opportunities for employment both within the Pacific Region, as well as in programs such as the seasonal work programs; and
f. Continue taxation, policy and legislation actions to change risk behaviours and effectively address NCDs. In particular, controlling the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children, restricting trans-fat in the food supply, prohibiting tobacco industry interference, and further raising taxes on unhealthy products in line with global recommendations.

Overall and despite COVID-19, some progress has been made across all six of the recommendations made in the 2020 report.

- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has heightened the need to introduce additional social inclusion and social protection measures across the region. Despite the existence of traditional forms of support, PICT Governments have increasingly recognized the need for formal social protection systems in the face of a crisis, including natural disasters and even pandemics, to

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help prevent deprivation, foster inclusive economic growth, create decent work and build resilience among their most vulnerable citizens. Various social protection schemes are available to cater for the unemployed, elderly, persons with disabilities, students and SMEs. Some countries offer more cover than others.

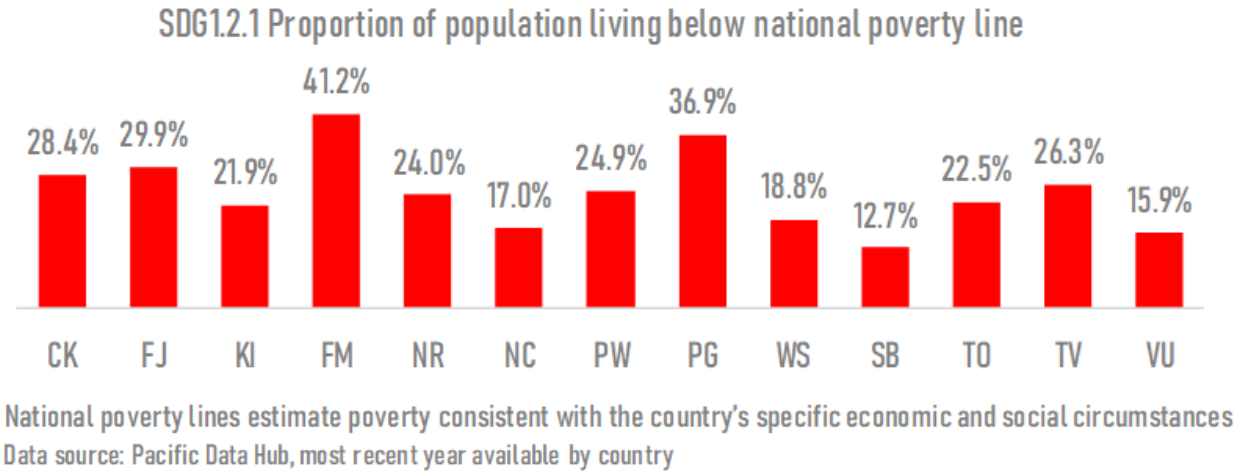
- As noted in this report, at the regional level, it is important to research social protection systems across the region within the context of climate change and disasters to revisit social protection systems to protect vulnerable groups; inform policy development; while recognizing the limitations and risks of current fiscal environments for PICTs.
- At this stage, Fiji is the only Forum member to have ratified the ILO Convention on Violence and Harassment in the World of Work (Convention 190). This took place on 25 June 2020. With respect to the issues of employment and importantly the high youth employment in the region, there remains significant scope for policy and programme action in the region.
- With respect to implementing measures to address NCDs. Twenty PICTs have maintained and/or implemented tobacco taxation measures, while twenty-one PICTs have now implemented alcohol taxation measures. However, in most cases, taxation is based on beverage type rather than on ethanol content as recommended by the WHO NCD best-buys. Fourteen. PICTs have adopted a taxation measure to discourage unhealthy food and beverage choices. In the policy area, the majority of PICTs have put in place policies to reduce population salt consumption and some have policy measures to restrict trans-fat in the food supply. Many also have endorsed food based dietary guidelines. A few PICTs have put in place policies to restrict the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children, while fourteen PICTs are putting in place policies to encourage the provision and promotion of healthy food choices in schools.
- Nineteen PICTs have national guidelines in place for the diagnosis and management of at least one of the four main NCDs (diabetes, heart disease, chronic respiratory disease and cancer) and have essential NCD medicines included in the national list of essential medicines. The majority also have smoking cessation support of some kind available. Regarding programmes related to infant nutrition, six PICTs have restrictions on the marketing of breast milk substitutes; five have a public hospital certified as a baby-friendly hospital, and fourteen have legislations to provide at least 12 weeks of paid maternity leave and breast-feeding facilities.
- Almost every PICTs has developed a national multi-sectoral NCD strategy and twelve PICTs have established a multi-sectoral NCD taskforce to oversee the implementation of their national NCDs strategy. Most PICTs have up to date adult NCD risk prevalence data and now have adolescent prevalence data and functioning systems for generating cause-specific mortality data on a routine basis. The majority of PICTs now routinely collect and report data on child growth. A number of PICTs have undertaken tax impact assessments on various products such as tobacco, alcohol, sugar-sweetened beverages, other discretionary foods, and fruits and vegetables.

5.1.1 Poverty in all its forms

43. In 2020 global extreme poverty rose for the first time as a result of the impacts of COVID-19[4], this has not happened since the financial crisis in the 1990s.

[4] UNSG Report 2021

44. Extreme and absolute poverty remains relatively low in the Pacific. However, an estimated one in four Pacific islanders are likely to be living below their respective national basic needs poverty line (BNPL). Poverty of opportunity is more concerning in the Pacific than extreme poverty[5], with limited opportunities for productive employment and the population growth rates continue to exceed the economic growth rates, which sees this problem worsening.



45. In the Pacific, disasters, including cyclones and tsunamis, have seriously impacted food security and led to a decrease in savings and increased difficulties in meeting daily expenditure. This combined with COVID-19, where many more people lost their source of income and had to rely on their little to no savings, has increased the vulnerability of communities with women and youth disproportionately at higher risk.

46. In 2020, more than 15,000 Pacific Islanders were engaged in seasonal worker programmes in Australia and New Zealand. High remittances into the Pacific, from migrants (temporary or permanent) have proven to be important in supporting families and keeping them out of poverty. In 2020, remittances into ten PICs (Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu) amounted to US$689 million, with Fiji receiving the largest sum, followed by Tonga and Samoa[6].

5.1.2 Strengthening Efforts to Reduce Inequalities across Pacific Populations

47. COVID-19 exacerbated already existing vulnerabilities in the Pacific with lockdowns in 2020 and 2021. Women were particularly impacted as they continued to disproportionately carry the burden of unpaid care and domestic work.

48. Unemployment, particularly among women and young people continues to be a major concern for the region. As a result of the pandemic, in 2020 overall unemployment rates went up by 3.7 % in the Pacific[7], with youth unemployment (prior to COVID-19) already averaging 23 % in the Pacific

[5] define extreme poverty
[6] https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-suva/documents/publication/wcms_712549.pdf
[7] Figure is excluding Australia and New Zealand

compared with the global average of 13%. The main reasons for high youth unemployment rates are low economic growth, high population growth and skills mismatches.

49. Women make up nearly 80% of Pacific small businesses. Even with little national impacts from infections, stringent COVID-19 lockdown measures, closure of schools and social distancing have had an extended supply-side shock on many businesses.

50. Female headed households and teenage mothers are especially vulnerable and tend to be concentrated in the poorest deciles. In some societies, teenage mothers face discrimination and exclusion. Women are generally most responsible for home care and also dominate positions in the nursing profession, in some cases making up more than 80% of the nursing workforce. This makes them more vulnerable to diseases.

51. In the Pacific, 15% of people have some form of disability many of whom are marginalized and often excluded and unable to access essential services such as water and sanitation and health and education services. Less than 10% of all children with disabilities in the region attend school, compared to 70% of children who do not have a disability. Reports show that the rate of unemployment for persons with a disability in the region ranges from 50% to 90%.

5.1.3 Expanding Social Inclusion and Protection

52. ADB's Social Protection Indicator data estimates an average social protection spending (pre-pandemic) amounting to 6% for Pacific countries[8] with PICTs exhibiting great variations in social protection coverage. Australia and New Zealand lead the course by providing at least one area of social protection coverage to all their populations whilst observations across 10 Pacific countries show coverage between 58.1% to 2.1%.

53. The need for social protection has intensified, with the virus impacting the most vulnerable more intensely. Response to the pandemic generated the largest mobilization of social protection ever seen globally, targeting not just the health of people but also the jobs and income that they depended on[9]. While general progress has been observed in the Pacific region's campaign against poverty, challenges remain acute as natural disasters continue to affect the disaster-prone region, and government spending on social protection, health and education continues to lag behind the expected benchmark.

54. Social protection in the Pacific has been predominantly traditional and informal. Traditional forms of social support, as provided by the clan and extended family structures, have always been important in supporting the most vulnerable members of society and those affected by personal and natural disasters. COVID-19 has led to people reverting back to traditional trading systems that do not require cash exchange. Despite these forms of support, PICT Governments are increasingly recognizing the need for formal social protection systems to help prevent deprivation, mitigate disaster impacts, foster inclusive economic growth, create decent work and build resilience among their most vulnerable citizens.

[8] https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/758046/sdwp-080-covid-19-social-protection-asia-pacific-costs-2020-2030.pdf

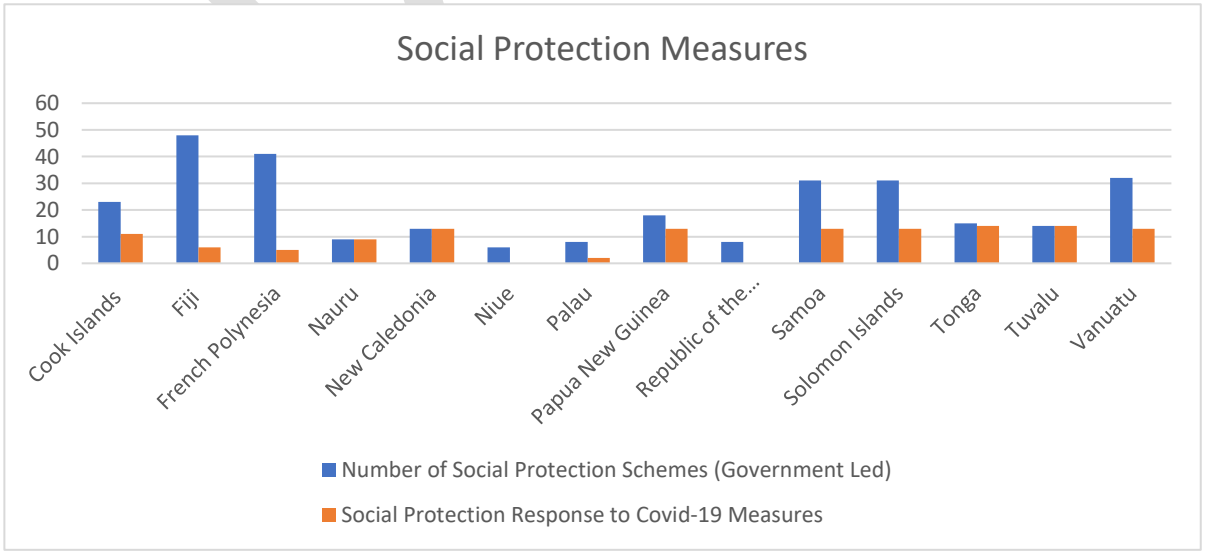
[9] ILO Social Protectino Report 2020-2022

55. PICTs have developed a range of social protection programmes to support vulnerable, disadvantaged or marginalised groups within their populations. They include: increasing the minimum wage; increasing existing poverty alleviation allowances; instituting or increasing regular financial support for persons living with a disability or their carers; introducing bus fare concessions for the elderly; a support fund for orphaned children in need; an insurance scheme to provide cover for loss of shelter through accident or fire; instituting or raising the amount for non-contributory social pension schemes for elderly persons without a source of income; legislating a contributory provident fund for workers in the informal economy (Solomon Islands); temporary support for populations affected by natural disasters such as cyclones, earthquakes and volcano eruptions; various job training/skill training including business training to help transition social protection beneficiaries to self-employment; distributing seedlings, poultry and livestock upon request; and providing unconditional (or conditional) 'cash transfers'[10].

56. Despite the growing number of initiatives, PICTs generally have limited experience in delivering formal social protection activities. In creating an inventory of non-contributory social protection programmes, UNICEF Pacific found that the scale and scope of social protection initiatives, which include cash grants, subsidies, free access to education and health services among others, vary widely across the Pacific region. Universal child allowance systems are in place in the Cook Islands and Nauru while larger Pacific nations such as Fiji provide more complex targeted programmes.

CSW65 MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLES INTERVENTIONS, PIF, 2021[1]
In three Pacific countries (Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) work is ongoing to ensure marketplaces in rural and urban areas are safe, inclusive and non-discriminatory, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. This includes women's involvement in market vendor associations as members and presidents, so they are part of the decision-making processes determining how markets operate, how they are built and the ways they are managed.
Gender-responsive institutional reforms were undertaken for the advancement of women and gender mainstreaming. The Republic of the Marshall Islands National Gender Mainstreaming policy has seen the review and revision of legislation and policies across government to include gender-responsive procedures and practices. Samoa has made gender analysis a requirement in all aid project proposals and Fiji has designated gender focal point positions across sector ministries.
Socio-Economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19 in the Pacific Region, June 2021, CROP Taskforce (Working draft report as of July 07th 2021 – CROP SEIA Taskforce) provides recommendations for inclusive social protection systems that the Taskforce will support for implementation in consultation with countries.

57. The population is geographically dispersed in the Pacific, which creates service delivery challenges, particularly to rural and remote islands. However, technological developments provide opportunities to overcome some of these difficulties.



[10] Beijing25+ Report

Source: World Bank and ADB Report, data as of April 2020 on countries' implementation of social protection response measures.

58. At the regional level, it is important to research social protection systems across the region within the context of climate change and COVID-19 to inform policy development, recognising the limitations and risks of current fiscal environments for PICTs and revisiting social protection systems to protect vulnerable groups.

UNDP in partnership with ILO and UNICEF are embarking to undertake a comprehensive review of national social protection systems in some Pacific Island countries, this will involve an in-depth analysis of:

- the coverage (existing social protection programmes) of vulnerable groups, including children, working-age population, herders, elderly, domestic workers, and migrants.
- the country's current and future challenges, including the social and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- the level/gaps in coverage to the extent to which they respond to the country's present and future needs and international social security standards.
- Rapid costing of the introduction of the national social protection floor (unemployment, maternity protection, child and family benefits, sickness, occupational injury and survivorship, old age benefit);

The objective of the research is to enable dialogue of social protection policy and programmes for the vulnerable with Pacific Island Governments by building evidence and engaging with constituents, to make recommendations to the Governments regarding:

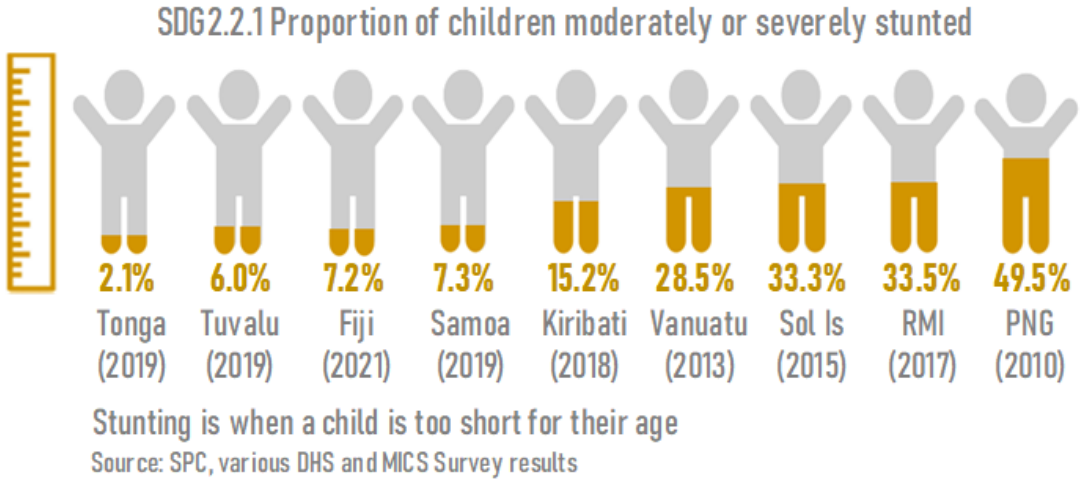
- Improvements in the effectiveness (coverage and adequacy), efficiency and sustainability of the social protection system, including options to extend coverage to the most vulnerable
- Support the governments developing a social protection intervention including financing strategy.

5.1.4 Addressing Food Security

59. There are multiple immediate and long-term challenges to ensuring food security in the Pacific. They include: climate and other environmental pressures; availability of scarce, fertile and arable land; limited access to land; overexploitation of oceanic resources and native forests; pollution; population growth; urbanization; and aging agricultural and fisheries workforces.

60. In the Pacific, dietary diversity is typically low, and consumption of fruits and vegetables is well below World Health Organization (WHO) recommended intakes of 400 grams per day. The Minimum Dietary Diversity score (proportion consuming foods from five or more food groups) among children 6 to 23 months of age ranges from 9.3% in Kiribati to 53% in Tonga (FAO, et al., 2021a).

61. The ten countries with the highest adult obesity prevalence in the world are PICTs (WHO, 2021b). At the same time, rates of childhood stunting and micronutrient deficiencies (including iron



deficiency anemia) in women and children remain of serious concern in a number of PICTs (FAO, et al., 2021b; WHO, 2021a), resulting in a triple burden of malnutrition.

62. There are also issues of food insecurity linked to sea-level rise, warmer ocean temperatures, changing rainfall patterns, and increasing incidence and severity of extreme weather events. These are already impacting on Pacific ecosystems, water resources, agricultural production, fisheries, and critical food chain infrastructure, as well as increasing agricultural and aquatic biosecurity threats (SPC, 2021a).

63. Coastal ecosystems and fisheries are critical to nutrition and livelihoods across the Pacific, providing a primary or secondary source of income for up to 50% of households (Farrell, et al., 2020; SPC, 2021b). Supply chains of locally-produced perishables (especially fruits and vegetables) are particularly affected by disasters, with reduced supply and higher prices (FAO, 2020b). Fish supply in the Pacific has been also impacted temporarily by these COVID-19 related measures, particularly due to irregular shipping schedules between islands (FAO, 2020c; FAO, 2020e). These impacts have had implications for access to healthy diets. Most PICTs produce less than 65% of their dietary energy supply domestically.

64. Food import volumes into PICTs have been steadily increasing since the mid-1990s, when trade liberalisation policies were widely embraced by the region's governments (Farrell, et al., 2020). A macro analysis of the agricultural import dependency for Fiji, Marshall Islands, Palau, Samoa, Tonga, and Tuvalu showed worrying overall market and trade vulnerabilities, with high vulnerability to global price fluctuations, depending on countries' domestic production (WFP, 2020).

5.1.5 Securing the Health and Well-Being of all Pacific People

65. The NCDs crisis remains a significant burden on Pacific Island populations and health systems. They affect life expectancies, health-care costs and economic development. At least half of the adult population in the Pacific are overweight and/or obese and childhood obesity is well recognised as a major concern. In 10 of the 14 PICTs, more than 40 percent of adults over 18 years of age are obese. Diabetes affects one in six adults in the region. In several PICTS, one in every four adults is affected (IDF, 2021).

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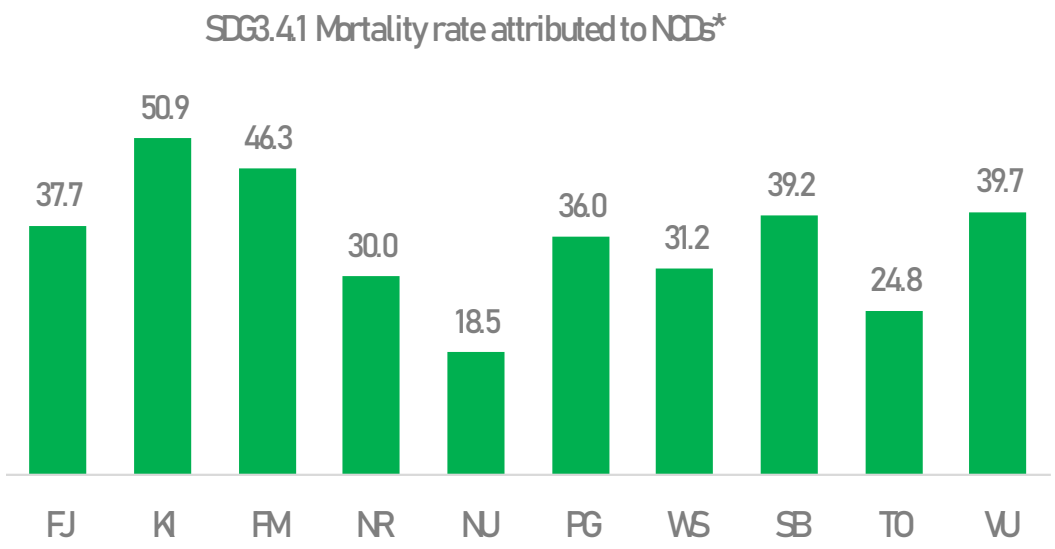

*Probability a 30-year-old would die before their 70th birthday from cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, or chronic respiratory disease

Data source: Pacific Data Hub, most recent year available by country

66. PICTs have a substantial burden of cervical cancer caused by sexually transmitted Human Papilloma Virus. For example – Melanesia has been classified as a region that has one of the highest incidence rates of cervical cancer in the world, with 33.3 cases per 100,000 females per year.

67. There is recent evidence that climate change has direct implications for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR). Climate change increasingly affects the health of vulnerable populations, including maternal and fetal health. Research has shown that air pollution and temperature extremes adversely impact birth outcomes, including, but not limited to: changes in the length of gestation, birth weight, stillbirth, and neonatal stressing unusually hot temperature exposures.

68. Harmful social norms related to customs and gender roles mean that women and men are exposed to different health risks, with these factors contributing to an increased risk for women, girls and other marginalized groups. Being primary caregivers within their household, women also face the increased responsibility of providing care to family members with NCDs and disabilities, generating additional stress and pressure on their own health.

69. The Pacific region is also experiencing a double burden of malnutrition with both overweight/obesity and undernutrition being significant issues. Undernutrition includes poor growth and stunting in young children, and micronutrient deficiencies such as anaemia, vitamin A deficiency and other issues in various population groups.

70. With respect to implementing measures to address NCDs, almost every PICTs has developed a national multi-sectoral NCD strategy and twelve PICTs have established a multi-sectoral NCD taskforce to oversee the implementation of their national NCDs strategy. Most PICTs have up to date adult NCD risk prevalence data and now have adolescent prevalence data and functioning systems for generating cause-specific mortality data on a routine basis.

71. The majority of PICTs have national guidelines in place for the diagnosis and management of at least one of the four main NCDs (diabetes, heart disease, chronic respiratory disease and cancer) and have essential NCD medicines included in the national list of essential medicines. The majority also have maintained and/or implemented tobacco taxation measures, while twenty-one PICTs have now implemented alcohol taxation measures. Fourteen PICTs have also adopted a taxation measure to discourage unhealthy food and beverage choices. Some PICTs have put in place policies to restrict the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children, while fourteen PICTs are putting in place policies to encourage the provision and promotion of healthy food choices in schools.

5.1.6 Education and Human Development

72. COVID-19 as well as natural hazards called upon the importance of increasing resilience in education systems through a transition that could involve a whole eco-system approach that includes the necessary enabling factors of policy, resources, supportive infrastructure, capabilities (human and systems) and how this leverages ongoing efforts relating to teacher quality and professionalism. In addition, supporting the transition to blended learning will require partnerships and engagement beyond the education sector. Over half of the countries in the region have developed and/or reviewed teacher professional standards in the last decade. The challenge comes in the implementation of such systems and how they are used for the continuous development of the profession.

73. Investments in child health and wellbeing build the foundation for productive adulthood and cohesive communities and societies, strengthening a country's future workforce and economy. Ensuring that all children, including the most vulnerable, have the best first chance in life is a well-founded way to stabilize individuals, communities and societies over the long-term. Early childhood development requires a comprehensive approach to policies and initiatives for children from birth to 5 years of age.

74. An effective ECD strategy starts with core sectoral investments and subsequently works to build synergies across structures and sectors. Although major inputs are expected from both the health and education sectors, the contribution of other ministries to ECD is equally important. Budgetary allocations, social welfare grants, protective services, birth registration, access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene, mobility, equality and functional infrastructure are all critical and should be linked with each other.

75. The agenda for education in the Pacific is changing to recognize the increasing need to develop non-cognitive skills in young people to respond to changing communities, labour markets and the broader impacts of climate change on the region.

76. Further work is required on curriculum review, including TVET and post-secondary curricula along with measures to ensure the relevant teaching approaches to both the Pacific student and the curriculum content are developed and supported. It may be necessary to identify the essential skills and training required to be able to respond to emerging labour markets and needs. A gap analysis may help to map out where countries are currently at in terms of incorporating climate-change, DRR, GEDSI, and culture/traditional knowledge.

77. Education for Sustainable Development in the Pacific, whilst being cognizant of its base in Climate Change as well as Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience, is underpinned by understanding and approaching from a cultural and traditional knowledge lens.

78. Development of regional SDG4 benchmarking, was endorsed by the Pacific Heads of Education Systems (PHES) in July 2021. This is to accelerate the efforts towards collecting and monitoring key education data to assess progress towards SDG4. The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) highlighted that for children aged 7-14 years numeracy skills are poorer than reading skills in this age group in every country, noting however that this survey has been administered in five Pacific countries to date. Where sex disaggregated data is available, the data also suggests that more females than males are displaying foundational skills.

79. Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (PILNA) administered by the SPC Education Quality and Assessment Programme (EQAP) in 2018 focusing on the numeracy and literacy proficiency skills of Year 4 and Year 6 students. PILNA essentially provides a measurement of regional standards based on a common scale. This gives the Pacific region valid and reliable results to inform on the improvement of student learning outcomes over time. A new round of PILNA started in 2021.

80. The results of PILNA 2018 show that overall achievement in numeracy has improved across the Pacific between 2015 and 2018, with higher proportions of students in both Year 4 and Year 6 reaching higher proficiency levels. Regionally, 83 percent of Year 6 students were performing at or above the expected minimum proficiency level for year 6, with more girls than boys performing at levels above that minimum threshold. Approximately 71 percent of Year 6 girls are meeting or exceeding minimum literacy proficiency expectations, compared to only 55 percent of Year 6 boys.

81. A new round of PILNA started in 2021, and an interactive PILNA report will be launched on International Literacy Day in September 2022. The PILNA results will be very valuable to policy makers and development partners in understanding the impacts of the pandemic on education service delivery in the region.

82. Recognizing the critical role of Pacific languages for quality learning, PILNA was administered by SPC in 10 different languages to 15 PICTs. The 2018 assessment covered more than 40,000 students and 2000 teachers from 926 schools and with the involvement of more than teachers and education officials in the development, administration and coding of the assessment.

83. Pacific SIDS are promoting Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in 2020-21 and developed teaching and learning resources on this topic, with support from UNESCO and the Government of Japan, in partnership with USP Institute of Education, Government of Tonga, and Conservation International. These online open educational resources were made available to 15 PSIDS for adaptation and utilization.

84. The Pacific Regional Education Framework (PacREF) 2018 – 2030 aligns specifically with SDG 4, the commitment to quality, contextual education is found in Priority Area 1: Quality and Relevance which includes the "Review, develop and resource inclusive curriculum that is grounded in culture, language and identity, as well as being aligned to country circumstances, and that supports a holistic approach to learning."

5.1.7 Empowering women and advancing gender equality

85. Pervasive gender inequality remains a key barrier to social stability, economic progress and health and well-being across the Pacific. Progress continues to be hampered by cultural and traditional

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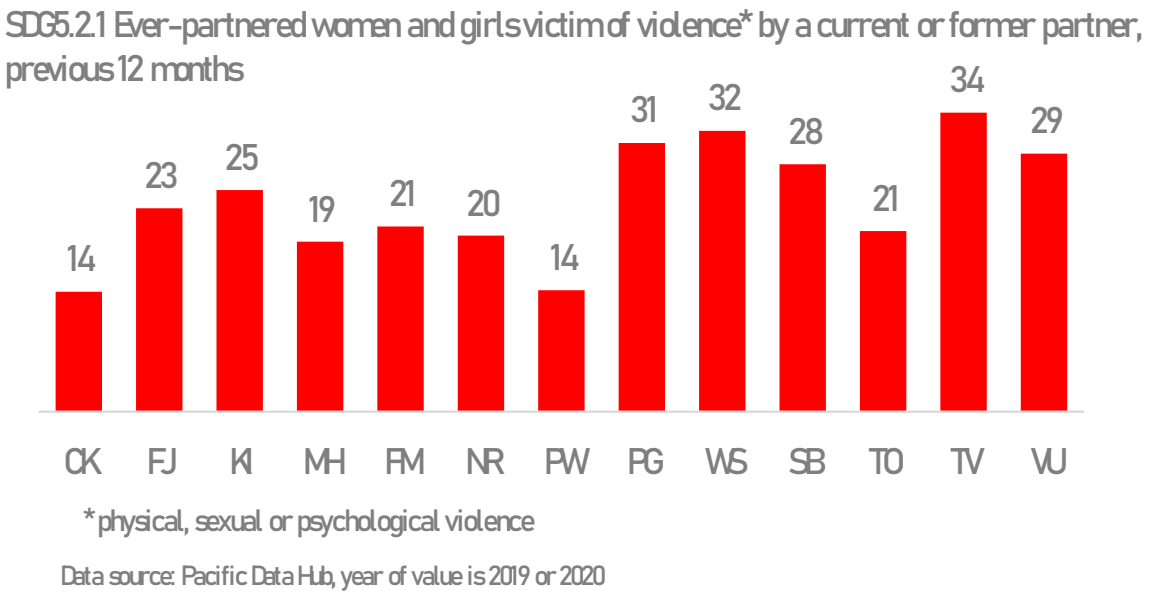
norms and systematic weaknesses such as the absence of disaggregated data by gender, age, location, access to justice, and inadequate legal and policy frameworks.

86. Numerous studies have attributed the high prevalence of violence against women to cultural and traditional norms within the Pacific. The Pacific region has some of the highest prevalence of violence against women in the world, almost double the global average. Women and girls with disabilities are 2 – 3 times more likely to face physical or sexual abuse.

87. Violence against women and girls takes many different forms in the Pacific. These include intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence, non-partner sexual assault, sexual exploitation and trafficking, and harmful practices such as bride price and accusations of sorcery. Prevalence of these types of violence is high in the region; in most countries, it is much higher than the global average of 35 percent.1 National research shows the rate of lifetime experience is high in Tonga (79%), Samoa (76%), Kiribati (73%), Fiji (72%), Vanuatu (72%) and Solomon Islands (64%).



88. In all PICTs, women commonly undertake non-paying work, including subsistence agriculture, as well as unpaid household and caregiving work. Women are also heavily involved in lower earning informal sector work such as marketing agricultural and fisheries produce, and other types of micro-enterprise. Women in urban areas are more likely to be in secure paid employment than rural women. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs most of which make up the informal business sector. At the same time, many women entrepreneurs have managed to demonstrate their resilience by pivoting their businesses online and through digital channels to adapt.

89. A 2021 study by the Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative (PSDI) across 14[11] Pacific Island countries found that more women are holding leadership positions in business. According to the study, the average representation of Pacific women as board of directors is 21 percent compared to the global average of 17 percent. Thirteen percent of women hold CEO positions compared to the global

[11] Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, RMI, FSM, Nauru, Niue, Palau, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

average of 4.4 percent and 11 percent of women are Board chairs compared with the global average of 5.3 percent.[12]

90. There is a strong commitment from Pacific governments to advance human rights issues such as gender equality and social inclusion in the region, as reflected in the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) by most countries in the region. However, there is a need for Pacific governments to ratify more of the other nine core UN human rights treaties, especially the two main covenants, where ratification is still low, compared with global averages. At the regional level, there is still strong collective commitments to the PLGED and the Revised Pacific Platform for Action and Women's Human Rights (PPA). At the national level, almost all countries have adopted gender policies and strategies, including gender-inclusive disability policies.

91. The 2021 PLGED review notes that the approach to advocating the Pacific's common aspirations to gender equality is not as coordinated as in other areas such as climate change, nor are gender equality perspectives and impacts incorporated in the collective actions in other priority sectors. It highlights that the revitalisation and repositioning of the Declaration, as one of a number of issues focused on regional policy frameworks endorsed by Pacific Leaders and Ministers, should ensure it is a critical part of the continuum of priority frameworks in a coherent and transparent way to bring both focus and clarity to the regional gender equality agenda.

92. There is a strong commitment from Pacific governments to advance human rights issues such as gender equality and social inclusion in the region, as reflected in the high ratification of the core nine human rights conventions/treaties including the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). At the regional level, there is still strong collective commitments to the PLGED and the Revised Pacific Platform for Action and Women's Human Rights (PPA). At the national level, almost all countries have adopted gender policies and strategies, including gender-inclusive disability policies.

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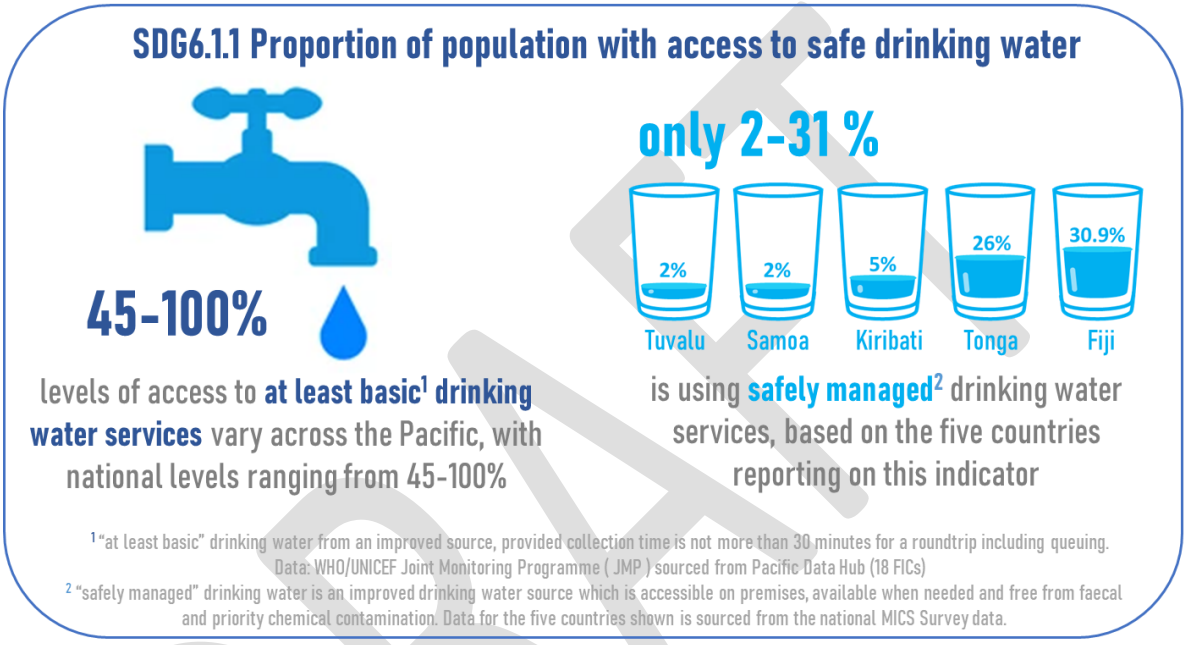
94. Across the Pacific Women's representation in parliament currently stands at approximately 14.3percent with only two women heads of state. In 2022 the first meeting of Women Leaders was held as an oversight and governance mechanism for gender equality in the region. The meeting does not replace the Triennial Conference of Pacific Women but introduces more regular discussion among a wider group of leaders to strengthen political accountability for advancing gender equality, women's empowerment and leadership.

[12] *Leadership Matters: Benchmarking Women's Business Leadership in the Pacific* https://www.pacificpsdi.org/assets/Uploads/PSDI-LeadershipMatters-Web3.pdf]

5.1.8 Access to safe water and sanitation

95. The world is not on track to achieve SDG targets 6.1 and 6.2, to do so will require a quadrupling of current rates of progress in safely managed drinking water services, safely managed sanitation services, and basic hygiene services. Pacific communities endure some of the lowest levels of access to safe water and sanitation of any region in the world and are disproportionately impacted by the water-related impacts of disasters and climate change.



96. Data gathered by Pacific Island Countries and Territories[13] indicate that approximately half of the Pacific population lives without access to basic drinking water facilities, and more than two thirds live without access to basic sanitation[14]. These whole-of-Pacific numbers remain relatively stagnant compared with other global regions that have seen significant improvements in access over the past decade.

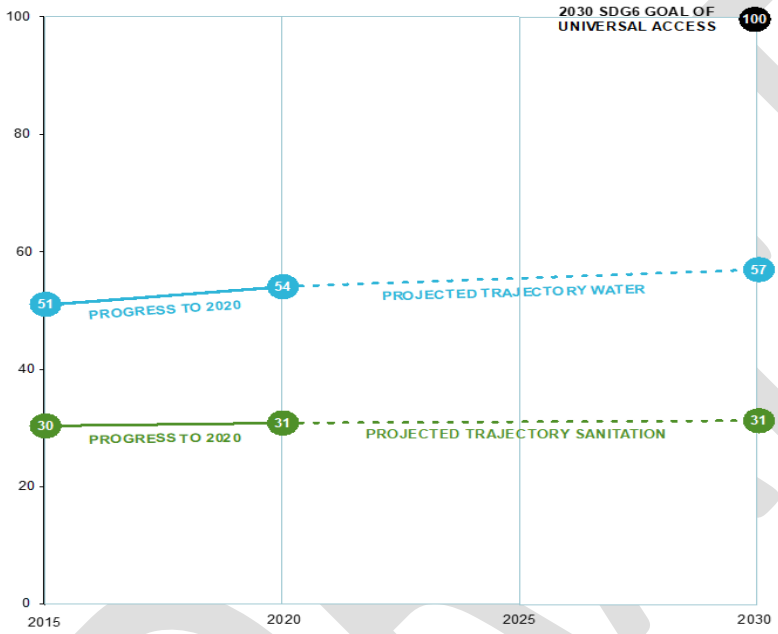
97. Pacific statistics are heavily driven by the region's significant rural and outer island populations that live outside the reach of reticulated water services and face serious water security challenges compared to their urban counterparts. However, urban services are also under pressure, from increasing population, underinvestment in infrastructure, pollution and water quality impacts, and limited human, natural and financial resources. Water sources face threats from increasing demand, excessive water abstraction, coastal erosion, increased seawater infiltration and droughts. Essential drinking water and wastewater infrastructure are also at risk of increasing extreme weather events, sea level rise and flooding.

[13] Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) data (2020) compiled by UNICEF and WHO (2021)

[14] JMP defines "basic" services as: drinking water from an improved source, provided collection time is not more than 30 minutes for a round trip, including queuing; and use of improved sanitation facilities that are not shared with other households.

98. While every country and territory in the region is active in improving the water security of their vulnerable communities, in many cases these efforts are not keeping pace with the pressures of population growth and movement, disaster setbacks and the accelerating impacts of climate change.

99. For example, since 2000 the population of Solomon Islands and PNG have increased by 275 thousand and 3.1 million respectively[15]. However, only 138 thousand and 659 thousand people gained access to basic sanitation leaving a total of over 2.5 million without basic sanitation facilities. If current trajectories persist, millions of Pacific islanders will continue to endure water insecurity for generations to come, with profound implications for public health, socio-economic development, food and energy security, the environment and human rights.



JMP data (2020) indicate that the Pacific as a whole (JMP Oceania sub-region, including PNG) is significantly off track in meeting the 2030 SDG6 Goal of universal access to at least basic sanitation [data source: WHO and UNICEF 2020]

[15] JMP: Progress on Household Drinking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene: Pacific Region and Pacific Islands

5.1.9 Youth perspectives in Policymaking

100. The population of the Pacific region is around 11 million people, more than half of whom are under the age of 25. The youth population is growing rapidly, placing huge demographic pressures on basic resources and core services such as education, health and justice. Key youth populations are more often marginalised from mainstream development efforts, including young people not in education; employment and training (NEET youth); young women; rural youth; young people with disabilities; and youth who are discriminated against because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

101. Working Young people are often employed in informal jobs without benefits and protections, and they are over five times less likely to secure jobs compared to older workers (PYDF, 2015). Young women face additional insecurities and barriers due to the significant gender wage gap as well as occupational segregation. Further, young women spend considerably more time doing unpaid care and household work than young men (Azzopardi and Clarke 2019).

102. There is a large number of youth from the Pacific region engaged in labour mobility schemes with New Zealand and Australia. As a result of the pandemic, the two receiving countries have had to prioritise their own citizens. The uncertainty surrounding the future of these initiatives will worsen the region's youth unemployment crisis. At the same time, significant progress made in education in the last five years, particularly regarding expanding opportunities in basic education – primary and lower secondary education. Adolescents and youth are increasing their levels of educational attainment; however, there are long-term concerns about the quality of education at all levels and the preparation it provides for adult life.

103. Youth unemployment and lack of decent work constitute arguably the most significant problem facing young people, with young women being disproportionately impacted. PICT economies are simply not generating the quality and quantity of work opportunities required to meet the demands of young educated people. Additionally, COVID-19 has forced people to go back to growing their own food, however, the majority of the young people who have lost jobs live in urban areas where there is limited access to land.

104. All PICTs have national youth policies, although the degree of implementation of these policies varies across the region, while several of them are out of date. Youth ministries and departments take responsibility for developing youth policies, however, as a cross-cutting issue, it requires committed implementation from several ministries and departments. Two areas of specific focus for the future and where real attention is already being paid are: (i) youth entrepreneurship and (ii) youth activism

Youth Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Analysis

105. The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a massive disruption of labour markets that have had disproportionate impacts on youth employment. Given that youth have relatively limited skills and experience, they face higher rates of unemployment than adults regardless of the sector and business cycle. Young people are also more likely than adults to work in less-secure, lower-wage, lower productivity employment, frequently with limited legal rights, social protection, and representation[16].

[16] See ILO: Tackling youth unemployment in Asia and Pacific report

106. The lack of access to business support services and intermediation services such as entrepreneurship programmes, quality career guidance, counselling and public employment services are also important structural constraints for an efficient transition of young people to the labour market. Many governments in the Pacific are actively engaged in policies to create productive employment opportunities and to create an enabling environment for youth to grow and attain the skills they need to do well in work and in life, as well as to either start a business or find suitable employment.

107. Based on evidence from the ILO rapid assessments of the impacts of COVID-19 on workers and enterprises and SMEs in particular, in the Pacific Island countries, most enterprises have difficulty operating, especially youth-led businesses in the informal sector. Their limited ability to counterattack the involved risks, business environment, and afford the costs due to the slowed down business activities face the complex problems of the lack of funds and liquidity, skills, employees, customers, and technology.

108. The role of young entrepreneurs and youth-led micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) have steadily gained an essential role as a driving force for fuelling employment, business innovation and green and inclusive growth. It is essential to understand the environment in which young entrepreneurs and MSMEs operate - the so-called entrepreneurial ecosystem – to improve business outcomes and facilitate job creation.

The Power of Youth Activism in Progressing Sustainable Development

"I don't need to remind you of the reality of vulnerable communities. If you are here today, you know what climate change is doing to us. You don't need my pain or my tears to know that we're in a crisis.

The real question is whether you have the political will to do the right thing. To wield the right words and to follow it up with long-overdue action."

Brianna Fruean, Opening Ceremony of the World Leaders Summit at COP26 in Glasgow, 2021.

Climate activists from the Pacific during a protest action in Glasgow. Photo from a 350 Pacific Twitter post.

109. At their meetings in July, Forum Foreign Ministers and Forum Officials Committee "recognised the importance of engaging Pacific youth from Forum Members in climate change projects and advocacy in the lead up to COP 26 and requested the Secretariat to invite all Forum Members to nominate youth representatives that can contribute to this work" through the establishment of the PIF SG's Pacific Young Climate Leaders Alliance. Members of the alliance have participated in climate change advocacy including COP26. Youth have also contributed to resilience building activities in the countries.

110. Networks of youth, including the Pacific Youth Council, the Pacific Sexual and Gender Diversity Network, 350 Pacific, and Young Entrepreneurs Councils have benefited through donor and development partner support. These networks have been effective in consolidating a unified voice, facilitating representation of their key populations in policy dialogue and decision-making and have ensured their needs and issues are included in development agendas, including regional and international fora for climate change, gender, health and others. This progress is encouraging, but their sustainability remains fragile and will be dependent on development assistance for some time.

111. The importance of youth in a vulnerable situation such as climate change remains to be an area to be addressed through human rights as a focus for climate change actions. OHCHR conducted a flagship regional activity at the end of 2020 bringing together about 30 youth climate change ambassadors, human rights defenders and youth representative from the Pacific to discuss issues relating to the human rights mechanism and using it to amplify youth and climate change advocacy work.

112. The youth 2030 agenda was discussed specifically to allow youth participants to strategically link the human rights-based approach to key areas of inclusion and participation in politics and climate action. Migration and climate induced migration through ensuring dignity, safety, and human rights of migrants are protected in the context of climate change also featured in the workshop. Understanding the Intersectional approaches to climate vulnerability reduction where tools for human rights, gender & climate change was important for youth participants. Action plans from participants were presented as part of the way forward which highlighted the need for Human Rights and Climate Change education in schools and community awareness. The regional workshop was to prepare for youth engagement in national policy and legislative reform processes and in the UN Climate Change Conference [COP] hosted by the United Kingdom in 2021. Several youth participants attended COP 26.

113. In March 2022, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) awarded a range of youth-led initiatives building climate change resilience, involving 10 groups across the region. The recipients, chosen from more than 60 applicants for small grant support, were from Fiji, Niue, the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Supported by the Government of Australia through the Pacific Resilience Partnership, the projects cover a wide range of sectors including preserving traditional practices, strengthening mental resilience including through art, addressing water security, waste management and sustainable agro-forestry.

114. The youth-led initiatives have been successfully implemented in March which is a testament to the critical role youth plays in resilience actions building in their own communities. The activity also demonstrated evidence of partnership, leadership, community engagement and ownership taking by our young people.

115. Sabrina Taman, a representative from Santo Sunset Environment Network in Vanuatu whose project is on preserving traditional practices said that “this project on revival of traditional agricultural practices in remote communities is important for our climate resilience, particularly involving high school students to record traditional agricultural practices as a means of adaptation.”

116. Kim Allen, a grant recipient and Member of the PIF SG’s Young Climate Leaders Alliance from Papua New Guinea in acknowledging the initiative said, “thank you for believing in young people across the Pacific region and creating the platform allowing young people to be part of the climate change solution by implementing community youth-driven projects.”

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117. Avikesh Jai Kumar, Bula Pulse Youth Network from Fiji successfully implemented 'You Matter – Strengthening mental health resilience through empowering youth leadership Project. He emphasized that "Youth leadership in building community resilience is important and opportunities like this are crucial in advancing youth agenda, empowering youth leadership and providing young people the platform to become positive instigators of change to help build stronger and healthier communities."

118. PIFS supported these youth-led initiatives as part of facilitating coordinated and scaled-up efforts by stakeholders at the regional, national and sub-national levels towards effective implementation of the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP). It builds on the energy and innovation of young people as well as their outreach to their communities with a view to empower future champions of the FRDP and PRP.

5.1.10 Acknowledging Culture as an enabler for Sustainable Development

119. The nexus between culture and sustainable development has gained clear recognition for its role in supporting continuity, engagement, employment, resilience, and well-being, while also revealing the value of culture in our societies and the weight of the cultural sector in advancing social and economic development at the global and national levels.

120. Culture has a clear impact on the achievement of critical SDGs notably quality education (SDG 4) through cultural and artistic education in both formal and informal settings as well as technical and vocational education and training in the cultural sector; decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) by supporting job creation in the creative economy; reduced inequalities (SDG 10) by fostering social inclusion within communities including vulnerable groups; sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11) by strengthening the resilience and social fabric of urban areas; or climate action (SDG 13) through innovative and community-based adaptation and mitigation solutions.

121. A new Pacific Regional Culture Strategy (PRCS) 2022 – 2032 is currently being finalised. It serves to provide policy guidance for the Pacific states to assist them in the development of the culture sector and the promotion of Pacific cultures. The PRCS 2022 – 2032 was presented to Culture Ministers in April 2022 and captures five priority areas of: Policy Frameworks, Heritage, Wellbeing, Innovation and Statistics.

122. The Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework 2021-2030 draws clear links between culture and tourism and sets out priorities to support the development and promotion of cultural tourism. There are many examples of positive contributions from community-based sustainable tourism across the region. UNESCO/SPTO Roundtable on Building Sustainable Tourism for Green/Blue Livelihoods in Pacific Island Countries and Territories is under preparation to highlight good practices in this area.

123. UNESCO has partnered with IUCN Oceania to define the Regional Pacific Action Plan for World Heritage in 2021. This partnership, which also included the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Pacific Community (SPC), and the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO), emphasised the relationship between culture and the environment in the Pacific.

124. There have been positive developments towards curriculum integration of Pacific languages and culture at The University of the South Pacific. This includes UU204 Pacific Worlds, a compulsory undergraduate course and the establishment of pre-degree and degree programmes in Pacific Vernacular

Language and Pacific Language Studies including Fijian, Hindi, Cook Islands Māori, Tongan & Niuafoʻou, Vagahau Niue, Vanuatu Language Studies, and Rotuman. At the postgraduate level, the Pacific studies programme offers a broad Pacific coverage of culture and development issues and topics while the postgraduate diploma in Fijian Language Studies is a focused study of Fijian language and culture.

125. A review of the Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture was undertaken by SPC in 2021 to build on the original intent of the festival and take into account the changing context and development landscape resulting from the impact of COVID-19 and other challenges. The scope of the review included the festival delivery model, its benefits and role as a driver for cultural innovation, financial model and issues relating to copyright and intellectual property rights.

126. In the Ocean space, SPC has established the Pacific Community Centre for Ocean Science (PCCOS). Through PCCOS is now leading a UN decade-endorsed programme: "Pacific Solution for a healthy blue continent: an Integrated Ocean Management approach to sustain livelihoods today and into the future". One of the 3 pillars of this programme is to integrate Pacific traditional knowledge, culture, and wisdom to support inclusive, consultative decision-making and improve decision support systems.

127. The Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner established the Pacific Ocean Alliance in 2019 which is currently setting up a working group on traditional knowledge and its connectivity with the Ocean. Country level development includes: the Vanuatu Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Culture Authority, progress towards the Fiji National Culture Policy and National Cultural Statistics Framework and the development of a National Heritage Bill in Fiji and Kiribati.

128. Culture is integrated into almost every aspect of daily life in the Pacific, with the close linkages between people and their environment shaping a uniquely Pacific way of life. The wealth of traditional knowledge and skills is a source for developing more sustainable and resilient communities but the safeguarding of this intangible cultural heritage is under threat due to the effects of climate change and the high levels of youth migration.

129. The Pacific has been a pioneer in terms of integrating cultural heritage and traditional knowledge into public policy to reduce the risks of natural hazards and in post-disaster evaluation, generating a dynamic in other countries.

5.1.11 Sports for Sustainable Development

130. The sports sector has been largely absent in the SDG reporting processes to date and a significant commitment will be required from many stakeholders at the national and regional levels to realise the vision of the full inclusion of sport, physical activity and physical education in these policy spaces.

131. The contribution of sport to national development and well-being have long been recognized, but it is only more recently that sport is playing a more prominent role as a tool for achieving sustainable development. Sport epitomizes Pacific regionalism and the values of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism through its celebration of culture, diversity, inclusivity, equality, and human rights. A number of PICTs have already included references to sport in their Voluntary National Reviews, and national sports policies have been introduced in a number of PICTs including Kiribati, Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea.

132. While the sports sector was brought to a stand-still during the onset of COVID-19, sport also emerged as a symbol of hope and resilience with pivotal examples in the Cook Islands National Games that went ahead in 2020, and the representation from Oceania at the postponed Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

133. Sport was tabled at meetings of Forum Economic Ministers, Pacific Sports Ministers, and Pacific Islands Forum Leaders during the quadrennium, starting with a dedicated side-event titled 'A Stronger Pacific. Powered by Sport.' hosted by the President of Nauru alongside the Forum Leaders Meeting in 2018. Through coordinated regional action, national governments can be supported to overcome capacity constraints and capitalize on the powerful contribution of sport to Pacific Island people.

Recommendations

People

1. A comprehensive analysis of employment options across the region, that considers in detail the labour and training situation in each PICT, in particular for youth; the role of education and training initiatives such as TVET; the potential intra-regional employment opportunities that include issues linked to visas and work permits; and the economic and social costs and benefits of labour mobility schemes for both source and recipient countries.

2. Expanded research and development and capacity in the region to design, implement and monitor formal social protection systems to best address the impact on vulnerable communities in the region most impacted by climate change, disasters and health pandemics/epidemics.

3. Strengthened existing youth councils and networks and ensure representation of the diversity of young people in the public sphere to bring about a better tailored, needs-based and human rights-based approach in dealing with development issues in the region.

4. Continued advocacy and programmes for the promotion, respect for, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, without distinction of any kind to ensure that no one is left behind. Ratify core international human rights treaties and establish or strengthen national mechanisms for reporting and follow-up (NMRFs); review legislation and national policies to align them with the international standards as required under the core human rights treaties; and take concrete steps towards the establishment of National Human Rights Institutions and/or to strengthen existing National Human Rights Institutions to ensure human rights action on the ground.

5. Address gender equality in PICTs by implementing the 14th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women Outcomes Statement, endorsed at the inaugural Pacific Island Forum Women Leaders Meeting, with a focus on women's economic empowerment, gender-based violence and gender-responsive climate justice; while continuing to promote women in leadership and decision-making; their role in addressing crises and disasters; and the importance of sex, age and disability-disaggregated data.

6. Advocacy for the ratification of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No.159), which provides better opportunities for persons with disabilities to have access to decent employment opportunities. Strong engagement with the Pacific Disability Forum and national Organisations of Persons with Dsabilities (PWD) to ensure the implementation of existing binding obligations under the Convention on the Rights of PWD, which many PICs have ratified.

7. Despite the existence of several global and regional agreements and commitments related to NCDs, there is a necessity for continued and more concerted and innovative implementation of whole-of-government multi-sector strategies and actions to address the complex and multifaceted drivers of NCDs.

8. A regional approach for the procurement and increased awareness of the availability of HPV vaccines for cervical cancer, that includes an effective data and monitoring system, is critical for improving pricing and enabling evaluation of implementation and outcomes is critical.

9. Urgent and sustained response is required to address the region's water and sanitation issues. There is a need for more accurate data and information; strengthened local capacities to maintain safe, secure, appropriate and affordable systems and practices, paying particular attention to the needs of isolated communities and vulnerable groups and the role of women and girls; and strengthened communication, partnerships and utilisation of scientific understanding, citizen science and traditional knowledge of water resources in order to manage risks associated with water quality, overuse and extreme events. sector, and civic, religious and political leaders.

10. Increased investments, commitment and recognition is required to ensure the contribution of the region's cultures are appropriately valued and celebrated and that the contribution of physical education and sport is fully reflected in national and regional development frameworks.

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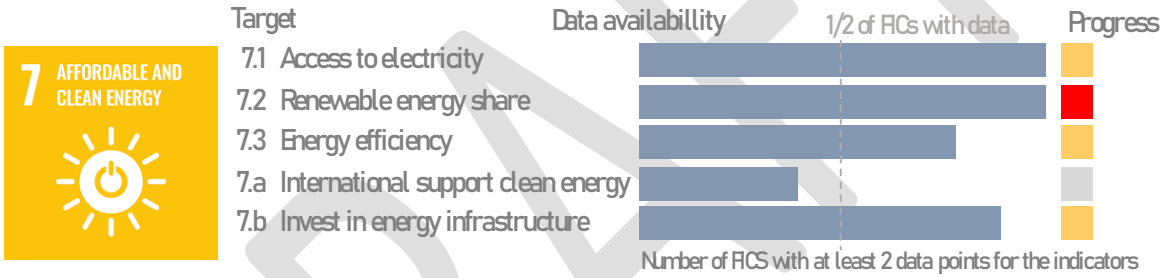
5.2 Planet

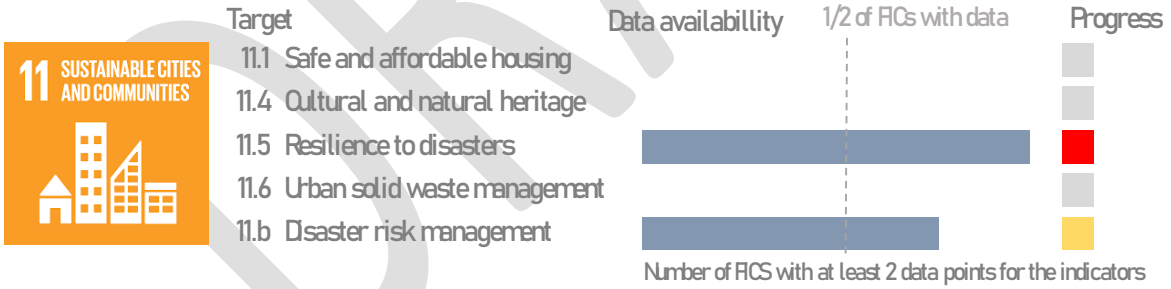
Link to 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent

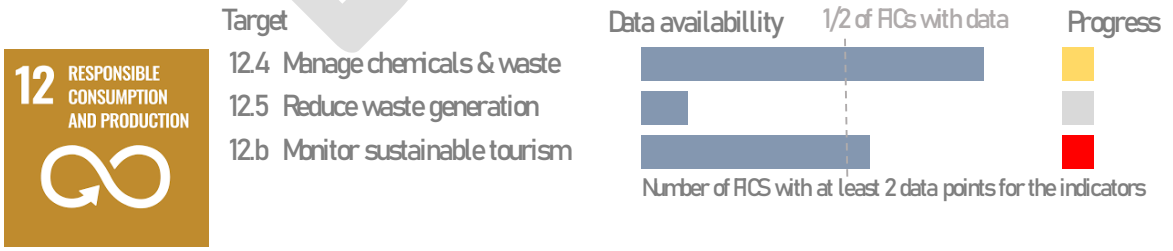
The focus of the 2030 Agenda on the **planet and the environment** is very much in line with the significance the draft 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent places on safeguarding the ocean; seeking global support in addressing the challenges of climate change; and addressing together environmental issues such as waste management, ocean litter and biodiversity loss, etc.

Data Availability

For 12 (37percent) of the 32 targets identified below, more than half of FICs have at least 2 data points for the indicators. 7 targets have less than half of FICs with 2 data points and 11 targets don't have data available. Most concerning is SDG 13 on Climate Action which has 5 targets and only 1 with more than half of FICs with 2 data points currently able to measure progress and 4 having no data available to show progress.







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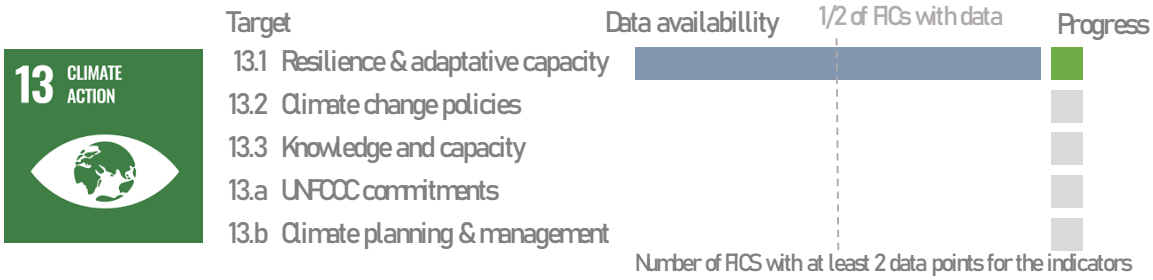

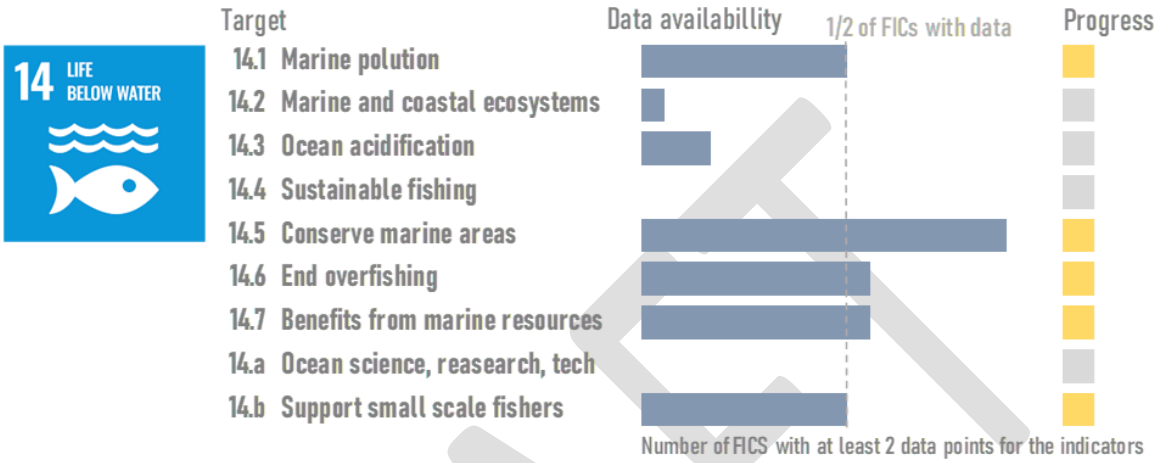

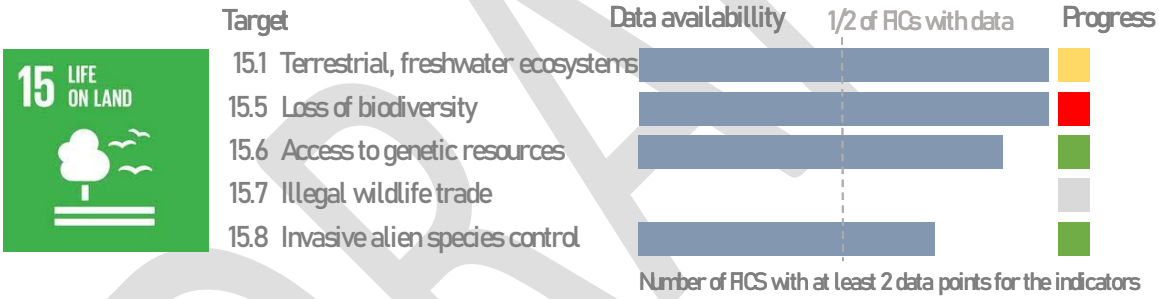

Progress against the 2020 Biennial Recommendations

The 2020 Biennial Report included recommendations linked to two issues: climate change and natural disasters and poor waste (both solid and hazardous) management that are summarized as follows:

a) Ensure that local, national and regional climate change adaptation planning processes are effective and informed by up-to-date, robust information on vulnerabilities, current and future risks; and by building resilient communities and ecosystems that ensure the region is benefiting from the latest technology.

b) Increase the flexibility and agility of the region's disaster preparedness and response, to effectively deal with different disaster/emergency scenarios, including displacement in a 'fit-for-purpose' and 'cost-effective' manner.

c) Develop policies and programmes that enhance the region's capacity to more effectively manage migration linked to climate change.

d) Continue to implement the Pacific Regional Waste and Pollution Management Strategy 2016-2025 (Cleaner Pacific 2025), by developing good practices on waste management; by helping communities and local authorities develop capacity and institutional mechanisms for targeted waste streams (used oil, disaster wastes, marine debris); by promoting sustainable financing mechanisms; by addressing the problem of waste generated outside the region polluting the Pacific ocean; ocean; and promoting better outcomes across the region through a Community of Practice.

In response to the issues linked to climate change, this report has identified (i) that although PICTs realise the importance of accessing and using risk information, the capabilities needed and resources required are still prohibitive for countries and additional support is required to undertake this work. Additionally, Information,

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Communication and Technology (ICT) capacity issues also limit the country's capacity to be able to access and manipulate risk information for informed decision making where it is available. There is also a need to develop build on traditional knowledge and develop practical applications to use the risk information in planning, policy and decision-making processes more effectively as well; (ii) Responses to recent disaster events in the Pacific have highlighted the need for increased capacity, particularly amongst key national response agencies to improve coordination domestically with their international and regional humanitarian partners as well as the private sector and civil society; and (iii) While labour migration schemes are being seen as a strategy to increase remittances sent home to assist with development and adaptation, there is climate change and disaster-induced migration which provide a different spectrum of challenges and opportunities.

Progress continues to be made in the implementation of the Pacific Regional Waste and Pollution Management Strategy 2016-2025 with a range of activities implemented at both national and regional levels.

5.2.1 Securing Our Blue Pacific Ocean

134. The sustainable use and management of the Pacific Ocean is a central priority of the region, with climate change one of the most critical challenges for this important resource. The increase in temperature has different impacts on the ocean, ranging from ocean warming to rising sea levels. Sea-level rise for coastal and island states on existing baselines and maritime zones was not considered when UNCLOS was drafted.

135. Out of the 17 existing extended continental shelf submissions to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, one was recommended in 2019. PIF Leaders have repeatedly expressed concern about the threat posed by sea-level rise to securing the limits of their EEZs. They reaffirmed the importance of preserving PIF Members' existing rights under the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

136. In August 2021, PIF Leaders issued the ground breaking Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the face of Climate Change-Related Sea-Level Rise to clarify this interpretation and call on countries outside the Pacific to support the Declaration. Through the declaration PIF Leaders recognise "*the threat of climate change and sea-level rise as the defining issue that imperils the livelihoods and wellbeing of our peoples and undermines the full realisation of a peaceful, secure and sustainable future for our region"*[17]. There are 48 shared or overlapping boundaries between countries in the region. As of July 2020, 35 of these boundaries have been formalized. There are 13 outstanding bilateral and 5 High Seas boundaries remaining to be declared.

In 2021, Forum Leaders endorsed the *Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the face of Climate Change-related Sea-level rise*, which recognises "the threat of climate change and sea-level rise as the defining issue that imperils the livelihoods and wellbeing of our peoples and undermines the full realisation of a peaceful, secure and sustainable future for our region".[1]

At the COP26 negotiations in Glasgow, Pacific Islands and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) made a considerable achievement in including onto the agenda of the *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC) the issue of the ocean-climate nexus, noting the intrinsic link between the two issues and their significance for SIDS.

On 30 December 2021, in its submission to the International Law Commission (ILC), Members noted that the Forum has not had the opportunity to consider a collective position specific to the issues of statehood and the protection of our people affected by, and from, climate change-related sea-level rise. It was highlighted that Members may further consider these issues in the future, particularly relating to the rights of those affected by sea-level rise, to assist in responding to these issues. The issues of statehood and the protection of persons affected by climate change-related sea-level rise are complex, yet of vital importance not only to the Pacific Islands Forum Members but the entire global community.

On 6 April 2022, at its 6th Meeting, the Forum Officials Committee (FOC) Specialist Sub-Committee on Sea-Level Rise in relation to International Law, **agreed**, and **tasked** the Secretariat, to convene a 2nd regional conference on statehood and the protection of persons affected climate change-related sea-level rise.

[17] Preambular paragraph 9, 2021 PIF Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the Face of Climate Change-related Sea-Level Rise > Forum Sec (Accessed 26 April 2022)

137. The 2021 Blue Pacific Oceans report called for a better integration and coordination. While sectoral approaches to reporting on development and implementation in the various areas of ocean governance have been the norm, there is increasing interest in strengthening national and regional mechanisms to ensure a holistic review and stock take of the state of affairs of ocean governance. An integrated approach is in line with the 2010 Framework for the Pacific Oceanscape endorsed by PIF Leaders which called for measures to effectively maintain the oceans' health, productivity and resilience through cross-sectoral cooperation. It identified the importance of the Pacific peoples' traditional and customary ties to the ocean.

138. The report also identified an increased interest in the application of ocean monetized studies in relevant ocean policy and planning work. This is often known as the regional ocean resources and ecosystems services accounting. Several key economic sectors operate for the benefit of economies in the Blue Pacific Ocean beyond tuna and coastal fisheries. These include tourism, submarine cables and satellites, ocean renewable energy, deep-sea minerals, marine genetic biotechnology, culture and traditional knowledge, ocean finance, blue economy and ocean accounting.

139. Whilst the Pacific is the only oceanic fishery with tuna stocks at sustainable levels, the distribution of tuna migration and abundance of tuna are impacted by climate change. The latest climate change modelling shows impacts both on the distribution of tuna migration and biomass could mean decreases in licensing revenues of countries by up to 20 percent by 2050.

140. Although the region has a good record with regard to tropical tuna overfishing is still prevalent mainly due to the number of fishing vessels. Recent stock assessments have shown that none of the four target species in the Western Central Pacific Ocean is overfished[18]. However, there are concerns that stock abundance is far lower than that required for an economically viable fishery and stronger management measures are needed commencing with an immediate freeze of fishing effort.

141. Pelagic fisheries in the Pacific benefit from robust systems for controlling IUU that have been developed over many years and which involve a high level of data sharing and regional cooperation. Many other coastal fisheries resources are under considerable pressure due to the exploitation of export species (like sea cucumber) which are severely overfished in many areas.

142. At the sub-regional level, Pacific Island Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) provides a critical platform for cooperation and coordination through the use of monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) tools. Notwithstanding the impacts of COVID-19 on MCS operations, progress was made in developing the regional PSM framework, the regional longline electronic monitoring policy, the COVID-19 Operating protocols for observers and crews including undertaking one of the largest surveillance operations (Operation Kurukuru) in 2021 for 12 days of international cooperation to target IUU fishing in the Pacific. The comprehensive work of the FFA Fisheries Operations Division and FFA Members in addressing IUU issues is well reflected in two recent studies undertaken for FFA by MRAG Asia Pacific.

143. In 2016, the first report on the Quantification of IUU in the Pacific Islands Region estimated the total annual volume of IUU fishing in the region for the period 2010-2015 representing approximately 306,440 tons, worth an estimated ex-vessel value of $616.11 million. In a 2020 follow

[18] The most recent stock assessment for skipjack (2019), yellowfin and bigeye (2020) and albacore (2021) show that overfishing is not occurring. Assessment for Albacore shows stock not overfished but overfishing occurring.

up study using the same methodology but with improved data access, estimate of the total annual volume of tuna product harvested or transhipped involving IUU activity in Pacific tuna fisheries during 2017-19 was 192,186 tons, worth an ex-vessel value of $333.49 million. This represents about 6.5 percent of the total tuna catch in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCFPC) Convention Area in 2019.

144. This result is a considerable reduction from the estimates in the 2016 study. A reduction of nearly 50 percent of estimated IUU fishing in the region between 2016 to 2020. The reduction of IUU was primarily driven by substantial reductions in estimates of illegal transhipping and FAD fishing during closure periods as well as the removal of unauthorized landings in foreign ports risks. The report confirms the results of the first study which shows that unlicensed fishing appears to be relatively well-controlled in the region, with estimates of IUU fishing dominated by the licensed fleet.

145. While the region is making good progress towards achieving the SDG 14 target of 10 percent marine protection and conservation, not all marine protected areas are fully implemented because of boundary disputes and some nations lack the resources to enforce the 'no take' zones. A total of 2,161,088 km2 across 346 marine protected areas with an additional 204 marine/terrestrial areas of 35,774 km2 are already protected across the Pacific. This is approximately 8 percent of the combined PICT's EEZ of 27,449,000 million km2.

5.2.2 Tackling Climate Change

146. Climate change continues to emerge as a key development issue for the Pacific. The effects of climate change across the Pacific (for example, sea level rise, extreme changes in rainfall, increased frequency of El Niño-like conditions, and increased intensity and frequency of cyclones) impacts a broad range of internationally accepted human rights, including the rights to life, adequate food and water, health, human security, and a place to live and work. Noting that, the majority of the Pacific people live in rural communities, and issues around access to quality basic services are critical. The lack of access to such services is a key factor driving rural to urban migration.

147. Climate-related migration is occurring within the broader context of urbanization in Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). Difficulties sustaining livelihoods and accessing basic services in remote areas are contributing to rural-to-urban migration and a growing interest in international labour migration opportunities. In this context, organized labour migration schemes are being seen as a strategy to increase remittances sent home to assist with development and adaptation. However, there is climate change and disaster-induced migration which provide a different spectrum of challenges and opportunities.

148. Incorporating a human rights-based approach to climate change ensures that policies and strategies will include a focus on individuals and communities. Under this approach, people are seen as rights-holders who are entitled to participate and provide inputs into policies and strategies to address climate change with free, prior and informed consent. Such an approach emphasises local knowledge of the environment and incorporates traditional cultural practices of communities into climate change responses.

149. Non-discrimination and substantive equality are key elements of a human rights-based approach, ensuring that decision-makers give due consideration to the impact of climate change on disadvantaged groups in vulnerable situations when developing policies and strategies. Such an

approach also ensures that core minimum human rights standards inform decision-makers when weighing up competing demands – for instance, the right to livelihood and subsistence as enshrined in Article 25 of the UDHR which states that "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing, and medical care, and necessary social services".

150. Although Pacific Island countries realise the importance of accessing and using risk information, the capabilities needed, and resources required are still prohibitive for countries and additional support is required to undertake this work. Additionally, Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) capacity issues also limit the country's capacity to be able to access and manipulate risk information for informed decision making where it is available. There is also a need to develop build on traditional knowledge and develop practical applications to use the risk information in planning, policy and decision-making processes more effectively as well.

151. To help address this reality, regional organisations, development partners and various stakeholder groups need to be more innovative in working with the countries to strengthen their understanding of the future risk scenarios so that these will help to drive the determination of development options and priorities leading to greater investments in 'resilient development'.

152. The Building Safety Resilience Project implemented by SPC across 15 Pacific States has developed a Disaster Ready Business Toolkit. SPC works closely with the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO) and the Fiji Business Disaster Resilience Council to help Pacific businesses with business continuity in the face of emergencies and disasters. The Toolkit contains a set of resources that can be used by businesses to not only support their own resilience but also that of their suppliers to better prepare for and respond to future events.

153. The Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security (PCCM-HS) programme is a joint-agency programme implemented by IOM, ESCAP, ILO, OHCHR along with PIFS and the Platform on Disaster Displacement. This regional programme seeks to protect and empower communities adversely affected by climate change and disasters in the Pacific region, focusing specifically on climate change and disaster-related migration, displacement, and planned relocation. A key component is to support a regional human security-based response on climate change-related mobility by facilitating an appropriate framework through regional level consultations. The programme will also empower communities affected by climate change to migrate safely with an understanding of their rights, and support governments to improve migration governance. Finally, through case studies and data collection, the programme will contribute to the evidence-base of good practices.

154. The EU-funded Intra-ACP GCCA+ Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change and Resilience Building aims to ensure better regional and national adaptation and mitigation responses to climate change challenges and issues facing Pacific countries. For the private sector, efforts through technical support to the national private sector organisations have been provided to strengthen private sector engagement with government and other stakeholders. These include capacity building initiatives for the private sector to increase its awareness of climate finance in order to build resilient operations and investments against the impacts of climate change, this is expected to enhance the private sector's access to climate finance and facilitate private sector partnership arrangements.

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155. Fiji and Kiribati have submitted their National Adaptation Plans to the UNFCCC and other FICs have started the process to develop their national adaptation plans. Cook Islands, FSM, Niue, Palau, RMI, Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu have benefitted from a GCF project with UNEP support focused on strengthening early warning systems and climate information systems. Tonga and Samoa have also received support for the development of Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems through the World Bank funded Pacific Resilience Program (PREP).

Key actions taken by ESCAP to address CCDRR issues

1) ESCAP signed the MoU with WMO in 2018 to scale up its collaboration towards addressing climate change and disaster risk management issues in Pacific SIDS. Moving forward, ESCAP contributed substantially to the WMO-led State of the Climate in South-West Pacific 2020 report, launched on 10 November 2020 at the side-lines of COP 26. It unpacks the interconnections between climate indicators and the SDGs and narrows down existing science and policy gaps and thus contributes to accelerated implementation of climate policy actions.

2) Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa have undergone capacity development training for weather and climate information users on potential impact assessment, risk analysis, and application of outputs in planning and decision-making for resource and risk management in agriculture and disaster management sectors.

156. The Pacific Resilience Meeting was convened in 2021 to share experiences and solutions for resilience building. Thereafter a number of Technical Working Groups were established under the auspices of the Pacific Resilience Partnership such as those for Disaster Risk, Finance Risk Governance, Localization and Human Mobility. It also included a working group on Mental health and psychosocial support cell and food systems working group which looks at traditional knowledge and practices in terms of food security and adapting to a crisis.

157. There is also a joint working group to support the development of a regional framework on climate mobility, with IOM, UNESCAP and PIFS as the secretariat and with technical support from the Pacific Resilience Partnership Technical Working Group on Human Mobility. This joint working group is co-chaired by Fiji and Tuvalu.

5.2.6 Promoting transition to Renewable Energy

158. Pacific countries are developing SDG 7 roadmaps to help address the energy challenges. Fiji and Tonga have completed their Roadmaps with FSM and Kiribati set to complete theirs in 2022. The development of the Framework for Energy Security and Resilience in the Pacific (FESRIP) 2021-2030 and its subsequent endorsement by the Leaders are a milestone achievement for the region. The FESRIP priorities include Energy Policy, Planning and Capacity Development, Financing, Sustainable Electric Power Development, Low-Carbon Transport Energy, Improved Energy Efficiency, and Petroleum and Other Liquid Fuel Services. Alignment in efforts across national and regional implementation is important to ensure long term improvements in the energy sector in the Pacific.

159. Notwithstanding the ultimate 100 percent renewable energy vision of the Pacific as a region, the continued heavy reliance on imported fossil fuels for commercial/industry-based energy requirements remain a major concern. The average regional renewable energy contribution to total energy produced is low at 17.1 percent. While the region is among the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and is still largely driven by carbon intensive sources of energy, there is an opportunity if the estimated USD 6 billion spent on fossil fuel imports annually are diverted to investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency.

160. Reliance on petroleum accounts for about 72 percent of all electricity generation and essentially 100 percent for transport energy use making the Pacific the highest petroleum fuel dependency of any region in the world. Oil price volatility greatly undermines energy security in the Pacific, with

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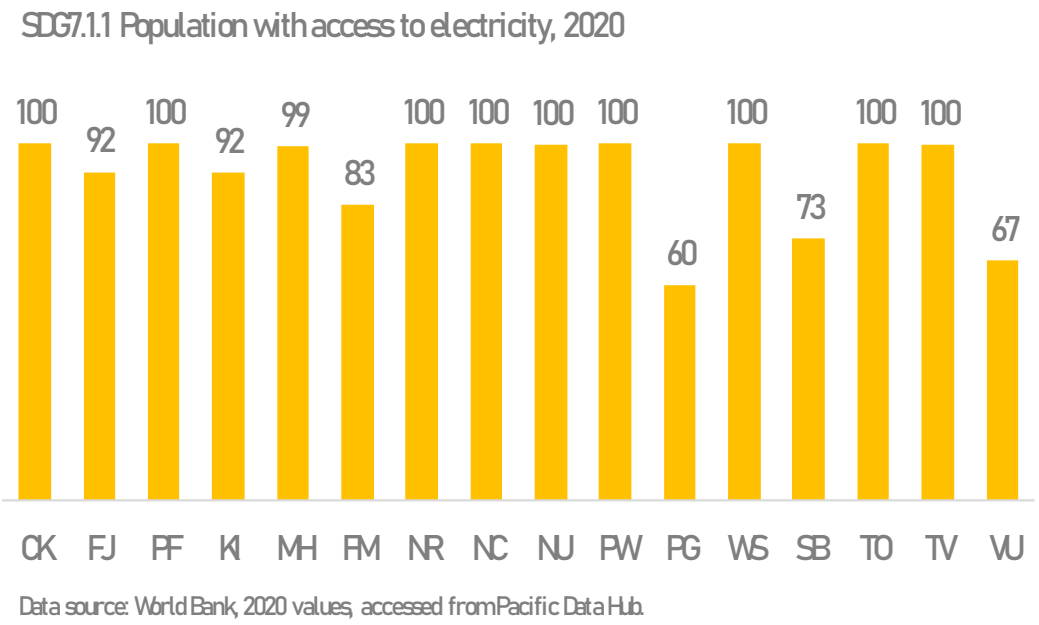
increasing oil prices disproportionately affecting low-income countries. It undermines macro-economic stability, the balance of trade, and the financial situation of major end-users such as power utilities and household disposable income. As a result of the Ukraine- Russia conflict, the world over has seen a hike in fuel costs. The Pacific has not been sheltered from these increases with domestic fuel costs increasing by more than $1 US dollar per litre in some PICTs.

161. Several Pacific governments have undertaken regulatory reforms by enacting legislations to empower regulators to regulate the energy sector to improve performance in the provision of energy services. For instance, Tonga has reduced its low voltage network losses from 12 percent to just 5 percent. However few PICs have seriously pursued energy efficiency to help mitigate the challenges faced related to climate change and heavy reliance on imported diesel fuel. The Pacific Appliance Labelling and Standards program (PALS 2019) was implemented by SPC between 2012 – 2019 and has supported ten PICTs to promote and implement Minimum Energy Performance Standards and Labelling. Fiji. Samoa, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Tuvalu have enacted these standards while Kiribati, Cook Islands, Tonga, Niue and Papua New Guinea have progressed to the drafting stage.



162. Whilst most households in the Pacific have both electricity and fossil fuel access there are low-income households in most of the region that uses little petroleum fuel or electricity because of high costs. There remains significant gaps in electricity and/or fossil fuel access in some Melanesian countries with access ranging from 59-67 percent. The use of hybrid and Electric Vehicles (EVs) in the PICTs can significantly reduce carbon emissions. However, some obstacles that will have to be considered for the use of EVs in the Pacific include high vehicle costs, the need for significant expansion of electricity generation, and its reliability and affordability in both urban areas and more remote communities.

5.2.7 Integrated Solid Waste Management

163. Marine pollution is a significant threat to the Pacific, and discarded plastic waste is considered one of the priority marine pollution issues facing the region. Effective management of solid waste (MSW) in Pacific developing member countries (DMCs) is difficult because of several country-specific

characteristics. These include limited land area, customary land ownership; environmental fragility; limited human and financial capacity; and in some countries, a heavy reliance on tourism. The problems are particularly evident on small atoll islands where there is little land available for landfill waste disposal and such activities are impacting potable groundwater resources. The challenges mean that selecting technologies that are appropriate to the physical and socioeconomic context of the Pacific is critical for improving solid waste management (SWM) in the region.

164. Pacific States and territories are affected not only by waste produced locally but also by waste transported in by foreign vessels and by ocean currents. Remote, uninhabited island ecosystems show impacts of marine pollution and the physical presence of debris. Approximately 80 percent of marine debris originates from land-based activities, with inputs from shorelines or via rivers and wastewater pipelines. Inputs at sea may be from normal operations, accidental losses, or deliberate discarding such as derelict vessels. Sources include street and beach littering; improper waste management; ships including fishing vessels; aquaculture; offshore drilling; at-sea accidents; extreme natural events; construction; and coastal tourism. The Pacific also has a nuclear heritage, with aging storage, e.g. on Bikini Atoll, and thousands of underwater shipwrecks that, if disturbed by natural disasters, could leak oil[19].

165. The most prevalent (60–80percent) types of marine debris are plastic materials, considered a priority marine pollution issue facing the Pacific region. Some plastics begin as chemically inert (non-toxic) but may adsorb heavy metals and other persistent, bio accumulative and toxic substances (PBT). Microplastics are a subset of the marine debris issue. Some microplastics are purposefully manufactured for industrial and domestic purposes ('primary' microplastics). 'Secondary' microplastics are created by the weathering and fragmentation of larger plastic objects. Additional sources of microplastics include industrial emissions and sewage; cosmetics and personal care products; textiles and clothing (synthetic fibres); terrestrial transport (dust from tyres); and plastic producers and fabricators (plastic resin pellets used in plastics manufacture).

166. Microplastics are often mistaken for food by a wide range of marine species, affecting their health and passing accumulated PBT up the food chain upon consumption, including human food sources. There is substantial illegal discard of wastes by vessels in South Pacific waters, despite existing conventions such as MARPOL, London Dumping Protocol and the Noumea Convention Dumping Protocol regulating the discard of waste from shipping and fishing vessels. SPC/FFA Observer GEN-6 Forms from 2003–2015 showed over 10,000 violations, primarily from purse seiners but also long liners. Plastic discharge constituted 71 percent of these violations, and 71 percent of the incidents were from fishing vessels flagged by distant water fishing nations.

[19] https://www.businessinsider.com/marshall-islands-nuclear-dome-radioactive-waste-11

167. Many PICs have no current systematic management plan or system for marine litter prevention, management, and clean up/recovery. The problem is growing – a global review found a 49 percent increase in reports of marine species being entangled in and ingesting marine debris between 1997 and 2015. A recent study of ingestion of plastic by fish in the Pacific region found plastic ingestion by 97 percent of examined fish species. Additional research should target identified priority topics.

168. Waste generation for the entire Pacific urban population was estimated at over 1.16 million tons in 2013 and projected to be more than 1.59 million tons by 2025. This includes an average of 44 percent of organic waste which generates unpleasant odours, pest infestations, and spreads diseases. As it decomposes, organic waste generates methane, a gas that contributes significantly to global warming. It is estimated that nearly 90 percent of ocean litter is from land-based sources which is having detrimental impacts on the health of oceans and marine life.

169. Only 47 percent of national populations across 18 PICTS have access to regular collection services. This is mainly populations in the rural areas and providing consistent and reliable waste collection services in rural areas and outer islands of many PICTs remains a challenge. Whilst recycling is a viable response to household rubbish disposal, there is little to none being set up in PICTs. Recycling initiatives in a number of countries, including FSM, Palau and Kiribati, have resulted in a substantial volume of waste being taken offshore. Recycling plants require substantial investment in infrastructure, capacity and maintenance and in some atoll nations where land availability is also a challenge due to high population densities setting up these types of facilities could be an issue.

170. Over 90 percent of world trade is carried across the world's oceans by some 90,000 marine vessels20. This generates a substantial amount of pollution that threatens coastal environments. Like all modes of transportation that use fossil fuels, ships produce carbon dioxide emissions that significantly contribute to global climate change and acidification. Besides carbon dioxide ships also release a handful of other pollutants that contribute to the problem. This includes pollution of water and air from fuel spills, waste dumping, and exhaust, biofouling on hulls and invasive species, inadequate facilities to receive ships' waste; and vessel grounding and sinking, noise pollution in water and air and collision with marine fauna.

171. To address the concerning issue of marine pollution, in 2017 Pacific Leaders committed to the development of policies to ban the use of single use plastic and Styrofoam packaging. As of June 2022, twenty countries have put in place or intend to enact measures to ban the sale and distribution of single use plastics and Styrofoam packaging. In Vanuatu legislation has been put into place to ban the use, manufacture and of single use plastic bags and polystyrene takeaway food containers; Palau and Samoa have banned the use of single use bags; and Fiji has 'user-fees' to discourage the use of plastics.

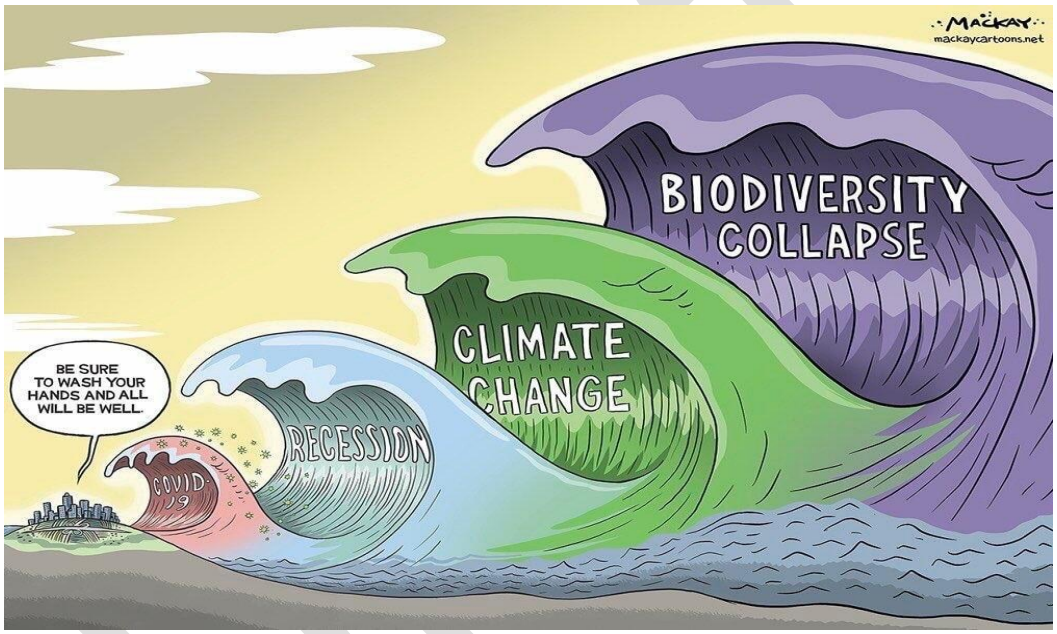
172. There is a lack of the specialized resources needed for the management, treatment and disposal of persistent, hazardous chemicals at a local level, and a lack of awareness of the hazardous nature of these chemicals at the community or farm scale, which often contributes to their unsafe use and storage.

[20] https://europe.oceana.org/en/shipping-pollution-1

Whilst current measures, legislations and policies are seeking to address the issue of waste disposal in the Pacific enforcement and prosecution remains a challenge.

5.2.8 Biodiversity

173. Conservation management of the rich biodiversity across the Pacific islands region is at the core of protecting our valuable ecosystem services that the world depends upon. It protects us, feeds us, builds up our economies, is at the heart of our livelihoods and at the centre of our cultural traditions. Many important development industries for Pacific islands, such as tourism, agriculture, forestry and fisheries, rely on the Pacific's biodiversity and ecosystem services. They are also the most important source of food, livelihoods, health and water security for Pacific Island communities. This underpins the significance of effective conservation and management of biodiversity in providing resilient and viable adaptation responses to changing climates and environment in the region[21].



Cartoon by: Graeme Mackay – mackaycartoons.net

174. The Pacific islands region has experienced an alarming rate of decline in biodiversity: 33 percent of reef forming corals and over 40 percent of amphibian species are under threat, with the average abundance of native species in most major land-based habitats decreasing by at least 20 percent since 1990. A major concern is that habitat loss could become irreversible with many species and ecosystems threatened, such as mangroves and terrestrial forests, all been driven by a range of development pressures. This decline in biodiversity around the Pacific has also contributed to high levels of loss globally.

175. Setting aside areas for the protection of key ecosystems will ensure that they continue to support key biodiversity and provide ecosystem services vital to the well-being of Pacific peoples. For example, keeping water catchments and rivers in a healthy state contributes to a clean and abundant supply of water for Pacific villages.

[21] https://www.commercialappeal.com/story/opinion/editorials/2016/08/20/our-view-help-protect-guams-environment-invasive-species/89037004/

176. PITs are home to many species, with a great number of these species only found in this region. Other species migrate through the region, contributing to global cycles of elements such as carbon and to multiple cultures, economies, and ecosystems. Long-term collaborative sustainable management is vital for the health of many Pacific species and the ecosystems on which they depend. Marine species support Pacific livelihoods and economies and shape the islands themselves.

177. The value of biodiversity is extensive and crosses many sectors. Healthy biodiversity is an important source of resources today and in the future. Pacific species provide essential ecosystem services and wealth. Mobile species link and support ecosystem services. For example, seabirds link native forests and coastal marine ecosystems, including manta rays and thereby support tourism. Integrated effects demand integrated management.

178. Healthy, live animals bring value to the region. Tourism accounts for 7.2 percent of regional GDP and 5.8 percent of employment in the PICTs, exceeding 20 percent of GDP in many countries. The Pacific Ocean is home to over half of the world's whale and dolphin species. Sharks, rays, corals, and turtles draw tourists on their own.

179. New threats are emerging, from local and global sources. Pacific species face threats from deep-sea mining exploration, coastal development, nutrient loading, sedimentation, disease, invasive species, predator outbreaks, overfishing, destructive fishing, marine noise and light pollution, ocean acidification, and climate change with the impacts of higher temperatures, sea level rise, and increased risk of storm damage. Marine litter and pollution threaten species, ecosystems, and us. The Pacific region is affected by local practice and by actions in other regions. Many fishing vessels illegally dump nonbiodegradable waste in the Pacific. Plastics carry toxins and invasive species.

180. Preservation of coastal habitats is globally valuable as a climate change mitigation measure. Coastal habitat loss is between 0.5 percent and 3 percent of their global area each year, resulting in the release of 0.15–1.02 billion metric tons of CO2 (equivalent to burning 112 billion gallons of gasoline).

181. The main drivers of change in Oceania are unsustainable development, invasive species, and climate change. The tropical Pacific contains 25 percent of the world's coral reefs and 3 percent of the mangroves. The goods and services provided by almost a fifth of the world's reefs have been lost due to reef degradation. A further 15 percent of reefs are under imminent threat of being lost within the next decade unless effective management actions are implemented.

182. Native biodiversity protects our islands. Reefs reduce the wave energy on shores by >95 percent. Maintaining healthy wetlands is the most cost-effective method of preventing shoreline erosion. At least 50 percent of Pacific islanders live within 1.5 km of the coast, and sustainable, integrated shoreline development that maintains reef ecosystems is vital.

183. Invasive species are the lead cause of endemic Pacific species extinction. Invasive species weaken ecosystem structure and function. Prevention is the most cost-effective form of invasive species management. Little is known about South Pacific marine invasives, although terrestrial invasives are a known food security issue. Invasive species on land and sea can negatively impact sustainable development.

184. Coastal biodiversity feeds us. About 70 percent of the protein in the diet of Pacific islanders is from near-shore pelagic, reef, and lagoon fisheries. Wetlands are structurally complex habitats that

support many species. Threats to wetlands also threaten nutrition, livelihoods, and incomes from reef fisheries and tourism. Pacific communities will need increased adaptation capacity, including access to alternate livelihoods, with particular attention to the food security gap created by the need to reduce fishing on reef systems.

185. We can boost resilience by reducing local pressures. Doing so requires commitments to management that ensures the sustainability of the values and resources provided by biodiversity, and that incorporates rigorous environmental impact assessments. Biodiversity can provide solutions. For example, healthy wetlands stabilise shorelines, reduce the sediment load that reaches lagoons and buffer against sea level rise and storm damage. As global changes proceed, the community structure will change, but diverse ecosystems support each other. Creating spaces for species to recover, by reducing external pressures, can support marine ecosystems and therefore support Pacific communities that depend on them.

186. Recovery is possible. The iconic humpback whale —the focus of a multi-million-dollar whale-watching industry in many Pacific Island countries—was hunted last century almost to the point of extinction, with perhaps as few as 200 remaining across the entire region when the hunting stopped in 1978. Its recovery in the Pacific region to ~3,000 whales is one of the world's most encouraging conservation success stories.

187. Our knowledge of Pacific species is still limited, particularly marine species, both pelagic and deep sea. Initiatives boosting the profile of research and the scientific capacity within the islands will serve the global community, support local and regional management, and take advantage of the opportunity for Pacific leadership in science and management.

188. Progress toward the SDGs requires measurements. Baselines and monitoring combined with local knowledge are vital for sustainable development and resilient management. Leader engagement with evidence-based knowledge will increase the effectiveness of planning. Capacity for monitoring data and analysis is a critical need for Pacific states.

189. The complexity of balancing development with the needs of ecosystems requires informed integrated planning. The Pacific region requires assistance in creating knowledge and Pacific capacity for Pacific-led management, incorporating local and traditional knowledge and practice.

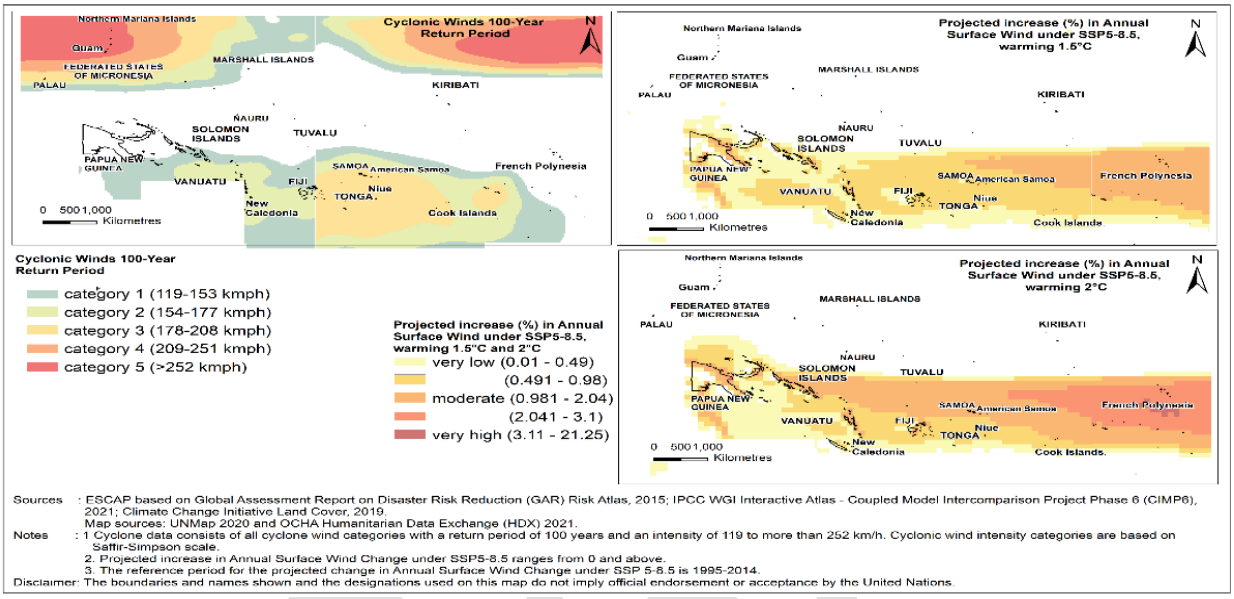
5.2.3 Strengthening Coordinated National and Intra-Regional Response Efforts

190. The 2030 Agenda, SDGs and the Sendai Framework Goals are inextricably linked. Progress in implementing the Sendai Framework is therefore progressed towards meeting the Sustainable Development Goals. The Sustainable Development Goals and The Sendai Framework both recognize that reducing the risk of these disasters is a fundamental aspect of climate change adaptation and building the overall resilience of people to shocks. Examining the synergies between SDG and Sendai Framework goals and indicators, ESCAP through its risk and resilience portal is developing innovative tools, risk analytics and assessments methodologies, and capacity development efforts to support the monitoring and achievement of the goals of both Sendai and the SDG for Pacific SIDS.

191. Response efforts to recent disaster events in the Pacific region such as that experienced during TC Pam 2015, TC Winston 2016 and the slow onset drought in the RMI over the 2015 to 2016 period have highlighted the need for increased capacity, particularly amongst key national response agencies

to improve coordination domestically with their international and regional humanitarian partners and donor governments. Coordination of national response efforts of the private sector and civil society are also often challenged where well-intentioned relief actions are ad hoc and not coordinated through their National Disaster Management Offices (NDMOs).

Figure 1: Exposure of tropical cyclone to Pacific SIDS at 1.5^{0}C and 2.0^{0}C warning scenarios



Sources : ESCAP based on Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction (GAR) Risk Atlas, 2015; IPCC WGI Interactive Atlas - Coupled Model Intercomparison Project Phase 6 (CIMP6), 2021; Climate Change Initiative Land Cover, 2019.
Map sources: UNMap 2020 and OCHA Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX) 2021.
Notes : 1 Cyclone data consists of all cyclone wind categories with a return period of 100 years and an intensity of 119 to more than 252 km/h. Cyclonic wind intensity categories are based on Saffir-Simpson scale.
2. Projected increase in Annual Surface Wind Change under SSP5-8.5 ranges from 0 and above.
3. The reference period for the projected change in Annual Surface Wind Change under SSP 5-8.5 is 1995-2014.
Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Source: ESCAP, Resilience in riskier world: Sub-regional Pacific Disaster Report (2022) - under publications

192. To help address the coordination of response efforts Fiji, RMI and Vanuatu governments together with their partners have established humanitarian cluster arrangements linked to the regional Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) Cluster system co-chaired by UNOCHA. These national cluster systems led by Governments have played an important coordination role and sharing of information during the RMI drought, Ambae Volcano response, Fiji's TC Josie and Keni response in 2018. OCHA through the PHT coordinates international actors to support national response during these emergencies. To strengthen collaboration between national and international actors, Vanuatu, RMI and the Cook Islands have established Country Preparedness Packages (CPP) with the support of UNOCHA, UNDP and PHT members to provide better guidance to humanitarian partners.

193. Under the auspices of the Pacific Islands Emergency Management Alliance (PIEMA), the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities (AFAC) have established twinning arrangements with fire and disaster management authorities in 12 Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). Additionally, New Zealand's National Emergency Management Agency (NZ-NEMA) has separate arrangements with disaster management authorities in 5 PICTs. Under the new phase of PIEMA, a review to better streamline these partnerships and strengthen coordination between the national authorities will be undertaken.

194. The coordination of partners, CROP, UN partners and civil society organisations is necessary to ensure that resources are maximized and lessons shared. The Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP) is intended to translate the FRDP into action and provides opportunities for cooperation, and information sharing through the Pacific Resilience Meeting (PRM) and the Technical Working Groups (TWG). The

PRP Taskforce guides policy makers and resilience practitioners through a range of initiatives. The PRP can facilitate enhanced regional coordination through its inclusive and multi-stakeholder membership.

195. Countries are continuing to explore ways to lessen national exposure and vulnerability to risks through a mixture of national and regional financing instruments and measures. At the regional level, both the Pacific Catastrophe Risk Insurance Company (PCRIC) and the Asian Development Bank's Disaster Resilience Programme (DRP) have demonstrated their utility. In the immediate aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Gita, Tonga received USD 3.75 million from the PCRIC and USD 7 million from the DRP. Ongoing work on the Pacific Resilience Facility (led by PIFS) and the Pacific Islands Climate Change Insurance Facility (led by SPREP) is a testament to efforts at the regional level to strengthen the collective financial resilience of Pacific Island countries.

196. Multilateral Climate Finance is increasingly provided through the Green Climate Fund and the Climate Change Adaptation Fund. Pacific Island Countries also continue to pursue the establishment of effective end-to-end multi-hazard early warning systems including strengthening the institutional capacity of agencies, modernising infrastructure and systems, improving risk information systems, developing impact-based forecasting platforms and implementing requisite preparedness activities.

197. There is greater recognition of the importance of the participation by women and other vulnerable groups in DRR activities. UN Women, UNDRR and IFRC are working with the Solomon Islands Government to ensure that the national and community disaster risk governance is gender responsive, and resilience is built to reduce vulnerabilities to natural or man-made.

Recommendations

Planet

1. Implementation of the Blue Pacific Ocean Report 2021 which, amongst other things, called for stronger coordination and collective management of ocean initiatives and engagement with development partners, while continuing to make progress in achieving the targets of SDG14.

2. Continued regional advocacy to seek the global commitment to decisive climate action that limits global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius together with continuing advocacy for the ground-breaking 2021 Pacific Islands Forum Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the face of Climate Change-related Sea-level rise.

3. Increased capacity, particularly amongst key national response agencies to improve coordination with international and regional humanitarian partners and donor governments in response efforts to disaster events in the Pacific region.

4. Strengthened partnerships for energy security and resilience in the region, including between SIDS to address issues of: Utilities Grid Readiness for High Penetration of variable renewable energy; financial and management mechanisms for the sustainability of outer island and remote rural electrification; Land and sea transport decarbonisation through non-motorised transport, E-mobility, etc; enhancing Independent Energy Regulation through the Office of the Pacific Energy Regulators Alliance (OPERA); strengthening the Productive use of Energy to Support Economic Growth and well-being; and the development of Pacific Renewable Energy Standards for Hurricanes and Natural Disasters.

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5. Support for the development of national systematic management plans, systems and enforcement measures for solid waste management and marine litter prevention, management and clean up/recovery.

6. Strengthened efforts to increase climate adaptation and biodiversity knowledge and Pacific capacity for Pacific-led management of the region's climate adaptation and biodiversity, incorporating local and traditional knowledge and practice.

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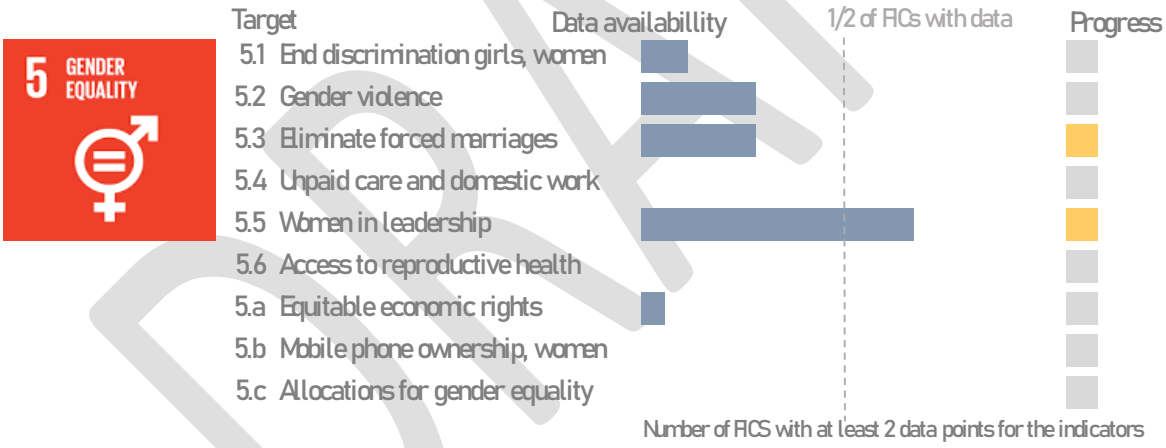
5.3 Prosperity

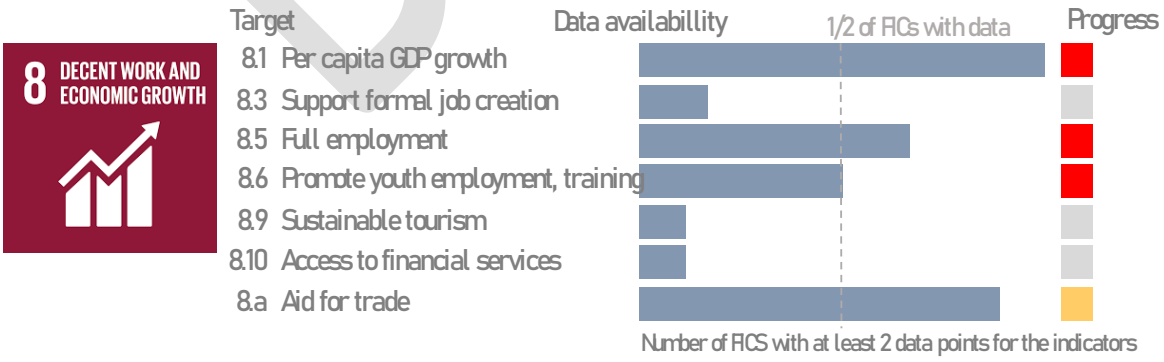
Link to the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent

The draft 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent includes as one of its seven thematic areas, one which pays particular attention to promoting **sustainable development as the pathway to prosperity** for Pacific people. As a consequence, it is very closely aligned to these elements of the 2030 Agenda and the importance of maximizing the sustainable use and management of the region's natural resources for existing and future generations.

Data Availability

Only 12 (35percent) of the 34 targets identified below, more than half of FICs have at least 2 data points for the indicators. 8 targets have less than half of FICs with 2 data points and 11 targets don't have data available. The coverage of data across these goals is very weak and therefore making it difficult to show a true picture of progress. Goal 5 and Goal 11 have the poorest data availability with less than half of its targets having no data available.





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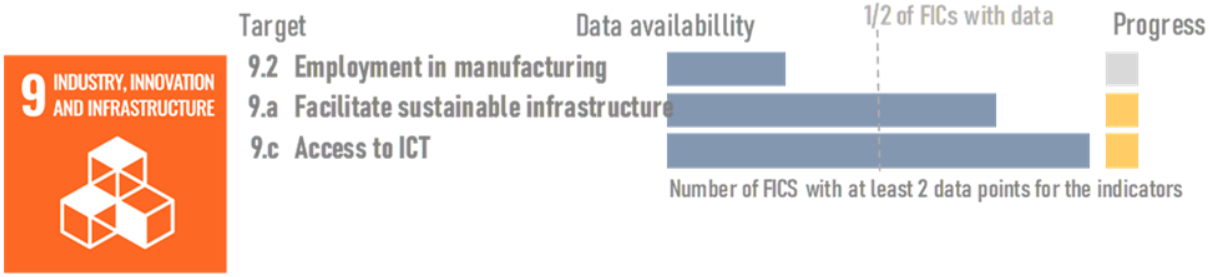
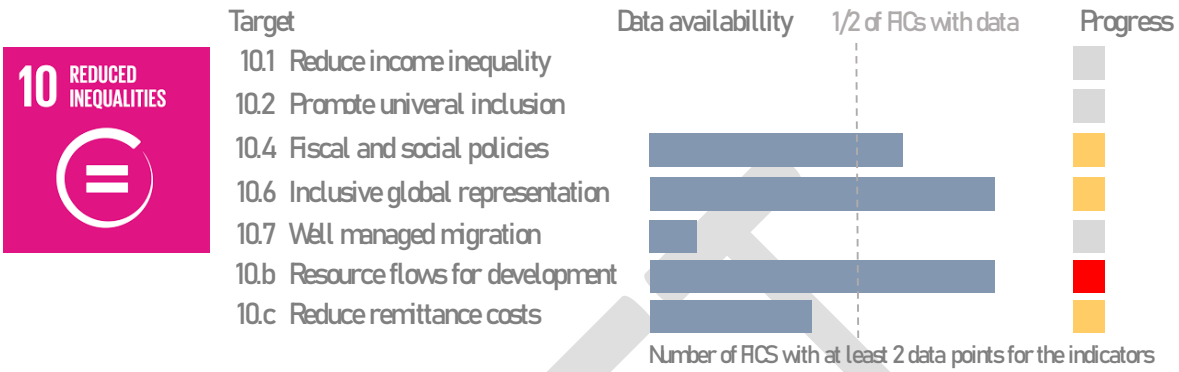
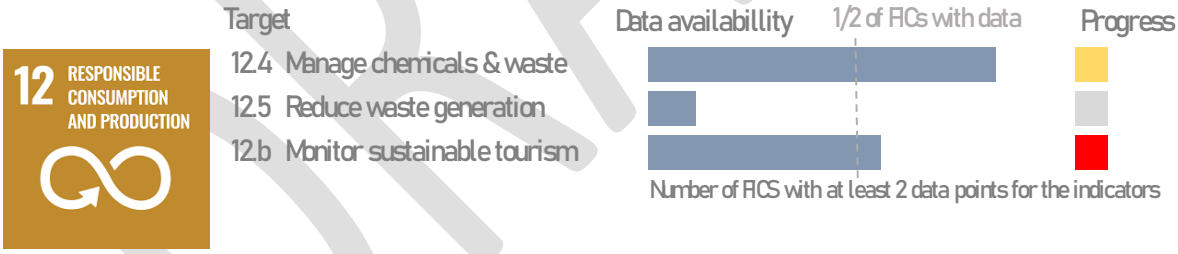
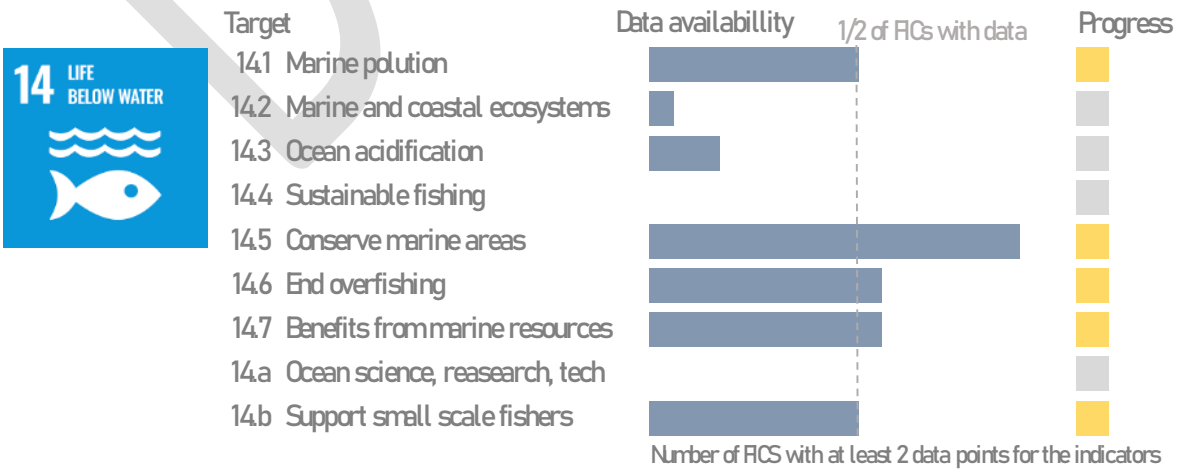

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
Target
Data availabillity
1/2 of FICs with data
Progress
9.2 Employment in manufacturing
9.a Facilitate sustainable infrastructure
9.c Access to ICT
Number of FICS with at least 2 data points for the indicators


10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
Target
Data availabillity
1/2 of FICs with data
Progress
10.1 Reduce income inequality
10.2 Promote univeral inclusion
10.4 Fiscal and social policies
10.6 Inclusive global representation
10.7 Well managed migration
10.b Resource flows for development
10.c Reduce remittance costs
Number of FICS with at least 2 data points for the indicators

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
Target
Data availabillity
1/2 of FICs with data
Progress
11.1 Safe and affordable housing
11.4 Cultural and natural heritage
11.5 Resilience to disasters
11.6 Urban solid waste management
11.b Disaster risk management
Number of FICS with at least 2 data points for the indicators


12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
Target
Data availabillity
1/2 of FICs with data
Progress
12.4 Manage chemicals & waste
12.5 Reduce waste generation
12.b Monitor sustainable tourism
Number of FICS with at least 2 data points for the indicators


14 LIFE BELOW WATER
Target
Data availabillity
1/2 of FICs with data
Progress
14.1 Marine polution
14.2 Marine and coastal ecosystems
14.3 Ocean acidification
14.4 Sustainable fishing
14.5 Conserve marine areas
14.6 End overfishing
14.7 Benefits from marine resources
14.a Ocean science, reasearch, tech
14.b Support small scale fishers
Number of FICS with at least 2 data points for the indicators

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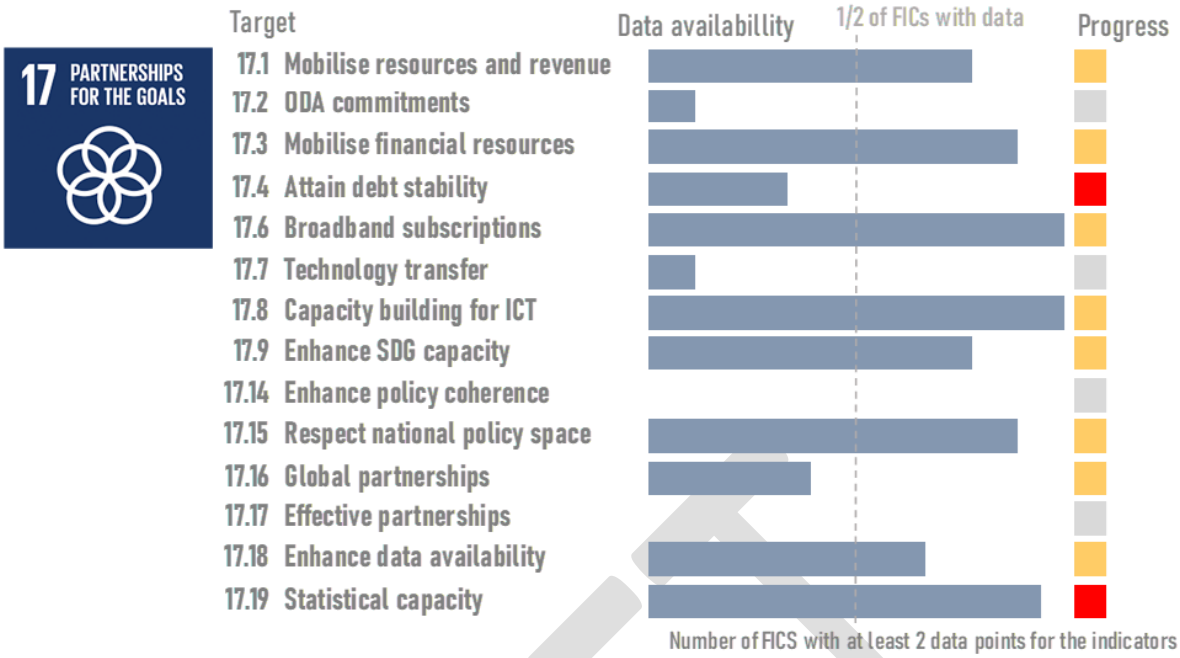

Progress on the 2020 Biennial Report Recommendations

In terms of addressing measures to promote prosperity, the 2020 Biennial report focused attention on two key issues. The first highlighted the need to strengthen the promotion of sustainable and equitable economic growth, with a focus on sustainable tourism and fisheries and the second referred to de-risking issues and the high cost of sending remittances, and enhance the impact of labour mobility on human development. The relevant recommendations are summarized as:

a) Continue efforts to strengthen data, and methodologies to monitor SDG14 progress.
b) Develop relevant policy frameworks, monitoring systems and capacity development to support private sector led sustainable tourism, with an emphasis on increasing the capacity of small to medium enterprises to be able to access finance for clean energy and green technology.
c) Adopt the Action Plan for the Regional Longline Fisheries Strategy that is currently under development with appropriate timeframes and indicators to measure progress.
d) Support the work of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) to improve labour standards and address modern slavery conditions in the fisheries sector.
e) Continue to be guided by Forum Economic Ministers' Action Plans and the support provided under the World Bank Group Pacific Payment Remittance and Securities Settlement Initiative (PAPRI) and the associated Pacific Payments Project (2013-2022).
f) Improve the implementation of seasonal worker schemes and strengthen the pre-departure and post-return assistance to migrant workers and their communities.

In support of efforts to strengthen monitoring of SDG 14, work has progressed on ocean accounting and statistics. Palau and Fiji are members of the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, which has highlighted the importance of completing a sequence of ocean accounts as an action for a sustainable ocean economy. Palau, Fiji and Samoa have begun experimenting with the development of ocean ecosystem accounting, that includes adopting the use of relevant global in combination with local data.

As a consequence of COVID-19, Pacific tourism sector stakeholders have used the opportunity to reflect, rethink and plan the pathway to recovery for the entire tourism system so that future visitation to our region not only balances economic, social and environmental needs but is also conscious, regenerative and restorative for our people, our culture, our islands and ocean ecosystems and for those who enjoy visiting our region. This led to the development of The Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework (2021-2030).

The Regional Longline Fisheries Strategy specifically addresses the region's shared objectives that includes the establishment of zone-based limits for longline fishing within Economic Exclusive Zones (EEZ) and action within

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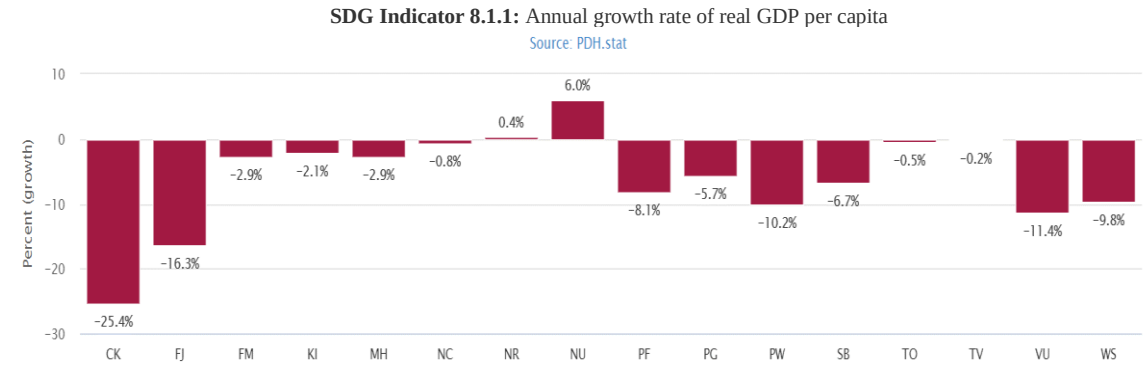
the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) to constrain longline fishing activity on the high seas. An aerial surveillance programme is also in place which significantly boosted the capacity of FFA Members to survey their vast EEZs.

COVID-19 highlighted the importance of remittances and the contribution to the region's economies of the seasonal workers' schemes. Efforts to address the high transaction costs of sending remittances continue and there are currently underway review processes to determine more fit-for-purpose seasonal workers' schemes that increase the benefits of both the sending and receiving countries while protecting the rights of the workers involved.

5.3.1 Macroeconomic Issues & Responses

198. Pacific Island Countries' (PICTs) economic activities, growth and fiscal capacity are largely dependent on the global economy, trading partners and markets. The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) World Economic Outlook report published in April 2022[22] predicts a slow down in the global economy to about 3.3 percent over the medium term with inflation projected at 8.7 percent for emerging markets and developing countries.

199. The global economic slowdown, increasing inflation together with high PICTs dependency with widespread economic and health consequences of the pandemic are headwinds that impact PICTs' economic recovery and subsequent public finances.



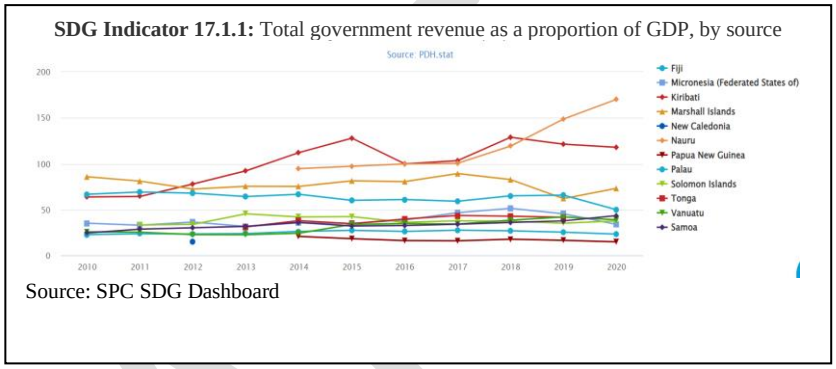
Source: SPC SDG Dashboard

200. During the period 2020-2021, most island countries, especially those reliant on tourism, experienced deep economic declines. To help the poor, vulnerable households, and small businesses, PICs launched sizeable fiscal stimulus packages. However, in conjunction with lower tax revenues due to slowing economic activities, these support measures have resulted in shrinking fiscal space and contributed to the pre-pandemic trend of rising public debt. A high risk of public debt distress is currently rated for almost all PICs. The rise in interest rates in developed countries and the Russian-Ukrainian conflict have an impact on financing costs, making it more difficult for PICs to finance widening fiscal deficits. Key amongst this is a heavy concentration on tourism earnings which was put at risk with border closures, with tourism-dependent economies most affected.

[22] https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2022/04/19/world-economic-outlook-april-2022

201. To reduce high debt distress levels and restore fiscal space to deal with pressing national needs such as health and education services, strong policy measures to address underlying structural economic challenges and to explore innovative financial instruments and mechanisms are required for both long-term growth and debt level containment. It should be noted that some of the PICs were in relatively weak fiscal positions with high levels of indebtedness at the beginning of COVID-19, which is still persisting. They are also amongst the most vulnerable countries to natural disasters. This is in addition to the continuing challenges of NCDs, poor health facilities and staffing, poor infrastructure and service delivery, etc., which all contribute to the overall situation.

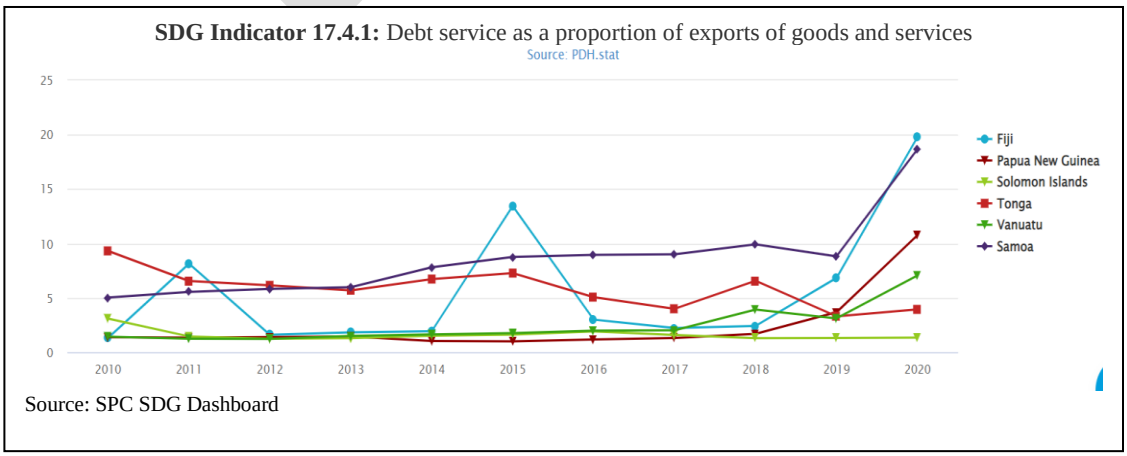
202. To summarize, Pacific Island Countries need a strong fiscal position to help meet the Sustainable Development Goals, cope with the impact of COVID-19 and adapt to future natural disasters. In a broader sense, a national financial framework is needed to link available fiscal and financial resources with sustainable development objectives. Moreover, various policy options, including (a) innovative reforms such as climate-based debt swaps, (b) fiscal reforms to improve tax administration, boost spending efficiency and streamline state-owned enterprise operations, (c) prudent and transparent public debt management, and (d) the use of disaster risk-sharing mechanisms.



Source: SPC SDG Dashboard

5.3.2 Innovative Financial Instruments and Mechanisms

203. The Pacific region is confronted with a dual challenge of fiscal sustainability risks in the short term, and financing shortfalls in critical areas, especially in the fight against climate change in the longer run, making it urgent to consider innovative financing instruments and mechanisms. In this regard, strengthening regional cooperation and coordinated advocacy by PICs at the global level would be critical for improving access to climate financing going forward. In addition to exploring innovative financing solutions, PICs could consider appropriate reforms to increase the resilience of financial systems and strategies.



Source: SPC SDG Dashboard

204. Debt for climate swaps was identified as an innovative financing solution that can provide debt relief in exchange for a commitment by debtor countries to earmark savings in debt servicing to investment in climate action or ocean conservation. To implement such swaps, third-party intermediaries can play a constructive role in facilitating the negotiation between a debtor and its creditors, structuring the financial transactions, and contributing technical know-how to the implementation of the investments committed by the debtor.

205. The experience of countries that have implemented such mechanisms reveals its potential to provide much-needed funding for climate action and ocean conservation activities. As an example, a recent debt for climate swap in the Caribbean used the proceeds of a blue bond issuance to retire USD500 million in government bond debt with private creditors at a large discount and fund national marine conservation priorities with the savings in debt repayments. However, the Caribbean context was acknowledged as being particularly suitable for debt swaps due to the elevated debt levels held by private creditors.

206. In the Pacific context, it was noted that the implementation of debt swaps needs to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the technical and resource requirements. Factors for success include thorough accountability to all relevant stakeholders, effective partnerships, national ownership of the use of proceeds, and a strong commitment to implement urgent actions on climate adaptation or ocean conservation.

207. The Pacific Resilience Facility, which aims to provide predictable, sustainable, accessible and accountable funding for disaster preparedness and climate risk resilience building within vulnerable communities, has been established by the Pacific Islands Forum and will become operational once funding requirements are met. The Pacific Catastrophe Risk Insurance Company aims to provide timely financial relief from losses and damages caused by natural disasters, and the Pacific Insurance and Climate Adaption Programme (PICAP) is developing and implementing market-based financial instruments, including parametric insurance, to provide Pacific people with immediate cash relief after extreme weather events and natural hazards. The programme has developed the Pacific region's first weather index-based micro insurance product providing cover against tropical cyclones and floods in Fiji, targeting farmers, fisher people, and market vendors. The programme is currently expanding to Tonga and Vanuatu.

208. At the global level, the IMF has created the Resilience and Sustainability Trust which aims to address longer-term structural challenges, including climate change and pandemic preparedness, that entail significant macroeconomic risks, while the World Bank Group has introduced the Sustainable Development Finance Policy to promote transparent and sustainable financing and promote coordination among creditors, and the Asian Development Bank has introduced a similar policy.

209. Effective fiscal and public financial management systems remain an important enabler for implementing development priorities, particularly in post-disaster situations when tailored and urgent policy actions are needed, as well as, to build sustainable financial resilience and fiscal buffers. At the same time, investment in climate-proofed infrastructure and human capital, amongst others, can reduce disaster damage and losses in the long run. In this regard, it is important to highlight the importance of strengthening absorptive capacities in the areas of fiscal and public financial management, and for project planning and management, including design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

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210. Second is the exposure to debt stress vulnerability borne from weak debt carrying capacity, as PICs face multiple shocks from the covid impact on subdued revenues, inflated healthcare expenditures, disasters, and ongoing impacts of climate change. The IMF's Debt Sustainability Analysis (DSA) shows that most PICs are assessed at high or moderate risk of debt distress. This has tightened fiscal space for most Governments, limiting financing capacity for growth reacceleration. Countries are negotiating with creditors bi-laterally based on their unique national fiscal positions. More regional coherence is needed on access to climate finance and more structured regional solutions are needed for disaster risk financing to widen financing options for Governments.

5.3.3 Extended shock timeline and simultaneous shock events exacerbate systemic vulnerabilities

211. The unique nature of COVID-19 as a shock now extended to 24 months is very different from disasters that have a shorter impact timeline and a long rebuild for a recovery period, compared to a much slower, less visible but equally corrosive impact of rising sea levels. COVID-19 has coincided with cyclones and flooding and most recently with the Tonga volcanic eruption and has exposed the systemic gaps in Government and national business disruption and continuity and disaster recovery preparedness; as well as the lack of fiscal reserves in the form of cash reserves, fiscal buffers, sovereign wealth funds that Governments can access readily to provide liquidity to finance immediate responses.

212. Before the pandemic, domestic resource mobilization was projected to increase modestly for all PICTs. However, the rapid decline in domestic economic activity with the onset of COVID-19 affected all major sources of tax revenue. Lower corporate profits, declining consumption and increases in unemployment, respectively, caused declines in revenue from corporate income taxes, goods and services taxes and personal income taxes. The decline in international trade, travel and domestic consumption suppressed revenue from consumption taxes on which many PICTs rely.

Regional KAVA Development Strategy

- In February 2020, Forum Trade Ministers in Suva agreed to maintain discussion on kava in order to ensure it becomes an international recognised commodity.
- In July 2021, Forum Trade Ministers endorsed a concept note to develop a regional Kava Development Strategy.
- In October 2021, Vanuatu Government in partnership with PIFS, SPC, PHAMA+, OACPS, ITC and EU Delegation for the Pacific in Suva organized a regional conference and agreed on potential areas to be covered under the Regional Strategy
- The Secretariat launch the Kava Working Group in January 2022, to coordinate and provide oversight of the development of the Strategy. The Chair and Vice/Chair of the Kava Working Group are Vanuatu and Fiji.
- Further to the establishment , the Secretariat has initiated the national consultations with Kava producing countries and partners to identify areas for regional approach where Members wanted to be included in the Regional Strategy.

213. Over the medium term, public debt sustainability could be at risk in PICTs. As fiscal measures to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic and to build forward better (such as by enhancing access to social services, closing the digital divide and undertaking climate action), the public debt-to-GDP ratio could rise from 41 percent in 2019 to 62 percent by 2030. Under a possible scenario that future economic growth would be lower than expected, the debt ratio could reach 94 percent by 2030.23

[23] See chapter 4 of ESCAP Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2021 (https://www.unescap.org/kp/2021/economic-and-social-survey-asia-and-pacific-2021-towards-post-covid-19-resilient-economies)

5.3.4 Strengthen Public Financial Management regionally

214. Efforts targeted at strengthening national systems to be able to cushion risks and losses from economic shocks need to, first of all, understand the root causes of the weaknesses that exist. It may therefore be crucial that we understand the fiscal capacities of PICs in cushioning these losses.

215. All in all, there is a need to ensure that the credibility of the budget process and reporting processes are observed. In situations where PICs do not have enough fiscal headroom, PICs take on further debt to cope with economic shocks but at the same time, there is a need for new innovative revenue strategies that strengthen/broaden the revenue base.

216. The public debt situation of PICs has continued to deteriorate over the last 10 years as the region grapples with structural growth challenges, as well as external shocks to our fragile economies. Gross public debt as a percentage of GDP for Pacific Island Countries had generally increased over the 10 years from 2010 to 2020, with a widening disparity between Government gross debt and revenue (as percent GDP). At the core of debt sustainability, is the need to strengthen a member-driven regional Public Financial Management dashboard to focus on a risk-centric PFM approach that will aim to reduce the risk profile of members, focusing on endogenous factors that are within members' control and can be monitored regionally.

217. The impact of COVID-19 exacerbated the economic shocks that climate change and natural disasters had already brought to PICs. It is even more pressing now that efforts to strengthen PFM systems need to be brought into the conversations around economic recovery.

218. In 2022, noting the economic pressures that COVID-19 has brought on PICs, a PFM Symposium was hosted from 22 – 25 March 2022 with the theme Strengthening PFM & Governance – An Enabling Tool for Progress Towards Effective, Inclusive, Accountable and Sustainable Economic Recovery followed by the Pacific Regional Debt Conference from 5 – 8 April 2022 with the theme Addressing Debt Sustainability in the Pacific in the Aftermath of COVID-19.

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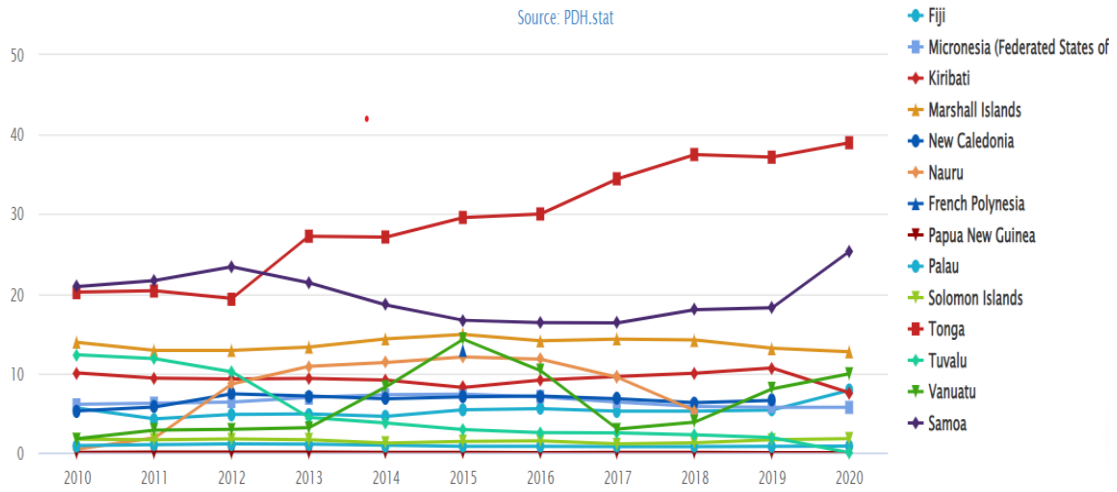
5.3.5 Safe and cost-effective remittance processes

SDG Indicator 17.3.2: Volume of remittances (in United States dollars) as a proportion of total GDP



Source: SPC SDG Dashboard

219. Resource and remittance-based economies have shown a negative correlation to the shock and have provided a valuable cushion to the downward economic impact.

220. COVID-19 was feared at its onset to have a significant impact on inflows of remittance to the Pacific region as countries respond to the threat of the virus. The global economy slowed down significantly in 2020, and unlike recent global economic shocks, the impact of COVID-19 was far-reaching as countries shut down economic and social activities, directly affecting demand for labour and family incomes.

221. However, remittances remained resilient despite the pandemic. Based on remittances data from the World Bank, remittances inflows for 2020 remained positive for most Pacific Island countries. For example, Fiji recorded increases in remittance inflows from $287 million in 2019 to $312 million in 2020 after an initial decline at the start of the pandemic, similarly to the Solomon Islands, Samoa and Tonga.[24] This trend continued into 2021 based on monthly data reported in central bank documents for Fiji and Tonga.[25] It is noted that as of writing this report there is a rising probability of recession in the US, which could also cause a rapid increase in unemployment which in turn might affect remittances. Note also that the US Fed might hike interest rates rapidly to curb inflationary pressure contributing to the (unintended) recession. The financial markets are officially in bear territory as of writing this report providing a pointer to market sentiments.

[24] Based on World Bank, migrant and remittance data and https://www.rbf.gov.fj/international-remittances-and-fijis-unsung-heroes-abroad-24-december-2020/.

[25] https://www.rbf.gov.fj/economic-review-november-2021/; http://www.reservebank.to/index.php/economic/rem.html

222. Money Transfer Operators (MTOs) provide safe, reliable and economical channels for sending and receiving money. The size of transactions sent to the Pacific via remittance channels is generally small (averaging AUD200-250 per transaction) but makes a great difference to the lives of people in Pacific Island Countries, often allowing families to invest in education, medical care and small enterprises.

Labour Mobility

- 2020 Forum Trade Ministers Meeting agreed to include labour mobility as a standing item of the FTMM, recognised the strong call for a more inclusive and transparent regional dialogue on labour mobility.
- The Secretariat has concluded a comprehensive assessment on Labour Mobility. From the Assessment 3 main recommendations are proposed:
  - Regional Platform for decision-making on Labour Mobility and Policy Support
  - Regional Labour Mobility Strategy
  - Regional information sharing on diaspora engagement strategies

223. In the Pacific, with limited financial sector development and a limited number of commercial banks, MTOs offer cheap, reliable and accessible support for families to finance basic goods and services. The closure (or anticipated closure) of Pacific-focused MTOs in major remittance sending countries, due to stringent compliance with Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Financing of Terrorism (AML & CFT) legislation by commercial banks, will increase costs and limit access to services and remittances inflows to the Pacific.

224. While MTOs still dominate, there has been an increased transfer of inward remittances through mobile money transfers during the pandemic.[26] Increasing mobile coverage, digital and financial literacy and financial inclusion can help support remittance inflows.

225. In summary, the following is expected to impact remittance inflows to the Pacific:

- The full social and economic impacts of COVID-19 are still unfolding. There is an ongoing risk to jobs and incomes which can reduce the capacity to maintain remittance inflows to the Pacific in the short-to-medium term;
- The cost of remittances in the Pacific is still above the SDGs target and requires a collective effort from all relevant stakeholders; and
- As called for by Forum Economic Ministers in their 2020 recent annual meetings, de-risking issues must be dealt with by all concerned stakeholders both at the regional and international levels.

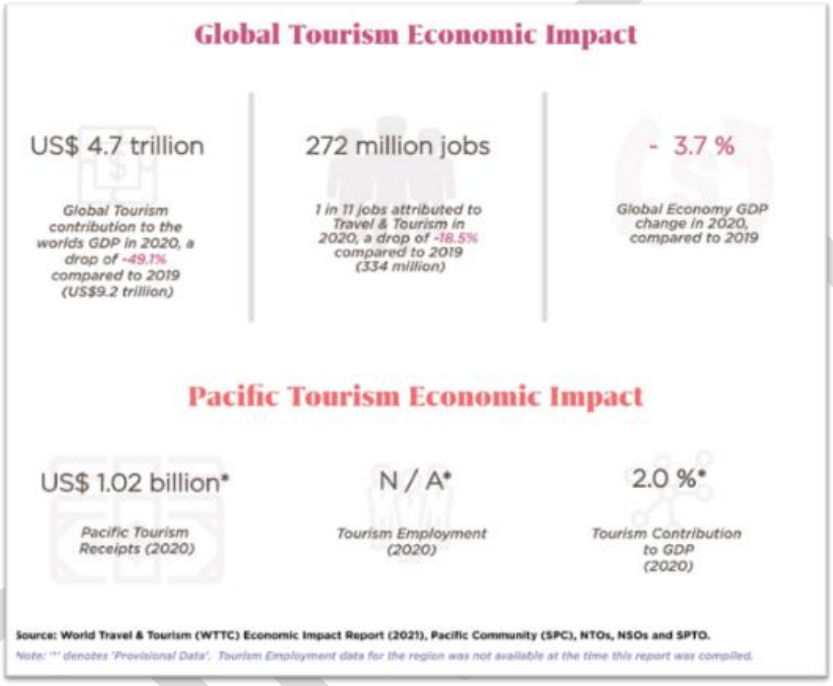
5.3.7 Tourism dependency highlights key revenue concentration risk

226. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism was an economic powerhouse and one of the main pillars sustaining growth and development in the Pacific. Visitors from all over the world were attracted to the warm and welcoming people, beautiful islands, coral reefs and sparkling blue ocean. Tourism created jobs and income for communities and contributed significantly to economic growth. However, tourism came at a cost to the Pacific. Pre-pandemic, the environmental pressures tourism created weren't always properly managed. It placed pressure on our limited resources and infrastructure, irreversibly impacted our fragile island ecosystems, and affected the well-being of our local communities.

[26] https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/430961606712129708/pdf/Pacific-Labor-Mobility-Migration-and-Remittances-in-Times-of-COVID-19-Interim-Report.pdf

227. COVID-19 has brought global tourism to a halt since March 2020. To date, only Fiji and French Polynesia have fully reopened with others partially opened. The unparalleled socio-economic impacts of the pandemic on the Pacific's tourism sector continue to be a major setback over the two years 2020 and 2021 as depicted in the following:

228. The tourism sector stakeholders have used the opportunity presented by the pandemic to reflect, rethink and plan the pathway to recovery for the entire tourism system so that future visitation to our region not only balances economic, social and environmental needs but is also conscious, regenerative and restorative for our people, our culture, our islands and ocean ecosystems and for those who enjoy visiting our region.



229. In the first half of 2021, the Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) brought together government, industry and community leaders from 20 Pacific nations to talk about how to create a better type of tourism. The Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework 2021-2030 was subsequently developed by SPTO and its 20 Member Countries, sector stakeholders and partners. It was endorsed by the Council of Tourism Ministers in October 2021. The Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework reflects the collective vision, goals and objectives of international and regional agencies, national governments, industry, community organisations and development partners.

230. Despite the importance of the tourism industry in the Pacific Region there is increasing awareness of issues around tourism in terms of the distribution of economic benefits, environmental impacts and the effects on local communities. Owing to this range of impacts and the wide spectrum of stakeholders involved, there is increasing acceptance of the need for a more holistic approach to tourism development, management and monitoring. Supporting the PSTPF is the Pacific Tourism Statistics Strategy (PTSS) which will develop and strengthen the statistical base for tourism information.

231. The ambition of the PTSS is to build robust tourism statistical systems at national and regional levels to address the data needs in the Pacific Region. The PTSS defines strategies and actions to increase the production of a new and wider range of tourism data and to encourage the wider use of tourism and related data to inform decision-making by all tourism stakeholders. It also describes a monitoring framework and action plan to demonstrate progress against agreed targets, monitors the success of projects and records lessons learnt that can be applied to current and future strategies.

232. A key strategic focus of the PTSS is the development of an agreed core set of indicators to measure the sustainability of tourism and to monitor progress towards the ambitions of the PSTPF. This strategic focus is supported by strategies concerning improvements in data collection and compilation, management, analysis, dissemination and use by stakeholders as well as data governance.

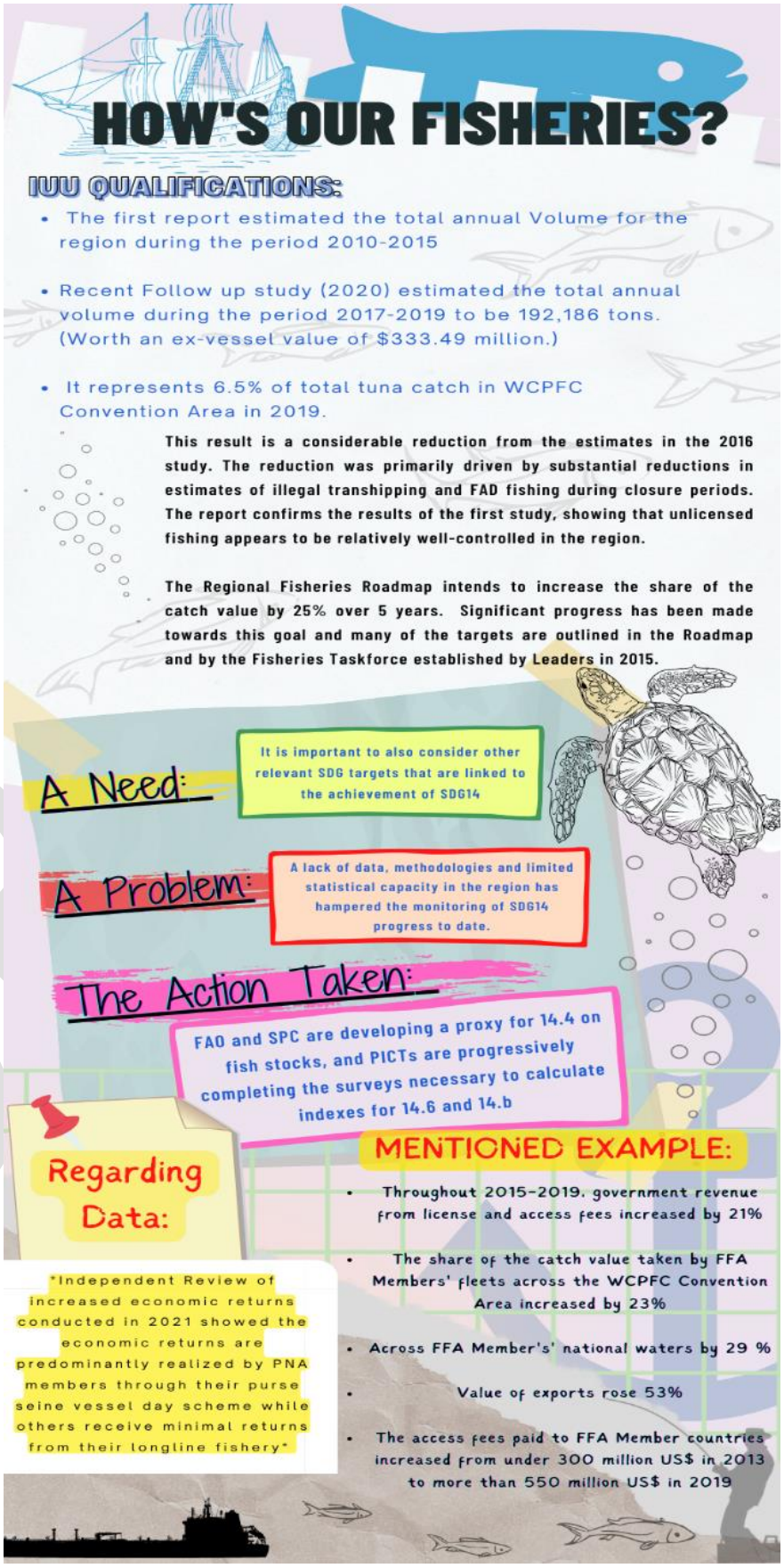
233. With zero growth since March 2020 for most Pacific Island countries means Governments and the private sector are dependent on external funding support to restart tourism. For recovery, accessing sustainable tourism financing is the single most important challenge facing the tourism industry at all levels. The recognition of tourism as an important sector in development partner and aid programmes at bilateral and multilateral levels is key to reviving tourism. It must remain significant. Building a resilient tourism sector means Survival for many tourism businesses, particularly SMEs. Progressing the SDGs means supporting the tourism sector in all its recovery needs and priorities.

5.3.8 Fisheries are a key contributor to economic growth in the Pacific

234. An Independent Review of Increased economic returns conducted in 2021 showed the economic returns are predominantly realized by PNA members through their purse seine vessel day scheme while others receive minimal returns from their longline fishery.

235. Total employment in tuna fisheries and related sectors among FFA Pacific Island members continues to grow, albeit at a slower rate than anticipated under the Regional Roadmap Sustainable Pacific Fisheries. The Roadmap anticipated an increase of 18,000 jobs over ten years with the Taskforce subsequently setting a goal of an increase of 9,000 over 5 years.

236. To address the under-performance of the longline fishery, the Forum Fisheries Ministers adopted a Regional Longline Strategy that specifically addresses the region's shared objectives that includes the establishment of zone-based limits for longline fishing within Economic Exclusive Zones (EEZ) and action within the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) to constrain longline fishing activity on the high seas is ongoing work in the region to explore the use of new technology in the fight against IUU fishing, where the Australian Government made a significant commitment to tackling IUU fishing through the



Pacific Maritime Security Programme. An aerial surveillance programme is also in place which significantly boosted the capacity of FFA Members to survey their vast EEZs.

237. There have been several initiatives to increase the supply of tuna to local markets, including increasing landings from commercial tuna fleets. Several countries now require licensed vessels to land on onshore bases with by-catch going to the local markets. Many countries have programs to increase tuna catches by artisanal fleets, mainly by the provision of anchored fish aggregating devices (FADs). A holistic understanding of the nexus between IUU fishing and the denial of fundamental rights for the crew on the terms and conditions of their labour, including those related to wages, safety standards and other living and working conditions, is important to consider.

238. Extreme underpayment and overwork of those employed on fishing vessels falsely lower the cost of fishing, supporting overfishing. Broadly, there is a correlation between poor working conditions on fishing vessels and other fisheries-related crimes, including IUU fishing.

239. Given the established link between poor working conditions, resource overharvesting and IUU activities, the Government of New Zealand is currently funding a regional multi-partner project, implemented by IOM, ILO, UNODC and the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency, which seeks to promote and maintain safe, decent and worthwhile working conditions on fishing vessels in the Pacific.

Progress work on tuna fisheries, IUU, enforcement and surveillance

240. The office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner is currently working on establishing the new Pacific Ocean Initiatives Dashboard. This tool is aimed to track all ocean-related projects and initiatives in the Pacific. By doing this, it will assist the Pacific Island Countries/Territories, Regional organizations, Development Partners and other stakeholders, in terms of informing "who is doing what", "what is the volume of ocean-related initiatives/projects in the Pacific region", "what is the level and landscape of finance" invested so far by "finance institutions/partners" in the plethora of "ocean sectors" in the Pacific.

241. The impacts of COVID-19 have affected the ability of the Pacific Islands Countries to effectively manage, control and undertake surveillance exercises. The important role that fisheries observers play in the purse seine fishery was significantly affected. Despite these, the disruptions by COVID-19 provided the opportunity for Pacific Island Countries through the FFA to develop new MCS tools.

242. Impacts of climate change and natural disasters will add pressure on fisheries, therefore mobilizing investments for access and management of data on coastal fisheries is critical. Also, it was identified that the sanctity of the traditional and customary ties that Pacific peoples share with the Ocean as their endowment fund, inherited from their ancestors and for which we must hold in trust for future generations – must be acknowledged.

243. As stewards of the ocean, we are required to look over it and care for it. To continue to benefit from it, we need to invest in it and nurture it through wise and sustainable management. Such measured management will enable us to address the most pressing challenges we are faced with. It starts with finding the right equilibrium between conservation and development (or sustainable management and use). This nexus between ocean and culture or traditional knowledge has been lacking in the Pacific.

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244. There have also been several key economic sectors that operate for the benefit of economies in the Blue Pacific Ocean. While the established sectors such as tuna fisheries, coastal fisheries, etc. in the Pacific have been adequately reported, it is important to cast more attention on other sectors that are emerging and developing fast. These include tourism, submarine cables and satellites, ocean renewable energy, deep-sea minerals, marine genetic biotechnology, culture and traditional knowledge, ocean finance, blue economy and ocean accounting.

Recommendations

Prosperity

1. Support the outcomes of the Pacific Regional Debt Conference which included the need for more innovative and climate friendly revenue generating initiatives; increased public private dialogue on SOE reforms; exploration of lessons learned on sustainable financing mechanisms to prevent a drain on fiscal resources; and the potential for multiple funding sources to be harmonised and aligned to members' needs.

2. Continued commitment to the implementation of the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework (2021-2030) which calls for a holistic approach to tourism development, management and monitoring.

3. Continued implementation of the Regional Sustainable Fisheries Roadmap and the Regional Longline Fisheries Strategy, noting the forthcoming updated report to Leaders on the independent review of the Roadmap's goal to increase economic returns from fisheries.

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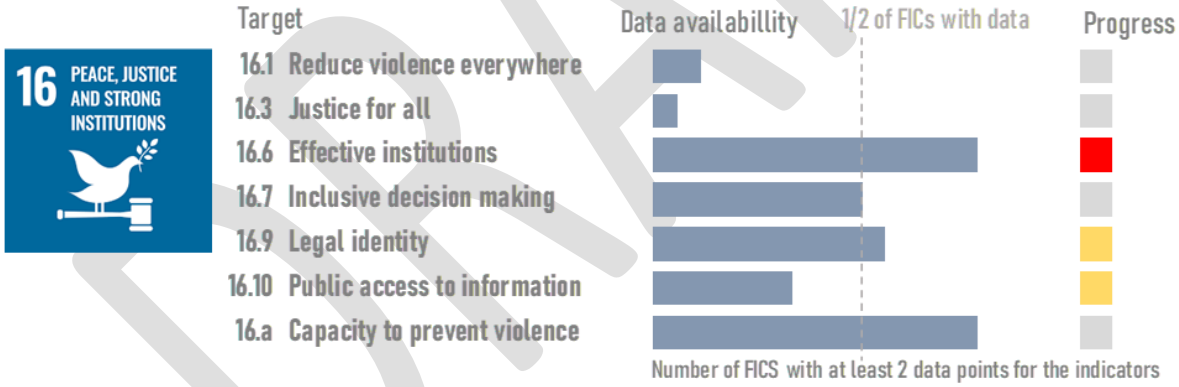
Section 6: Means of Implementation – Development effectiveness and partnership

Link to the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent

There is close alignment between SDG 16 and 17 and **Means of Implementation** and key aspects of the draft 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent which includes a strategic pathway across all seven thematic areas devoted to partnership and cooperation. The draft 2050 Strategy also includes a thematic area devoted to political leadership and regionalism which highlights the importance of collective action and the necessity for political leadership and regional cooperation that acknowledges the existing complex regional architecture or system that draws on the support of regional agencies, civil society, private sector, faith-based organizations, academia and a broad range of development partners.

Data Availability

Only 12 (50 percent) of the 21 targets identified below, more than half of FICs have at least 2 data points for the indicators. 3 targets have less than half of FICs with 2 data points and 6 targets don't have data available.



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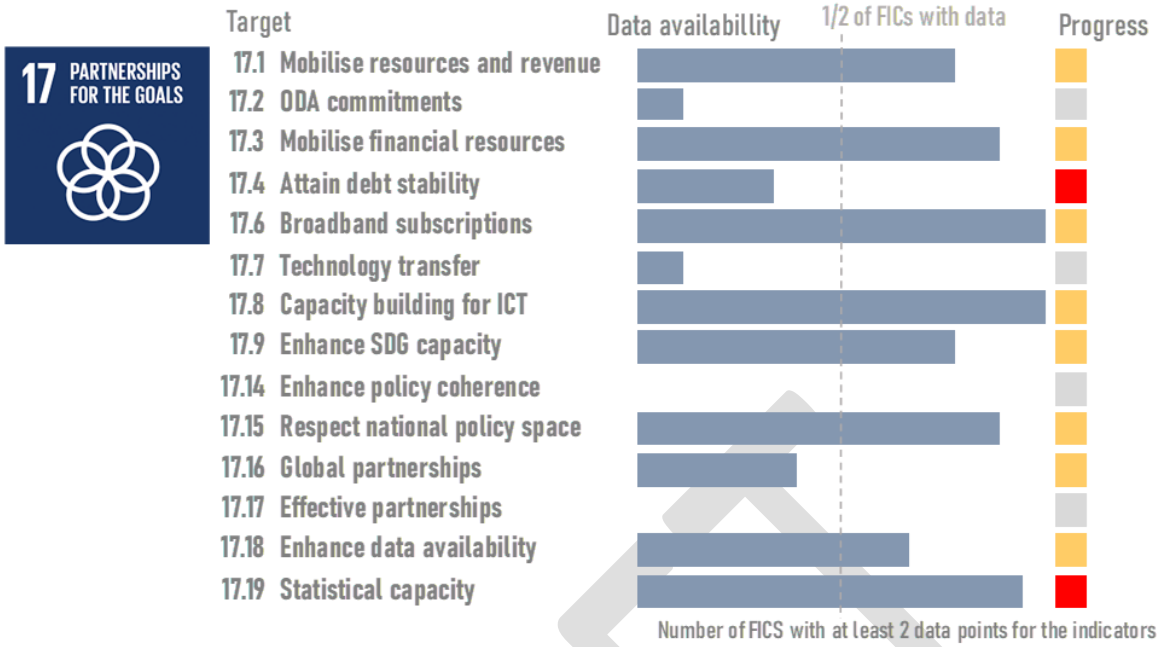

Progress on the 2020 Biennial Report Recommendations

Under 'Means of Implementation', the 2020 Biennial Report recommendations focused on two main aspects. These were: (i) the need for measures to strengthen coordination and collaboration; and (ii) the importance of increasing commitment to the collection and analysis of timely, accurate and disaggregated data for evidence-based policy, planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and accountability. The specific recommendations are summarized as:

a) Continue to more effectively utilise financing options; coordination mechanisms; local, national and regional capacities and institutions to strengthen planning, budgeting and implementation;
b) Share lessons learned and best practices and encourage coordination, cooperation and partnerships within the region as envisaged in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism and as a Blue Pacific Continent;
c) Continue to build closer partnerships within Asia and the Pacific as envisaged in the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development to address transboundary issues and promote wider regional cooperation;
d) Support the establishment of a Pacific Statistical Collections Financing Facility to address national statistical collection budget gaps and support technical assistance for the production of high quality and timely data; and
e) Strengthen national/local capacity in planning, monitoring and evaluation based on contextually and culturally appropriate analysis and use of data.

The decision by Forum Leaders in 2019 to develop the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, emphasizes the importance of working together to secure the future of the Pacific. The Strategy will be accompanied by a review of the regional architecture to ensure the governance arrangements and relationships with the region's partners most effectively support coordination and cooperation efforts. The draft 2050 Strategy also recognizes the contribution of all stakeholders, including CROP and other regional agencies; the private sector; civil society; media; academia; community, cultural and faith-based organizations; development partners; and other equally valuable constituencies.

While a Pacific Statistical Collections Financing Facility has not been established, a new Strategic Framework (TYPSS 2) is being prepared with a focus on Capability Development; Improved Data Quality; Coordinated Support; Improved Statistical Literacy; and Access to Data. With respect to the

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second 2020 recommendation on data and statistics, there have been a range of initiatives to improve national capacity to contextualize and ensure culturally the collection, analysis and use of data. Two examples of these efforts are the broadening of the Household and Income Expenditure Surveys and the work undertaken by FAO and SPC on the production of indicators on undernourishment and food insecurity that includes deprivation methods that focus on measuring poverty through an assessment of how many "deprivations" are experienced by individuals and/or households in relation to a range of specific criteria.

6.1 S.A.M.O.A Pathway

245. The S.A.M.O.A Pathway, adopted in 2014, is a central policy document for sustainable development in Small Island Developing States which covers priorities such as: (i) sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth; (ii) climate change; (iii) sustainable energy; (iv) disaster risk reduction; (v) oceans and seas; (vi) food security and nutrition; (vii) water and sanitation; (viii) sustainable transportation; (ix) sustainable consumption and production; (x) chemical and waste management; (xi) health and non-communicable diseases; (xii) gender equality; (xiii) social development; (xiv) biodiversity; and (xv) means of implementation.

246. The sustainable development agenda for Small Island Developing States (SIDS), in line with the S.A.M.O.A Pathway and predecessor agreements have recognised a "special case" for SIDS development given their array of multidimensional vulnerabilities, including small size, geographical isolation, debt sustainability concerns, susceptibility to natural disasters, and increasingly severe effects of climate change. It was noted that an analytical approach that identifies vulnerabilities and resilience gaps in SIDS is critical to unpack the "special case'' and inform national planning and policies.

247. In this regard, a United Nations General Assembly resolution in 2021 provided a mandate for a Multi-dimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) to be finalized and adopted in 2022. The MVI will consider economic vulnerabilities, structural development limitations, and environmental vulnerabilities. Results of a pilot MVI showed that the SIDS represented the biggest share of the vulnerable countries across the world in all dimensions. It was highlighted that the MVI could be used to assess the impact of structural vulnerabilities on socio-economic outcomes and the ability of SIDS to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, the MVI has the potential to (a) provide a strong basis for debt restructuring, (b) complement criteria for access to development cooperation including concessional financing, (c) inform multilateral and bilateral financing frameworks, and (d) inform the design of SIDS specific instruments, including climate financing.

248. In early 2022, a framework for monitoring the S.A.M.O.A Pathway was endorsed. Utilizing existing global frameworks, progress under the S.A.M.O.A Pathway was measured by both "trend analysis", using a range of data sources, including existing global data portals, and "policy progress", identifying the changes, results and impact in national policies.

249. The trend analysis measured progress across 5 thematic areas: (i) Economic growth, sustainable consumption and production and sustainable transport; (ii) Mitigate climate change, implementing sustainable energy and disaster risk reduction programs: (iii) Protect biodiversity of SIDS and care of environmental health, including oceans; (iv) Human health, improved water and sanitation and gender equity and women's empowerment; Fostering partnership among SIDS, UN Agencies and other development partners. While the dashboards produced through this trend analysis have been included

in the relevant sections of this report it was clear that evidence suggests that there has been progress in the Pacific across areas of ODA, Energy and Health.

250. Policy progress in the Pacific SIDS has been mixed. Overall, policies across the Pacific have made headways, particularly in the areas to mitigate climate change, sustainable energy, disaster risk reduction, and in protecting biodiversity and oceans. Pacific SIDS are some of the most active member States in the space of climate change, having submitted their Nationally Determined Commitments (NDCs) is a demonstration of steadfast commitment to the Paris Agreement (ESCAP, 2022). Pacific SIDS are also taking the ownership to build their preparedness, resilience and capability to recover quickly from natural calamities. All Pacific SIDS have put in place some sort of national disaster risk management (DRM) or disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategy (ESCAP, 2022).

251. Pacific SIDS are active in the global discourse of oceans, some are among the firsts to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and most have signed up to the Agreement for implementation of provisions of the UNCLOS related to conservation and management of straddling fish and highly migratory fish stocks.

252. All Pacific SIDS, apart from Tonga, have signed or ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEADW) (UNHRTB, 2022). Efforts to mainstream gender equality in policymaking in Pacific SIDS are clearly articulated in their Voluntary National Reviews.

6.2 Development Cooperation

253. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for a whole-of-society approach to development that builds on the collective actions of all stakeholders to deliver long-lasting solutions for people and the planet while leaving no one behind. Improved development cooperation is recognised as one of the important elements of a means of implementation for the 2030 Agenda and SDGs. It is reflected in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), which calls for continued efforts to improve the quality, effectiveness and impact of development co-operation while recognizing the importance of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC). Goal 17 calls for the strengthening of the means of implementation and revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development. The Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development is the Pacific region's plan to implement the 2030 Agenda, including the SDGs and the SAMOA Pathway.

254. It is critical that both Forum member countries and development partners in the region align their partnerships to development effectiveness principles. In particular, Forum member countries should drive donor coordination systems at the country level. The Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation is the platform for global monitoring of development effectiveness. In the 2018 GPEDC monitoring 11 Pacific countries participated including Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

255. Pacific countries have undertaken many initiatives and reforms aligned with these principles to take stronger ownership and leadership of their own development agenda through intensified attention to strengthening country systems, institutions and capacities for national planning, monitoring, budgeting and public financial and aid management reforms. This, in turn, helps to strengthen engagement with development partners including ensuring development is more inclusive engaging non state actors in the country.

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256. All Pacific countries have national action plans or policies that mirror these regional commitments. All 14 Pacific countries have some form of national plan and sector plans, public financial management reform plan and most have development cooperation policies and joint budget support matrices that guide national prioritisation and resource allocation including driving alignment and harmonization of development partners programming with country priorities. At a national level, many Pacific Island Countries (PICs) have development cooperation policies and implementation frameworks in place, which help drive joint accountability for governments and development partners on the results of development cooperation. Some Pacific countries also have annual, biannual or quarterly dialogues with development partners to discuss the progress of the national development strategies.

257. The intentions of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent as closely aligned with the global agenda on effective development co-operation. The focus of the 2050 Strategy is to strengthen the empowerment of vulnerable groups in particular women, youth, the elderly and persons with disabilities which gives particular attention to leaving no one behind.

258. There is also evidence that South-South and Triangular Co-operation can be useful tools for building the capacity for PICTs in the area of development effectiveness. Through the Forum Compact Peer Reviews and Peer to Peer learning Pacific governments have replicated or adapted good practices from neighbouring Pacific countries. Under the Forum Compact, thirteen PICTs underwent a peer review of their national systems and processes of planning, budgeting, public financial management and aid management. Peer review teams included PICTs officials and a development partner representative (for some reviews there was also representation from civil society). In addition, New Zealand and Australia opened up their systems and processes for peer review by PICTs and other development partner representatives to allow PICTs to better understand how development partner policies, procedures and actions are formulated and implemented and provide feedback on how they might be adjusted to more effectively support PICTs development efforts. What is clear is that peer reviews and peer to peer learning works and there is high and increasing demand from Pacific governments for its use in building capacities and helping to implement already planned national reforms and initiatives.

6.3 Trade

259. The Pacific is proactively engaged in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Fisheries Subsidies negotiations. While negotiations are being protracted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Pacific WTO Members remain steadfastly committed in the resolve to ensure effective and appropriate measures to discipline fisheries subsidies that contributes to IUU fishing, overfished stocks and overcapacity leading to overfishing. The Pacific Group, working closely with other small island developing states including the OACP Member States are optimistic that a balanced text – one that leaves no one behind, is agreed to by end of 2022. The Pacific priority at the MC12 was to deliver a comprehensive outcome on Fisheries Subsidies that is meaningful, pragmatic, balanced and realises the mandate of SDG14.6. Although this was not fully realised, a partial outcome on Fisheries Subsidies was reached on a legally-binding agreement to prohibit two forms of harmful subsidies namely subsidies to Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing and to Overfished stocks (OFS) as well as provisions to improve notification and transparency. The partial outcome on Fisheries Subsidies also included a mandate to continue negotiations on the remaining pillar to discipline subsidies that contribute to Overcapacity and Overfishing (OCOF) as well as to provide for appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing country Members. The conclusion of these negotiations is expected by MC13

which is proposed to be held in 2023 to achieve a comprehensive Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies. Failing this deadline, negotiations are required to be concluded four years after entry into force of the Agreement. The Fisheries Subsidies Agreement will enter into force after ratification by two-thirds of the 164 WTO Members, which may take at least three years.

260. In addition to the partial Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, the MC12 adopted other important outcomes in the form of decisions and declarations: Outcome document for the launch of work on WTO Reform, Trade and Environment, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and Women Economic Empowerment; Ministerial Declaration on the Emergency Response for Food Insecurity; Ministerial Decision on Exemption from Export Prohibitions or Restrictions of World Food Programme (WFP) Food Purchases for humanitarian reasons to address food insecurity and hunger; Ministerial Declaration on the WTO Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic and preparedness for future pandemics; Ministerial Decision on the TRIPS Agreement (TRIPS Waiver) in response to the exceptional circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic; Ministerial Decision on the Work programme on Electronic Commerce (E-commerce) and the Moratorium on customs duties on electronic transmissions to be maintained until 31 March 2024; Extension of Work Programme on Small Economies; Moratorium on TRIPS Non-Violation and Situation Complaints; Ministerial Declaration on the SPS Agreement.

261. On the Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA), PIFS is currently reviewing the agreement with a view to modernise it and make it fit for purpose. Further to the review, PICTA Members will consider the next steps for its implementation. In parallel, PIFS is conducting a review on the PICTA Product Assessment Mapping with the view to review the PICTA Rules of Origins threshold of production to be similar to the PACER+ Agreement.

262. In relation to the Pacific-EU Economic Partnership Agreement, 4 Pacific ACP countries are currently implementing fully or provisional the Agreement. Additional support will be provided under the SPIRIT Project mentioned earlier.

263. PIFS is collaborating with the PACER+ Implementation Unit (PPIU) in order to build complementarity, synergies and harmonization. This collaboration is crucial so that the resources from the PACER+ implementation are put in good use and that PIFS can assist non-PACER+ parties and PPIU to assist the PACER+ parties.

Pacific Regional Electronic-Commerce

264. The Pacific Regional E-commerce Strategy and Roadmap approved in August 2021 by Forum Trade Ministers includes 54 regional measures, i.e. measures that can be implemented through forms of collective action identified in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. By doing so, the Pacific Regional E-commerce Strategy interprets the instances of pragmatic and achievable regionalism with regard to e-commerce, thus complementing the national activities undertaken by members to improve their digital trade readiness.

265. This regional strategy would not have been achieved without development co-operation, including the technical input and guidance by technical agencies such as UNCTAD, UNCDF, UNCITRAL, UNESCAP, the World Bank, the Oceania Customs Organisation, the Pacific Community, and many others. As well as the financial support of like-minded development partners who agreed to pool resources in support of a unified purpose, in particular the EIF, the European Union, and the Australian Government.

266. The PIFS is already in its phase 2 of the E-commerce implementation in undertaking some activities aligned with the strategy recommendations, including the development of a regional e-commerce portal, a regional training course on e-commerce rules for Pacific negotiators, and support for the development of the national e-commerce strategy of Samoa, Tuvalu, and soon Papua New Guinea. PIFS is in partnership with UNCTAD in supporting the National E-commerce Strategies of Fiji and Solomon Islands.

267. Technical capacity is being strengthened to assist with progressing this work from strategy development to implementation of the recommended regional measures. The implementation of the Strategy is tentatively costed at about USD 50 million, excluding the implementation of the infrastructure-related measures with only USD 5.5 million having been secured so far.

268. Establishing a space for members, donors, technical agencies, and the private sector to oversee the implementation and provide the required direction is also very important. This is why the Pacific Regional E-commerce Strategy mandates the development of a regional E-commerce Committee, which will report to Pacific Ministers, and will be assisted by a Donor and a Private Sector Sub-Committee. The PIFS is working on establishing this recommended governance structure, which will be another milestone to ensure better targeting of donor support, together with strong regional ownership.

269. The launch of a Pacific Fintech Bootcamp later in 2022 has been planned in partnership with United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF).

270. In July 2021 Forum Trade Ministers approved the development of a Regional Trade Facilitation Strategy to identify priority collective measures to reduce the time and cost of trading across borders. There is ongoing work by PIFS with assistance from the World Bank to develop this strategy through consultations with Forum members on how this regional strategy can best complement national priorities and areas needing a regional approach. The draft of the Regional Strategy is expected to be developed by July 2022 for Members' consideration.

6.3 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

271. Pacific Leaders have identified the importance of strengthening measures to increase the transparency and accountability of public expenditure and national budgets. Despite this, there remains only limited capacity to track public expenditure at the sector level and only Vanuatu has enacted a Right to Information Law which was adopted in 2016.

272. The region has made strong recent progress to address corruption. Most PICs have now signed up to the UN Convention Against Corruption, and that in 2021 Pacific Leaders endorsed/adopted the Teieniwa Vision on Pacific Unity Against Corruption. In the Teieniwa Vision, Pacific Leaders: “resolve to document anti-corruption impact by developing and maintaining anti-corruption measurement tools and data within our SDG and national plan reporting and address implementation gaps in relation to SDG16 on peace, justice and strong institutions”.

273. Ensuring responsive, inclusive and participatory and representative decision-making at present is measured through the proxy of numbers of women in parliament in the Pacific. In the Pacific, women make up 9 percent of parliament, which is under half of the global average of 21 percent. Three

countries, Federated States of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu currently have no women representatives. Further work to measure the inclusivity of public processes could entail an analysis of the demographic breakdown of public institutions, as well as a perceptions survey on the inclusivity and responsiveness of decision-making processes. For the Pacific, consideration should also be given as to whether inclusivity of community institutions is a worthwhile measure, noting the prevalence of formal-informal governance nexus.

274. The S.A.M.O.A Pathway's focus on development efforts to support "Peaceful Societies and Safe Communities" has facilitated national-level attention to relevant policy areas such as good governance, human rights, peacebuilding, access to justice, and combatting crime and trafficking, albeit with mixed progress. The Pacific region has recognized the importance of good governance in both the Biketawa Plus Security Declaration and the Boe Declaration – for example, the Boe Declaration recalls "the principles underpinning the Biketawa Declaration such as commitment to good governance, belief in the liberty of the individual under the law, upholding democratic processes and institutions and recognising the vulnerability of member countries to threats to their security. The Pacific has further contextualised this 'sustaining peace' approach through the aforementioned Declarations, which call for an expanded concept of security inclusive of human security, humanitarian assistance and prioritising environmental security and disaster resilience.

275. As noted earlier in this report, the Pacific has some of the highest rates globally of lifetime physical and sexual violence by partners. All Pacific SIDS, except Palau and Tonga have ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and accompanying legal frameworks criminalising domestic violence are in place. Despite this, there is limited data available to measure gendered access to justice in both formal and informal systems.

276. Trafficking in persons is a growing concern in the Pacific region, which is a source, transit and destination point for trafficking in persons. The scale of the problem is very difficult to determine due to a lack of overall awareness, infrequent prosecutions and limited official statistics, as well as a related paucity of information due to a dearth of targeted research and data collection and the insidious nature of the crime.

277. While labour mobility is important for Pacific islanders, there is also significant labour migration into the Pacific, particularly from Asian countries to work in construction and extractive industries (mining, logging and fisheries). This has created challenges in protecting the rights of these migrant workers and many have been stranded without support following border closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. More needs to be known about the nature of labour migration into the Pacific and the risks it may pose. The long distances between islands and small land areas make maritime areas difficult to monitor, with PICs lacking the resources to effectively monitor borders and enforce national and international law. Evidence of forced labour and other abuses (including unexplained deaths at sea) have continued to come to light in the fishing industry in the Pacific. Many fishing fleet operators rely heavily on rural, migrant workers and these workers are extremely vulnerable to abuse in distant-water fleets.

278. PICs through the 1991 Honiara Declaration and 2002 Nasonini Declaration have committed to combatting trafficking and transnational crime, recognising increased global connectivity and the Pacific region's geography of vast maritime corridors render countries vulnerable to organized crime, including trafficking in persons, drugs and arms, as well as environmental crimes.

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279. Environmental crimes are typically in the form of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities. Limited national capacity for maritime surveillance and fisheries law enforcement is supplemented by the Forum Fisheries Agency's Regional Surveillance Centre. There are ongoing efforts to strengthen combatting of transnational crimes and trafficking through the maritime domain by sharing fisheries information for broader law enforcement use.

280. Ten countries (Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu) have ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Its supplementary protocols have one of the world's lowest ratification rates in the Pacific: Protocol on human trafficking has been ratified by 4 Pacific countries (Fiji, Kiribati, Micronesia (Federated States of) and Nauru); protocol on migrant smuggling 3 (Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru) and protocol on firearms 2 (Fiji, Nauru). This leaves considerable gaps in Pacific States' legislation addressing transnational organized crime.

281. Overall, there is limited data in this area. There is limited information on human trafficking, drugs and firearms trafficking. However, there are ongoing efforts by the regional law enforcement secretariats (Pacific Immigration Directors Conference, Oceania Customs Organisation, Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (Pacific Transnational Crime Network) to enhance data collection and analysis on transnational crimes relevant to their operational areas.

282. With respect to drug controls, only four countries (Fiji, Tonga, the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia), are party to all three of the United Nations Drug Control Conventions. As a result, drug-related legislation across some PICs is outdated and ill-equipped to address emerging issues.

283. The independence of the judiciary is key to ensuring equality before the law. In the Pacific, some constitutions and laws allow for the selection and management of senior judicial officials by the executive branch without any checks or balances from other branches, especially the legislature. In some PICs, the constitution creates legal committees exclusively headed by cabinet members to decide on personnel issues and procedures for judges. In recent years, concerns have been raised about judicial independence in Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea and Samoa. Concerns in other PICs include the backlog of court cases, lack of court resources and staff, and judicial officers remaining an impediment to access to justice. Studies have identified some of the challenges as the physical inaccessibility of courts for those living in remote islands, despite attempts to improve outreach and services; and on the other hand the level of experience of adjudicators, the reliance on foreign judicial expertise, gaps in law enforcement in legal and administrative procedures, deficiencies in the prosecution system, lack of administrative capacity, and the lack of an ombudsman or independent national human rights institutions in most PICs.

6.4 Building a Sustainable Transportation Sector

284. For many years, attempts have been made to leverage the Pacific's limited resources and strengths to collaborate in enhancing **regional air connectivity**. However, very little progress was made in the past 40 years or so, since the one regional airline concept in the form of Air Pacific ended. Over the years as PICs became independent, one of the first initiatives was to set up a national airline. Today almost every independent PIC has its own airline. And while these airlines are providing much-needed air services to meet their countries' needs and aspirations, these have come at a huge cost to the PICs.

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285. Very few airlines achieve profitability continuously. In a good year, they might make a profit but that profit is hardly sufficient to fund future aircraft needs. All have resorted to debt financing for their large operational needs.

286. At the 2021 Aviation Minister's meeting, the first meeting since 2014, Minister's endorsed a study to carry out a holistic air transport review and reform the air transport system among the PICs. The objective of the study was to explore all options available that will improve air connectivity and enhance the economic sustainability of air services in the region.

287. Aviation represents an essential lifeline and air traffic from these countries have tended to grow faster than the world average. As with maritime ports, most airports in the Pacific receive only a limited number of flights a week, and costs of air travel are disproportionally high. Despite the Pacific Islands Air Service Agreement (PIASA), air connectivity has not significantly improved, although aviation safety and security remains a priority for departments of transport, Civil Aviation Authorities are not always adequately resourced to assume their responsibilities.

288. The pandemic brought unprecedented challenges to the airlines, with revenue streams severely disrupted while loan repayments and lease payments remain to be met. In addition, there are other fixed costs that are unavoidable. Equipment, including aircraft and also systems (GDS, Safety, RM etc) must be maintained to ensure they are functioning, effective and compliant. The same is true for technical staff such as engineers, pilots, and specialized staff, including management.

289. Unable to service these financial commitments, airlines were forced to renegotiate loan/lease contracts and fall back on the shareholders, in this case, the Governments to provide the financial support. These are in the form of either direct grants or loan guarantees. If it is a loan, what this means is that effectively they are borrowing to repay loans. Some airlines were forced to return aircrafts due to non-payment of leases.

290. The maritime sector is also crucial for national development and social cohesion in any modern society, but more so, for maritime nations of the Pacific region, which depend primarily on the sea for commerce, trade and mobility. According to the World Bank, the total imports of goods and services in the Pacific accounted for 67percent of GDP compared to the world average of 30 percent. The sector is central to the lives of Pacific Islanders, serving as the backbone of domestic inter-island transport, often providing the only means of access to and from smaller outer islands to meet key socio-economic needs for these island communities, such as education, healthcare, and emergency services in response to catastrophic events (cyclones, droughts, etc.). The region is also heavily dependent on the maritime sector to provide and support domestic, intra-regional, and international transport of cargo and passengers, and to facilitate trade, fisheries and cruise tourism.

291. Maritime transport is responsible for about 2.5 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. Given the predicted increase, of between 50 percent and 250 percent by 2050, current trends are incompatible with the internationally agreed goal of keeping global temperature increase to below 2°C. The Paris Agreement requires worldwide emissions to be at least halved from 1990 levels by 2050 and the recent IMO agreement to cut the shipping sector's overall CO2 output by 50 percent by 2050 while welcomed, is grossly inadequate for meeting the global emission targets. For many PICTs, existing maritime transport services are increasingly unaffordable and unsustainable, with fossil fuel as the largest single operating cost for shipping operators.

292. Maritime ports are a key enabler of economic growth, given their role as gateways for international trade. This was highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic, where keeping ports functional was one of the key measures that most Governments implemented to ensure the flow of essential goods to their populations, helping to effectively address the crisis. Ports are also major contributors to employment, local development, and potentially decarbonizing global supply chains, as maritime transport offers many advantages in terms of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This comprehensive role of ports entails a wide set of economic, social and environmental challenges in their development, which were further exacerbated during the pandemic.

293. ESCAP is conducting a research study to develop policy recommendations for sustainable port development taking into account the regional and national context in the Pacific region. This study will work with countries in the Pacific region to assess their current activities, identify key opportunities and challenges they face, and ultimately assist in designing a roadmap for improving sustainability. In particular, in this study, energy conversion and Low Emission-High Efficiency were specifically investigated as part of strategies and practical approaches for zero net emissions.

294. ESCAP is also conducting studies to improve the quality of national policies on sustainable maritime and port connectivity in the Pacific region and to develop policy proposals to improve maritime connectivity after Covid-19. The purpose of the study is to increase the capacity of both public and private sector stakeholders in target countries of the Pacific SIDS to design and implement sustainable maritime and port connectivity policies exploring existing and emerging opportunities for maritime and port services and pursuing them through national or regional actions.

Transport Safety and Security

295. Safety and security issues remain a concern and a priority for all modes of transport in the Pacific. Whatever the mode of transport, regulatory bodies and administrations in the Pacific must be adequately resourced, independent and have the capacity to assume their responsibilities and international obligations through good governance. While international shipping and aviation are less of a concern for PICTs with regard to the implementation of international safety instruments, domestic transport continues to face issues in the implementation of international safety and security instruments. In particular, many domestic vessels are sailing on domestic routes that are similar to international routes that the level of safety requirements should be equivalent to international conventions. Reliance on aged and poorly maintained domestic vessels, vessel overloading, lack of life-saving and emergency communications equipment on-board several domestic ships, and general lack of enforcement of safety regulations are evidenced by maritime accidents. In addition, political interference and commercial pressure, as well as pressure from communities on ship operators or masters, make the safe and efficient management of domestic vessels difficult.

Transport Accessibility

296. Within the Pacific, most of the islands are scattered and widely dispersed with some islands so remote that air or shipping services are non-existent or inadequate because of the economic costs and/or operational challenges involved in servicing such islands. As a result, people on these islands do not have the same level of access to economic opportunities and social services and therefore are disadvantaged. This affects priority vulnerable groups in Pacific communities, which rely on transport services to access markets and run small businesses. Transport infrastructure and adapted modes of

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transport need to be developed to respond to communities' needs and provide reliable and affordable services.

Transport Efficiency and Connectivity

297. The long-standing concern about irregular, unreliable and expensive shipping services and the lack of resources or power in PICTs to deliver the protection to air services in a new operating environment and open markets continues to affect the smallest PICTs. Leaders have mandated officials in the transport sector to explore options that can improve connectivity and affordability of air and maritime transport services. Regional initiatives such as the Pacific Islands Air Service Agreement (PIASA) and shipping commissions and support from development partners try to address the need for improved regional transport infrastructure and operational connectivity.

Transport Sustainability

298. While PICTs have set national targets for reducing their reliance on fossil fuels, most of these efforts are towards substituting fossil fuels that are used for power generation. While the PICTs have made significant progress in terms of promoting renewable energy, they cannot ignore the fact that most of their fuel oil consumption is in the transport sector. The latest developments at ICAO and IMO for international aviation and maritime transport and the measures to reduce GHG emissions from these sectors provide significant challenges but also opportunities for technology transfer and implementation in PICTs domestic transport. There is a wide range of available solutions that could address both transport GHG emissions and imported fossil fuel dependency that needs to be integrated and include education and research, capacity development and training, policy development, economic analysis and modelling, heritage revitalization and the uptake of new technologies and proof of concept pilot projects.

6.5 Innovation in Science and Technology

299. The achievement of sustainable development in the Pacific region can be greatly facilitated through the adoption of regionally appropriate science and technology solutions that bring innovations to addressing the specific development challenges facing the region. In fostering Pacific innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship it is vital that appropriate recognition is given to existing traditional Pacific cultures and knowledge, while ensuring proposed solutions respect human rights principles.

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300. At the regional level, the Pacific-Europe Network for Science, Technology and Innovation (PACE-Net) project brings together government and academic stakeholders, CROP and UN agencies from across the Pacific and Europe to enhance science and technology capacity in the Pacific.

301. PACE-Net is a network that promotes knowledge exchange that builds upon traditional knowledge in ways that respect traditional practices and that enhance knowledge production; provides evidence and advice to support regional activities; improves the quality of STEM teaching and raises the level of scientific competency across societies; and facilitate open access to regional scientific data for the benefit of all Pacific nations.

Pacific Quality Infrastructure Initiative – Phase 1

In September 2019, Forum Island Country (FIC) representatives convened in Nadi, Fiji, to discuss the regional agenda on Quality Infrastructure. On that occasion, FIC representatives:

- recognised the "strong potential of Quality Infrastructure to underpin the health, safety, wealth and sustainability of the Pacific Island economies and their people; and that wealth will be underpinned by the power of Quality Infrastructure to add value to Pacific goods and services, increase trade competitiveness, and ensure access to markets by addressing non-tariff barriers".
- adopted the international definition of Quality Infrastructure as of "a system comprising the organisations (public and private) together with the policies, relevant legal and regulatory framework, and practices needed to support and enhance the quality, safety and environmental soundness of goods, services and processes".
- requested "the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) to continue providing regional leadership and coordination for the development of a strong Pacific Quality Infrastructure", including by coordinating work "to identify gaps, prioritize needs, and work towards solutions".

302. The network places a specific focus on ensuring that all policies, institutes and strategies related to innovation, science and technology are based on principles and safeguards for equity and inclusion. This includes ensuring gender equality and inclusion of people with disabilities at; ensuring that research is based on principles of free, prior, informed consent; and leads to the development of protocols for intellectual property rights and access and benefits-sharing.

303. Work is underway to produce a regional roadmap for innovation, science and technology to strengthen contributions in this area while enhancing Pacific regionalism and advancing sustainable development objectives. It requires a thorough understanding of the current challenges, actors and capacity in the Pacific.

304. The broadband divide continues to widen within the Pacific and between the Pacific, other parts of Asia-Pacific and globally in fixed- and mobile-broadband with the most recent information on market shares (i.e. subscription per 100) showing differences within the region and between fixed and mobile broadband. Affordability, measured as a percentage of gross national income (GNI) spent on broadband services (i.e. less than 2 percent indicates affordability), is a challenge for the Pacific. Most recent figures show Tonga (2.5 percent) and Fiji (2.7 percent) as the most affordable of the PICTs, which reflects the high mobile-broadband penetration (of 59 and 148 per 100), respectively. PNG (10.7 percent), FSM (10.6 percent), and Solomon Islands (12 percent) are the least affordable of the PICTs.

305. The capacity of the ICT sector to implement and sustain digital transformation needs strengthening and requires multi-sectoral partnerships. USP chairs a regional ICT working group to facilitate coordination and strengthen ICT collaboration under the Pacific Regional ICT Strategic Action Plan (PRISAP). ICT Ministerial Meetings have been held in the past but there is no regular intergovernmental meeting.

306. At the national level, PNG and Tonga have well-developed plans that incorporate a range of activities, including science education in schools, community initiatives and structured science advice mechanisms for government policy. The Government of Samoa has endorsed the establishment of a science, technology and innovation policy with a particular emphasis on supporting linkages to business and supporting economic growth in the country.

307. Papua New Guinea has established a Science and Technology Council and Secretariat to support and oversee the country's National plan and National Research Agenda. The Council and Secretariat serve as a conduit of information and communication between government, society, research and education bodies, international institutes to bridge the gaps between science, policy, knowledge creation and technological advancement.

308. In all three countries and emphasis is given to providing strategic direction to the development of science and technology, increasing the degree to which countries themselves set the science agenda and supporting the development and commercialization of technological innovation to serve social, economic and environmental needs as defined in national development strategies.

309. An immediate priority is to generate data on what works for ST&I development in PICTs to be able to learn from and support these country level initiatives.

Pacific Quality Infrastructure Initiative – Phase 2

In partnership with Based on widely accepted definitions,
Quality Infrastructure is made up of the following components:

1. Quality Infrastructure Governance including quality policies, and technical regulations
2. Core Quality Infrastructure Institutions responsible for standardisation, metrology, and accreditation
3. Quality Infrastructure Services including conformity assessment (testing, inspection, certification), calibration, verification, market surveillance, and promotion of a quality culture

- Besides the core components, the establishment of a regional Quality Infrastructure systems involves activities in the following areas:

4. Trade and Enterprise Development
5. Consumers and Markets
6. Beyond Trade, Quality Infrastructure is the backbone for other aspects in life such as health, environment, and buildings

- PIFS has taken up the role of as the coordinator for Quality Infrastructure in the Pacific. The PQI Unit is led by a Coordinator, Project Manager and Finance and Administration Officer.
- PIFS is currently implementing the PQI project with funding from the EIF (Enhanced Integrated Framework), the EU, Australia, Germany, and Japan.
- The PQI project includes the establishment of a regional governance and technical framework for Quality Infrastructure, capacity development and awareness measures on standardisation, metrology and conformity assessment, quality promotion, and value chain analysis.
- Upcoming activities include needs assessments on standardisation, metrology and conformity assessment (testing, certification) and the establishment of regional QI committees to drive collaboration and coordination among FICs

310. The future development of Pacific innovation, Science and Technology for and by the Pacific, must include:

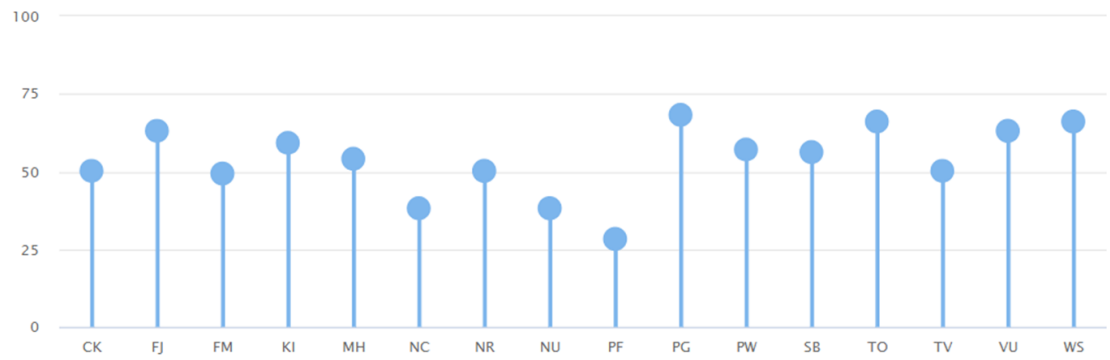
- accessible protocols for free prior, informed consent, intellectual property rights and access and benefits-sharing;
- A regional mechanism or organization to be the custodian of and facilitate open access to scientific knowledge;
- Explicit and cross-cutting safeguards and protocols for moving to gender equality in all stages of innovation, science and technology, as well as for people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples;
- Programmes that recognize and foster grassroots innovations; and
- Environmental safeguards to ensure stewardship of the Pacific Ocean and its Islands.
- Leverage the digital technology including the geospatial technologies.

6.6 Leveraging the power of Data and Statistics

311. The 2030 Agenda and the identification of seventeen SDGs, with 169 integrated and indivisible targets brought new challenges for Pacific policy-makers, planners and statisticians. It created an unprecedented demand for data and statistical information to monitor and effectively report progress across all the SDGs. Whilst there have been some improvements in national statistical systems, many remain under-resourced to effectively collect and analyse the breadth of data and information required for evidence-based performance budgeting, monitoring and evaluation of national development policies, strategies and programmes.

312. Reporting against the global SDGs (including the Pacific subset) is still limited, but improvements in data availability have been achieved over the last two years, with 38 percent of all SDG Indicators having sufficient data to assess progress in 2021, an increase from 26 percent in 2019 (the number for the Pacific subset being even higher). With respect to the Pacific subset of SDG indicators, we saw that in the 2018 Quadrennial Report, 48 percent of the 131 SDG indicators had baseline data, increasing to 55percent in the 2020 Biennial Report. The Pacific now has 59percent of its indicators with baseline data.

Figure 2: Current availability (percent of the 131 Pacific SDGs in the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development) by country, based on data in the Pacific Data Hub)



313. The improvement in indicator availability has been primarily the result of: (i) the engagement of Pacific countries in the Voluntary National Review process which has led to a closer alignment of national indicators to the SDGs and increased national interest in monitoring progress; (ii) tailoring of household survey instruments to the SDGs; (iii) improvements in methodologies at the global level which has seen all SDG indicators move into Tier 1 or Tier 2 ; and (iv) statistics training opportunities delivered by regional and global development partners.

314. Since the first Quadrennial Report, a Disaster-related statistics framework has been developed, involving the participation of several PICTs. There has also been significant progress in the Pacific reporting against the Sendai Framework Monitor, with all 12 Pacific SIDs plus Australia and New Zealand reporting in 2021 on progress across 280 targets, compared with only 3 SIDs reporting in 2020 against 51 targets.

315. In the area of ocean accounting and statistics, Palau and Fiji are members of the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, which has highlighted the importance of completing a sequence of ocean accounts as an action for a sustainable ocean economy. Palau, Fiji and Samoa have begun experimenting with the development of ocean ecosystem accounting, that includes adopting the use of relevant global in combination with local data.

316. FAO and SPC have also undertaken significant work to strengthen the production of indicators on undernourishment and food insecurity and fish stocks, sustainable fisheries and illegal fishing. A number of countries in the Pacific have benefited from this assistance. The PSMB (Pacific Statistics

Methods Board) has developed a discussion paper on measuring poverty in the Pacific which focuses on different methods for poverty measurement. This includes deprivation methods which focus on measuring poverty through an assessment of how many "deprivations" are experienced by individuals and/or households in relation to a range of specific criteria. These criteria might include factors related to education, health, asset ownership and living standards, but exclude direct assessment of expenditure/consumption. This allows countries to determine which deprivations are relevant to their own setting.

317. The Pacific data through the Pacific Data Hub (PDH) provides a central, sustainable and accessible platform for cataloguing or hosting Pacific data from countries. It is supported by SPC and other partners, agencies and institutions. There are currently 1.26 million data points and 1500 indicators, a significant increase from 110,000 data points and 350 indicators in mid-2020. The PDH has also proved a valuable platform for the storage and dissemination of up-to-date country COVID-19 case numbers, deaths and vaccination doses.

318. The Pacific Microdata Library located on the PDH is promoting secure data discovery and re-use, while also serving to safely archive PICT data collections. There are currently 680 surveys in the Library, with nearly 1,100 citations credited in journal articles, reports and research papers. Work is ongoing to facilitate access to this data between the countries and users.

319. Pacific countries have faced additional data demands since 2020, as governments, development partners and donors seek to understand the ongoing economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, the pandemic has highlighted the value of administrative data such as trade, visitor arrivals and tourism spending, and macro-economic indicators that can be monitored quarter to quarter.

320. Additionally, specific surveys were conducted in the region to track responses to, and socio-economic impacts of, COVID-19 such as the World Bank supported high-frequency phone surveys in PNG and the Solomon Islands, UNWomen rapid assessment surveys in Samoa and the Solomon Islands, and SPC/StatsNZ rapid assessment surveys in the realm countries of Niue, Cook Islands and Tokelau.

321. PICTs are scheduled to conduct 44 national household statistical collections between 2022 and 2025, to enhance national monitoring and evidence-based decision-making, and meet regional and global reporting requirements. A small number of collections planned for 2021 were deferred to 2022 or later due to pandemic restrictions, but overall, most PICTs were able to continue data activities as planned.

322. ESCAP is also supporting national SDG monitoring improvements through the development of a "National SDG Tracker" tool that facilitates the development of a national SDG indicator set, setting national target values and analysing data to produce SDG progress dashboards at Goal and target levels.

323. Statistics development in the Pacific has been guided by the Ten-Year Pacific Statistics Strategy (TYPSS) 2010-2020 which has led to improvements in the timely collection of core social and economic official statistics across the PICTs. To replace TYPSS, a new Strategic Framework (TYPSS 2) is being prepared with a focus on Capability Development; Improved Data Quality; Coordinated Support; Improved Statistical Literacy; and Access to Data. The phase 2 TYPSS will encourage all donors and development partners to align their activities and investments with this new framework.

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324. Extensive collaboration coordinated by SPC, PIFS and ESCAP to develop additional indicators to monitor progress against the SAMOA pathway, has involved a number of UN and CROP agencies, to ensure aspects relating to relevance and measurability of these indicators are met.

325. SPC has received financing, USD 4.5 million equivalent, from the World Bank toward the cost of the 'Statistical Innovation and Capacity Building in the Pacific Islands' (PACSTAT) Project. The project has an overall development objective to improve the quality of welfare data collection and accessibility to comparable welfare data in the Pacific Island Countries, through supporting the adoption of improved methods by National Statistics Offices and promoting context-appropriate innovation in the region with the goal of reducing the costs and complexity of collecting socioeconomic data in the Pacific. This will directly support monitoring capacities in SDG Goals 1 and 2.

326. Pacific island countries are engaging more extensively in steering groups and partnerships globally and regionally driving the production of statistics across a number of areas including Populations and Social Statistics, Civil Registration and Vital Statistics and Oceans to name a few. Membership at the highest level includes Samoa in the UN Statistics Commission and Tonga and Nauru Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators.

Recommendations

Means of Implementation

1. Support the outcomes of the Pacific Regional Debt Conference which included the need for more innovative and climate friendly revenue generating initiatives; increased public private dialogue on SOE reforms; exploration of lessons learned on sustainable financing mechanisms to prevent a drain on fiscal resources; and the potential for multiple funding sources to be harmonised and aligned to members' needs.

2. Continued commitment to the implementation of the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework (2021-2030) which calls for a holistic approach to tourism development, management and monitoring.

3. Continued implementation of the Regional Sustainable Fisheries Roadmap and the Regional Longline Fisheries Strategy, noting the forthcoming updated report to Leaders on the independent review of the Roadmap's goal to increase economic returns from fisheries.

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Section 7: Update on the Review of Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration

327. A review of the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration (PLGED) was undertaken in 2021 to consider the effectiveness and relevance of the Declaration to progress gender equality in the region. It examined ownership of the PLGED and the degree of political will to follow through on commitments, including: responding to new and emerging regional gender equality issues; assessing progress in implementing recommendations from the PLGED reports; and, guiding actions going forward, such as strengthened coordination and harmonised approaches to enhance progress and reporting.

328. The review outcomes were considered by Ministers and Delegates of the Pacific Island Forum Women Leaders Meeting. They expressed their support for the revitalisation process of the PLGED. and noted the importance of the Declaration and the role it can play in advancing gender equality in the region. The meeting also recognised the importance of engagement and communication and strengthened education systems to support progress on gender equality. In endorsing the findings of the review the meeting supported the proposed consultation process for revitalizing the PLGED and the need for strengthened governance and accountability, including plans to present a revised PLGED to Forum Leaders in 2023.

Overall conclusions of the review

329. The PLGED is an important tool for advocacy and can potentially be used to hold decision makers to account at the highest level despite current weaknesses in ownership, political will and low levels of visibility and utility at both regional and national levels.

330. Progress on gender equality in the Pacific since 2012 has been built on efforts that began several decades ago. This work was driven by civil society, and started well before the Beijing Conference. While there are examples of the PLGED contributing to the momentum, specific attribution of progress to the PLGED is not possible.

331. There has been progress in some areas such as in eliminating violence against women and girls, introduction of gender responsive programmes, policies, legislation and gender statistics. However, progress is not shared or consistent across all aspects of gender equality for all countries and is largely funded by development partners. The absence of an implementation framework with measurable targets and indicators which outlines mechanisms and processes for accountability, reporting and collaboration at the Leaders' level has been a missed opportunity to enhance leadership and ownership at regional and national levels.

332. As one of a plethora of competing and potentially duplicative regional development frameworks endorsed by Pacific Island Countries and Territories, Leaders, revision and repositioning of the PLGED should ensure it is a critical part of the continuum of priority frameworks in a coherent and transparent way. This will bring both focus and clarity to the regional gender equality agenda while reducing the burden of reporting on countries. It will also help to strengthen the other priority frameworks by improving development effectiveness and supporting the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) and government agencies to meet their human rights commitments according to their mandates.

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333. Systematic mechanisms and processes for addressing gender inequalities across priority regional development frameworks at the regional level are unclear. This includes within CROP agencies where overall commitment to gender mainstreaming is weak and technical gender expertise is under resourced. While there have been efforts in the past to promote and support action in some areas, for example, through the CROP Gender Working Group (1998); the High-Level Reference Group on Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) (2009); and the Regional Working Group on Women, Peace and Security (2011) these have been inactive. What is clear is that since 2012, there have been many missed opportunities at the regional level to flag, promote and use the PLGED at Ministerial and Leaders meetings to advance gender equality in the region in a more systematic, measured and visible way.

334. Collaboration at both national and regional levels is ad hoc, sporadic and mostly led by development partners. While the PLGED specifically calls on development partners to support country efforts to realise commitments to the PLGED through increased technical and financial support, Forum Dialogue Partners discussions do not discuss the PLGED priorities and this aspect of the declaration is not reported on.

335. The PLGED is unique in its potential to be a bold high-level commitment by Pacific Forum Leaders to enhance the status of women in the region. It should be retained and revised to reflect current regional developments and priorities. It can facilitate ongoing work by CROP agencies, be used as an advocacy tool by civil society, and serve as a mechanism to track progress through regionally relevant, measurable targets and indicators. Renewed commitment to an updated PLGED, and further integration with other regional frameworks, will enhance its usefulness and promote a more equal and sustainable Pacific region.

Recommendations

336. The review was organised around five themes of i) governance ii) relevance iii) impact and effectiveness iv) collaboration and v) sustainability. Several of the recommendations intersect and are similar, demonstrating both the importance and the inter-connectedness of these issues.

Governance

1. Establish a governance mechanism for the PLGED, comprising PIF members, development partners and other stakeholder representatives. The governance mechanism should ensure that the PLGED is firmly on the Leaders agenda and is regularly discussed and reported on in connection with other regional priorities, including gender equality priorities.
2. Develop a PLGED communications strategy to improve visibility, knowledge and understanding of PLGED commitments in connection with other gender equality commitments such as the SDGs, BPA, PPA and CEDAW; and their relevance and potential contribution to sustainable development in the region.
3. Embed PLGED commitments at the national level, including at all levels of government budget processes in order to support ownership and progress action on gender equality.

Relevance

4. PIF Leaders renew their commitment to the PLGED so that it remains a relevant, high-level commitment to gender equality which:

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- reflects the current situation of the Pacific in 2021, including the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and regional strategies and frameworks that have been developed since 2012;
- has a clear purpose and governance mechanism, and clear implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting processes and responsibilities;
- recognises the diversity of women's lived realities as reflected by age, disability, sexual orientation and where they reside, for example, women living in remote, rural and outer island areas, persons of diverse SOGIESC10 and young women and girls, as well as the intersectionality of these identities.
- recognises the critical role of civil society and the women's movement in progressing gender equality and includes them in all aspects of the PLGED.
- uses language around gender transformative approaches to actively challenge harmful social norms; and recognises intersectionality as critical for the relevance and effectiveness of these approaches.
- reflects emerging priorities such as pandemics (COVID-19), climate change and environmental justice, disaster risk response and resilient development, poverty and hardship, digital technology and literacy while, also ensuring that the PLGED is reflected in the regional frameworks that govern these areas
- in addition to retaining commitments to national policy actions, includes the issue of gender responsive budgeting in relation to gender responsive policies and programmes; unpaid care work, paid maternity leave, family leave and accessible and affordable child care to redress care imbalance and social protection in the area of women's economic empowerment; addresses sexual harassment in all forms, for example, cyberstalking and bullying etc.; strengthens language on sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, and includes mental health and disability in the area of women's health.

5. Ensure the governance mechanism (Refer Recommendation 1) strengthens ownership and increases visibility and accountability for the PLGED at both national and regional levels in connection with other regional gender equality commitments and accountability processes.

6. Examine ways to build and supplement gender technical capacity in the region to support governments and regional organisations to ensure that gender equality issues are analysed and addressed at all levels, nationally, and in CROP operations and programmes. This could include regionally owned South-South cooperation modalities as well targeted support to address gender mainstreaming in sectoral frameworks. (Refer Recommendation 5.)

Effectiveness and impact

7. Strengthen and improve efforts to progress women's economic empowerment and women in decision-making in line with recommendations from Triennial meetings of Pacific Women, Women's Ministerial meetings and recent PLEGD reports.

8. Support ongoing efforts in EVAWG, with additional emphasis on prevention and working with men and boys.

9. Examine regional frameworks in education and health to ensure specific gender equality outcomes, targets and indicators are in line with the PPA and the PLGED.

10. Develop a PLGED Report Card to enable stakeholders and political leaders to monitor progress in priority areas. A PLGED report card could be modelled on the SPC/FFA fisheries report cards that provide annual high-level reporting on the status of Pacific fisheries in relation to goals, indicators and strategies adopted in the Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries.

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11. Clarify the opportunity costs of not implementing the PLGED as well as the importance of having male and female leaders fully engaged in gender equality work (as gender inequality reduces the ability of CROP and other government agencies to produce sustainable outcomes in accordance with their mandates).

12. In order to build and supplement gender technical capacity in the region:
    - Support countries to implement the SPC stocktakes of the capacity of the governments to mainstream gender across policies, programmes and services.
    - Support CROP agencies to strengthen and establish mechanisms and processes to ensure that gender equality issues are analysed and addressed in all aspects of their operations and programmes. Refer to recommendations in the 2007 PIFS CROP Gender Stocktake report which are still relevant today.
    - Establish a regional roster of technical experts that can be made available to countries, regional organisations and other stakeholders to support efforts to mainstream and progress gender equality.

13. Integrate gender equality outcomes, targets and indicators into all regional development frameworks and initiatives that are prioritised by Leaders.

14. Implement the Pacific Roadmap on Gender Statistics for better production and use of gender statistics in the Pacific. The roadmap aims to ensure quality, relevant and timely gender data that responds to users' needs is produced, available, disseminated and effectively used to advance gender equality.

15. Support efforts to increase Pacific-led research on the causes and impacts of gender inequality to inform policy and programmes aimed at empowering women.

Collaboration

16. Ensure that the governance mechanism (Refer recommendation 1 in the Governance section) supports improved coordination of efforts to progress a common, coherent, focused Pacific Gender Equality agenda. This single agenda should not duplicate, but rather build on existing gender equality commitments, with a common goal and measurable targets and indicators over a short-, medium- and long-term period based on respectful and agreed principles of development cooperation. Efforts to improve coordination and collaboration should focus on:
    - better targeting and use of resources;
    - sharing experiences, good practice and lessons in implementation at both national and regional levels;
    - identifying specific actions needed to address gender equality at the regional level
    - harmonising indicators and reporting requirements with other guiding frameworks so as not to overload national agencies;
    - improving coordination between regional and national partners; while ensuring complementarity of actions at the national level; and
    - building political will to progress gender equality at all levels.

17. Adapt the PLGED reporting process to Leaders so that it contributes to a useful discussion of progress and identifies areas for action but also addresses the issue of improved collaboration and coordination amongst development partners.

18. Clarify the roles and responsibilities of CROP agencies, development partners and other stakeholders in implementing the PLGED.

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19. Mandate all CROP agencies to adopt gender responsive programming to help reinforce member governments' efforts towards achieving gender equality and provide them with guidance and technical support.

20. Ensure all PIF members are made accountable to report on progress made under the PLGED so that lessons may be shared with and learned by other countries. (Refer recommendation 11)

Sustainability

In consultation with Leaders and all key stakeholders, including development partners, CSOs and the private sector:

21. Reaffirm the commitment of Leaders to the PLGED.

22. Update and raise the profile, visibility and utility of the PLGED as a high-level gender equality commitment in the Pacific region.

23. Embed the PLGED commitments in national planning, budget, public expenditure, and financial accountability processes in support of increased national budget allocations for gender equality.

24. Agree on and develop an appropriate implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting mechanism for the PLGED with dedicated technical and financial resources at both regional and national levels.

25. Identify, mobilise and promote specific gender technical expertise to support the above processes.

26. Ensure that all efforts to improve the sustainability of the PLGED are fully integrated into the development of the Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and related plans to review the regional architecture.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Proportion of Baseline Availability for Pacific SDGs Sub-set Indicators

SDG	Global # of SDGs indicators	# selected in Pacific SD indicators	Proportion of the Goal selected	# with Baseline data (50 percent of FICs)
SDG1 No Poverty	13	5	38percent	3
SDG2 Zero Hunger	14	7	50percent	5
SDG3 Good Health & Wellbeing	28	16	57percent	16
SDG4 Quality Education	12	8	67percent	5
SDG5 Gender Equality	14	12^	86percent	5
SDG6 Clean Water & Sanitation	11	3	27percent	2
SDG7 Affordable & Clean Energy	6	4	67percent	4
SDG8 Decent work & Economic Growth	16	8	50percent	6
SDG9 Industry, Innovation& Infrastructure	12	3	25percent	3
SDG10 Reduced Inequalities	14	7	50percent	4
SDG11 Sustainable Cities and Communities	15	6^	40percent	1
SDG12 Responsible Consumption & Production	13	4	31percent	3
SDG13 Climate Action	8	5	63percent	5
SDG14 Life Below Water	10	9	90percent	5
SDG15 Life on Land	14	6	43percent	5
SDG16 Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions	24	8^	33percent	3
SDG17 Partnerships for the Goals	24	20^^	75percent	14
Total	231	131	57percent	89

^ includes a Pacific Proxy indicator based on the official SDG indicator
^^ includes two Pacific Proxy indicators based on the official SDG indicator

Annex 2: 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific links to SDGs Indicators

As can be seen below, there is a strong correlation between the seven Thematic Areas of the 2050 Strategy, Levels of Ambition and the 2030 Agenda and the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals.

Thematic Area	Relevant SDGs	Related Pacific Sustainable Development Indicator
Political Leadership and Regionalism	**SDG16**: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.	16.3.1 Proportion of victims of violence in the previous 12 months who reported their victimization to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms
		16.6.1 Primary government expenditures as a proportion of original approved budget, by sector (or by budget codes or similar)
		16.7.1 Proportions of positions in national and local institutions, including (*a*) the legislatures; (*b*) the public service; and (*c*) the judiciary, compared to national distributions, by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups
		16.7.2 Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability, and population group
		16.9.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age
		16.10.2 Number of countries that adopt and implement constitutional, statutory and/or policy guarantees for public access to information
	SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.	17.1.1 Total government revenue as a proportion of GDP, by source
		17.1.2 Proportion of domestic budget funded by domestic taxes
		17.2.1 Net official development assistance, total and to least developed countries, as a proportion of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee donors' gross national income (GNI)
		17.3.1 Additional financial resources mobilized for developing countries from multiple sources
		17.3.2 Volume of remittances (in United States dollars) as a proportion of total GDP
		17.4.1 Debt service as a proportion of exports of goods and services
		17.8.1 Proportion of individuals using the Internet
		17.9.1 Dollar value of financial and technical assistance (including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation) committed to developing countries
		17.14.1 Number of countries with mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence of sustainable development
		17.15.1 Extent of use of country-owned results frameworks and planning tools by providers of development cooperation
		17.16.1 Number of countries reporting progress in multi-stakeholder development effectiveness monitoring frameworks that support the achievement of the sustainable development goals
		17.17.1 Amount in United States dollars committed to public-private partnerships for infrastructure
		17.18.2 Number of countries that have national statistical legislation that complies with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics
		17.18.3 Number of countries with a national statistical plan that is fully funded and under implementation, by source of funding
		17.19.1 Dollar value of all resources made available to strengthen statistical capacity in developing countries
		17.19.2 Proportion of countries that (*a*) have conducted at least one population and housing census in the last 10 years; and (*b*) have achieved 100 percent birth registration and 80 percent death registration
People-Centered Development		3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio

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Thematic Area	Relevant SDGs	Related Pacific Sustainable Development Indicator
	SDG3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.	3.1.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel
		3.2.1 Under-5 mortality rate
		3.2.2 Neonatal mortality rate
		3.3.2 Tuberculosis incidence per 100,000 population
		3.3.3 Malaria incidence per 1,000 population
		3.3.5 Number of people requiring interventions against neglected tropical diseases
		3.4.1 Mortality rate attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, or chronic respiratory disease
		3.5.2 Alcohol per capita consumption (aged 15 years and older) within a calendar year in litres of pure alcohol
		3.7.1 Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15–49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods
		3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate (aged 10–14 years; aged 15–19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group
		3.8.1 Coverage of essential health services
		3.9.2 Mortality rate attributed to unsafe water, unsafe sanitation, and lack of hygiene (exposure to unsafe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All (WASH) services)
		3.a.1 Age-standardized prevalence of current tobacco use among persons aged 15 years and older
		3.c.1 Health worker density and distribution
		3.d.1 International Health Regulations (IHR) capacity and health emergency preparedness
	SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.	4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people (*a*) in grades 2/3; (*b*) at the end of primary; and (*c*) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex
		4.2.2 Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex
		4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex
		4.5.1 Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile, and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated
		4.6.1 Proportion of population in each age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (*a*) literacy and (*b*) numeracy skills, by sex
		4.7.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in (*a*) national education policies; (*b*) curricula; (*c*) teacher education; and (*d*) student assessment
		4.a.1 Proportion of schools offering basic services, by type of service
		4.c.1 Proportion of teachers with the minimum required qualifications, by education level
	SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.	5.1.1 Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination based on sex
		5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual, or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by the form of violence and by age
		5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence
		5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18
		5.4.1 Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age, and location
		5.5.1 Proportion of seats held by women in (*a*) national parliaments and (*b*) local governments
		5.6.1 Proportion of women aged 15–49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use, and reproductive health care

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Thematic Area	Relevant SDGs	Related Pacific Sustainable Development Indicator
		5.a.2 Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control
		5.b.1 Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex
		5. c.1 Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment
	SDG6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.	6.1.1 Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services
		6.2.1 Proportion of population using (*a*) safely managed sanitation services and (*b*) a hand-washing facility with soap and water
		6.3.1 Proportion of domestic and industrial wastewater flows safely treated
	SDG8: Promote sustained, inclusive economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.	8.1.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita
		8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in total employment, by sector and sex
		8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of employees, by sex, age, occupation and persons with disabilities
		8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
		8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15–24 years) not in education, employment or training
		8.9.1 Tourism direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP and in growth rate
		8.10.2 Proportion of adults (15 years and older) with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider
		8.a.1 Aid for Trade commitments and disbursements
	SDG10: Reduce inequality within and among countries.	10.1.1 Growth rates of household expenditure or income per capita among the bottom 40 percent of the population and the total population
		10.2.1 Proportion of people living below 50 percent of median income, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
		10.4.1 Labour share of GDP
		10.6.1 Proportion of members and voting rights of developing countries in international organizations
		10.7.2 Number of countries with migration policies that facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people
		10.b.1 Total resource flows for development, by recipient and donor countries and type of flow (e.g. official development assistance, foreign direct investment and other flows)
		10.c.1 Remittance costs as a proportion of the amount remitted
	SDG11: make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.	11.1.1 Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing
		11.5.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population
		11.5.2 Direct economic loss attributed to disasters in relation to global gross domestic product (GDP)
		11.6.1 Proportion of municipal solid waste collected and managed in controlled facilities out of total municipal waste generated, by cities
		11.b.2 Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies
Peace and Security	**SDG10:** Reduce inequality within and among countries.	See Above
	SDG16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.	See Above
Resource and Economic Development	**SDG 1:** End poverty in all its forms everywhere.	1.1.1 Proportion of the population living below the international poverty line by sex, age, employment status and geographic location (urban/rural)
		1.2.1 Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age

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Thematic Area	Relevant SDGs	Related Pacific Sustainable Development Indicator
		1.2.2 Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions
		1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable
		1.4.1 Proportion of population living in households with access to basic services
	SDG2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.	2.1.1 Prevalence of undernourishment
		2.2.1 Prevalence of stunting (height for age <-2 standard deviation from the median of the World Health Organization (WHO) Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age
		2.2.2 Prevalence of malnutrition (weight for height >+2 or <-2 standard deviations from the median of the WHO Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age, by type (wasting and overweight)
		2.3.2 Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status
		2.4.1 Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture
		2.5.1 Number of plant and animal genetic resources for food and agriculture secured in either medium or long-term conservation facilities
		2.a.1 The agriculture orientation index for government expenditures
	SDG8: Promote sustained, inclusive economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.	8.1.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita
		8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in total employment, by sector and sex
		8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of employees, by sex, age, occupation and persons with disabilities
		8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
		8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15–24 years) not in education, employment or training
		8.9.1 Tourism direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP and in growth rate
		8.10.2 Proportion of adults (15 years and older) with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider
		8.a.1 Aid for Trade commitments and disbursements
	SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.	9.2.2 Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment
		9.a.1 Total official international support (official development assistance plus other official flows) to infrastructure
		9. c.1 Proportion of population covered by a mobile network, by technology
	SDG10: Reduce inequality within and among countries.	10.1.1 Growth rates of household expenditure or income per capita among the bottom 40 percent of the population and the total population
		10.2.1 Proportion of people living below 50 percent of median income, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
		10.4.1 Labour share of GDP
		10.6.1 Proportion of members and voting rights of developing countries in international organizations
		10.7.2 Number of countries with migration policies that facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people
		10.b.1 Total resource flows for development, by recipient and donor countries and type of flow (e.g. official development assistance, foreign direct investment and other flows)

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Thematic Area	Relevant SDGs	Related Pacific Sustainable Development Indicator
		10.c.1 Remittance costs as a proportion of the amount remitted
	SDG12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	12.4.1 Number of parties to international multilateral environmental agreements on hazardous waste, and other chemicals that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each relevant agreement
		12.4.2 (*a*) Hazardous waste generated per capita; and (*b*) proportion of hazardous waste treated, by type of treatment
		12.5.1 National recycling rate, tons of material recycled
		12.b.1 Implementation of standard accounting tools to monitor the economic and environmental aspects of tourism sustainability
Climate Change	**SDG 7**: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.	7.1.1 Proportion of population with access to electricity
		7.2.1 Renewable energy share in the total final energy consumption
		7.a.1 International financial flows to developing countries in support of clean energy research and development and renewable energy production, including in hybrid systems
		7.b.1 Installed renewable energy-generating capacity in developing countries (in watts per capita)
	SDG11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.	11.1.1 Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing
		11.5.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population
		11.5.2 Direct economic loss attributed to disasters in relation to global gross domestic product (GDP)
		11.6.1 Proportion of municipal solid waste collected and managed in controlled facilities out of total municipal waste generated, by cities
		11.b.2 Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies
	SDG13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	13.1.2 Number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030
		13.2.1 Number of countries with nationally determined contributions, long-term strategies, national adaptation plans and adaptation communications, as reported to the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
		13.3.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in (*a*) national education policies; (*b*) curricula; (*c*) teacher education; and (*d*) student assessment
		13.a.1 Amounts provided and mobilized in United States dollars per year in relation to the continued existing collective mobilization goal of the $100 billion commitment through to 2025
		13.b.1 Number of least developed countries and small island developing States with nationally determined contributions, long-term strategies, national adaptation plans and adaptation communications, as reported to the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
Ocean and Environment	**SDG14:** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	14.1.1 (*a*) Index of coastal eutrophication; and (*b*) plastic debris density
		14.2.1 Number of countries using ecosystem-based approaches to managing marine areas
		14.3.1 Average marine acidity (pH) measured at the agreed suite of representative sampling stations
		14.4.1 Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels
		14.5.1 Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas
		14.6.1 Degree of implementation of international instruments aiming to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing
		14.7.1 Sustainable fisheries as a proportion of GDP in small island developing States, least developed countries and all countries
		15.1.1 Forest area as a proportion of total land area

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Thematic Area	Relevant SDGs	Related Pacific Sustainable Development Indicator
	SDG15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.	15.1.2 Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type
		15.5.1 Red List Index
		15.6.1 Number of countries that have adopted legislative, administrative and policy frameworks to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits
		15.7.1 Proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked
		15.8.1 Proportion of countries adopting relevant national legislation and adequately resourcing the prevention or control of invasive alien species
Technology and Connectivity	**SDG9**: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.	See Above
	SDG10: Reduce inequality within and among countries	See Above
	SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.	See Above

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