



DELIVERING
FOR OUR
BLUE
PACIFIC

2019
August

CROP Annual Report
to Pacific Island Forum Leaders



FOREWORD

Our *Blue Pacific* region is a place of rising international interest and attention. Traditional and new international partners are stepping up their engagement; foreign policy and security strategies are placing a greater focus on the Pacific; and issues that we have long championed, particularly oceans sustainability, are receiving greater global attention.

This growing interest and engagement creates both risks and opportunities for our *Blue Pacific*, and within this context, I believe Pacific regionalism is more important than ever.

Working together to achieve common goals, and address common challenges and opportunities, has been the driving motivation of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) since its inception in 1971. In 1988, PIF Leaders sought to strengthen regional cooperation and collaboration through the establishment of the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP).

As Member-owned regional organisations with distinct policy and technical expertise, CROP agencies have worked together to deliver on regional priorities, for over 30 years. The adoption of the *Framework for Pacific Regionalism* (2014), the *Blue Pacific* narrative (2017), and the new *CROP Charter* (2018) has provided renewed impetus for CROP collaboration, in support of stronger Pacific regionalism.

This year, the CROP has worked to deliver on the decisions arising from the 49th PIF Leaders' meeting held in Nauru in September 2018. Their focus being on climate change and resilience; security cooperation; regional fisheries; sustainable ocean management; childhood obesity, non-communicable diseases and promoting early childhood development; and sustainable development. CROP agencies have also focused on implementing the new CROP Charter, as endorsed by Forum Leaders.

This report provides Forum Leaders with an update on the work of CROP since the last PIF Leaders meeting, to deliver on regional priorities - including objectives, coordination mechanisms, achievements, challenges and next steps.

While noting progress on CROP collaboration, we acknowledge that an ongoing focus on strengthening the CROP mechanism, as one regional system, is necessary. Significant challenges remain including different governing structures across CROP agencies; diminishing levels of financing to deliver on Forum Leaders' priorities; and the expectations on CROP to either service or play a role in a plethora of regional and international meetings, workshops and committees.

CROP Heads are committed to strengthening the CROP mechanism, now and in the longer term, to ensure the region has the capabilities, resources, partnerships, and technology and innovation required to secure our future in the Pacific. We welcome discussion and reflection with Forum Leaders on this progress report, and on strengthening the CROP mechanism, to ensure we achieve the regional ambitions of Forum Leaders.



Meg Taylor, DBE
Chair of CROP

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About CROP	5
About this Report	6
CROP Strategic Work Agenda 2019	6
CROP Delivery on Forum Leaders' Priorities	8
CROP Financing to Deliver	28
CROP Delivery on SIS Strategy	30
2020 and onwards	32
CROP Agency Expertise	33

1. ABOUT CROP

Pacific Island Forum (PIF) Leaders established the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) in 1988, with the primary purpose of improving cooperation, coordination and collaboration between Pacific inter-governmental organisations.

Today, as set out in the *CROP Charter 2018* and guided by the *Framework for Pacific Regionalism (FPR)*, CROP is a partnership of regional, intergovernmental agencies that support PIF Leaders' increased commitment to regionalism and the principle objectives of sustainable development; inclusive and equitable economic growth; strengthened governance, legal, financial and administrative systems; and peace and security for all.

CROP works to strengthen Pacific regionalism through consolidating regional knowledge, expertise and resources to deliver goods and services that are more effectively and efficiently provided at the regional level.

CROP provides high-level policy advice and support to Pacific island countries and territories in the formulation of policy at national, regional and international levels. This includes support at international conferences and negotiations; in reporting on international commitments; in crisis situations in the region; and in implementing regional frameworks and programmes for national and regional outcomes and impact.

CROP also provides a forum to collectively respond to regional priorities identified by Forum Leaders through the public policy process of the FPR, and to ensure effective follow-up, implementation and reporting on progress. This occurs through regular meetings of CROP Heads, CROP Deputies and thematic taskforces and working groups.

The work of CROP is based on mutual respect for the mandates and comparative advantages that each CROP agency has, in line with its work programme and priorities across the region.

Currently, CROP membership comprises the following Pacific regional intergovernmental organisations: Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO); Pacific Community (SPC); Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA); Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS); Pacific Power Association (PPA); Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP); South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO); and The University of the South Pacific (USP)¹. The Secretary General of PIFS is the Chair of the CROP. Profiles of CROP agencies are on page 33.

¹Pacific Islands Development Program (PIDP) has been temporarily suspended with a pending decision of Forum Leaders, noting PIDP's non-compliance with the CROP membership criteria.

2. ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report provides an update on CROP's work since September 2018, to deliver on decisions arising from the 49th PIF Leaders Meeting², held in Nauru, including achievements, challenges, partnerships and next steps.

It includes a snapshot of CROP's financing for delivery, including the annual expenditure by CROP on regional priorities and funding levels from development partners. It also includes an overview of CROP's work to deliver on the priorities of Smaller Island States (SIS) Strategy.

3. CROP STRATEGIC WORK AGENDA 2019

In order to strengthen clarity and coherence on the role of CROP in delivering on Leaders' priorities, CROP Heads and Governing Council Chairs held their first joint meeting in November 2018 to jointly develop their first *CROP Strategic Work Agenda 2019*³.

The final Work Agenda, shared with respective CROP agencies' Governing Councils in early 2019, articulated the objectives, activities and coordination mechanisms for CROP to deliver on the decisions of Forum Leaders, in collaboration with Members and other stakeholders. It focused on seven priority areas:

-
- a) Combatting climate change and building disaster resilience;
 - b) Ensuring the long term sustainability and viability of the region's fisheries resources;
 - c) Strengthening regional security cooperation;
 - d) Ensuring sustainable ocean management and conservation;
 - e) Promoting sustainable development through the delivery of the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development;
 - f) Tackling childhood obesity, non-communicable diseases and promoting early childhood development; and
 - g) Strengthening arrangements for regionalism.
-

Over the course of 2019, CROP agencies have worked together to deliver on the Strategic Agenda including through supporting whole-of-government engagement; meetings of CROP Heads and CROP Deputies; collaboration through CROP taskforces and working groups; providing regional policy and technical advice; supporting the Forum's international advocacy and engagement; strengthening CROP communications; and undertaking reviews and reporting.

²As captured in the 49th Pacific Islands Forum Communiqué: <https://www.forumsec.org/forty-ninth-pacific-islands-forum-nauru-3rd-6th-september-2018/>

³The CROP Strategic Work Agenda 2019 can be accessed here: <https://www.forumsec.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Circ25-Attachment-2-CROP-Strategic-Work-Agenda-2019.pdf>





PICTURE: WWF

4. CROP DELIVERY ON FORUM LEADERS' PRIORITIES

CLIMATE CHANGE AND RESILIENCE

Leaders' 2018 decisions:

- ◆ Commitment to sustained, high-level representation and collaboration in the lead up to, and at, COP 24 and calling on the CROP Plus Group to provide strong, coordinated support to Member' delegations.
- ◆ Commitment to the Framework for Resilience Development in the Pacific (FRDP) and acknowledgement of the establishment of a regional risk governance arrangement through the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP) and Pacific Resilience Partnership Taskforce.
- ◆ Endorsement of the concept of the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF) and directing the Forum Secretariat to progress the development of the PRF.
- ◆ Urged expeditious progress of the work of the taskforce for the Pacific Islands Climate Change Insurance Facility (PICCIF).

PROGRESS SNAPSHOT: On-track with further work required to progress initiatives under the PRP, finalise the PRF, progress the PICCIF, and ensure effective advocacy at the UN Climate Action Summit and COP 25.

Partnerships and delivery mechanisms

CROP agencies actively participated in the delivery of the Leaders' decision on climate change and resilience, in collaboration with other partners, through the following mechanisms:

- One CROP Plus Team – led by SPREP and including PIFS, SPC, USP, PIDF and UNDP.
- PRP Taskforce – a 15-member taskforce including Member countries, civil society, private sector, development partners, academia and CROP. SPREP represents CROP on the Taskforce. The PRP is supported by a CROP Secretariat of PIFS, SPC and SPREP; and the
- FOC Sub-Committee for Forum International Engagement and Advocacy.

Achievements

International advocacy and engagement

- CROP assistance to develop and implement the 2019 PIF International

Advocacy and Engagement Action Plan and a Key Messages Guide, with climate change included as one of four priorities.

- In the lead up to COP 24, the One CROP Plus team provided support to Member countries in formulating and promoting negotiation positions, as guided by an engagement and communications plan. This included supporting a Climate Action Pacific Partnership event in Fiji in July 2018; Member countries' engagement at the UNFCCC inter-sessional meeting in Bangkok from 31 August to 9 September 2018; and a pre-COP meeting in Fiji in November 2018, in partnership with Climate Analytics and the Fiji COP 23 Presidency.
- At COP 24 itself, SPREP and the One CROP Plus Team supported Member countries in the negotiations and managed a Pacific Koronivia Pavilion, in partnership with Fiji and with support from New Zealand. An estimated 6,000 visitors attended 52 side events, launches and activities. SPC supported Ocean Pathway initiatives, which enhanced the visibility of the Ocean Pathway and ocean-climate nexus.
- CROP provided policy advice to support an effective High Level Dialogue between the UN Secretary-General and Pacific Leaders in May 2019 on Pacific priorities for the UNSG Climate Action Summit, to be held in September 2019.

Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific

- To drive implementation of the FRDP, the PRP Taskforce was successfully established with six meetings held, and supported by the PRP Support Unit (comprising PIFS, SPC and SPREP). The Taskforce has progressed work on 'resilience standards of excellence'; a monitoring and evaluation framework for the FRDP; and a system of PRP affiliation for entities at the regional, national and sub national levels. These initiatives are expected to be completed by the end of 2019 and rolled out in early 2020. Funding from DFAT and the EU has been secured to support the work of the PRP.
- The PRP Taskforce also successfully held the first Pacific Resilience Meeting from 1-3 May 2019 in Suva, under the theme of 'Youth Futures in a Resilient Pacific'. The meeting attracted over 300 participants and the outcomes have seen youth groups mobilising to support implementation of the FRDP and the establishment of two technical working groups focused on disaster risk financing and human mobility.
- CROP agencies supported the better integration of disaster and climate change considerations into development planning decisions and initiatives including through national climate finance assessments completed in 11 Forum countries, and the development of a climate change finance tracking tool, piloted in two countries.

Pacific Resilience Facility

- On the PRF, PIFS led the establishment of the PRF technical working group, Member and stakeholder consultations, and design and analysis work to develop the proposed financial products and governance structure of the PRF. Following consideration by Forum Economic Ministers, at two meetings held in May and July 2019, the governance arrangements and technical design for the PRF will be considered by Forum Leaders in August 2019

Pacific Islands Climate Change Insurance Facility

- As led by SPREP, an update on the PICCIF concept was tabled at the FEMM in May 2019. A funding arrangement is now being finalised to progress toward a full proposal for consideration by Forum Economic Ministers in 2020.

Challenges

- The regional and global dimensions of climate change and disaster risk in the Pacific are interrelated, multi-dimensional and complex. To better support Member countries, coordination across the CROP family is critical, as addressing climate change requires the expertise and resources of each CROP agency. The PRP achievements show that more can be done and achieved through genuine and strong partnerships.
- Whilst the One CROP Plus coordination mechanism is dedicated to supporting members for UNFCCC negotiations, the Working Arm for Resilient Development (WARD), which has not met since the PRP was established, needs to be revitalised and strengthened to provide climate change technical advice for CROP Heads and Members.

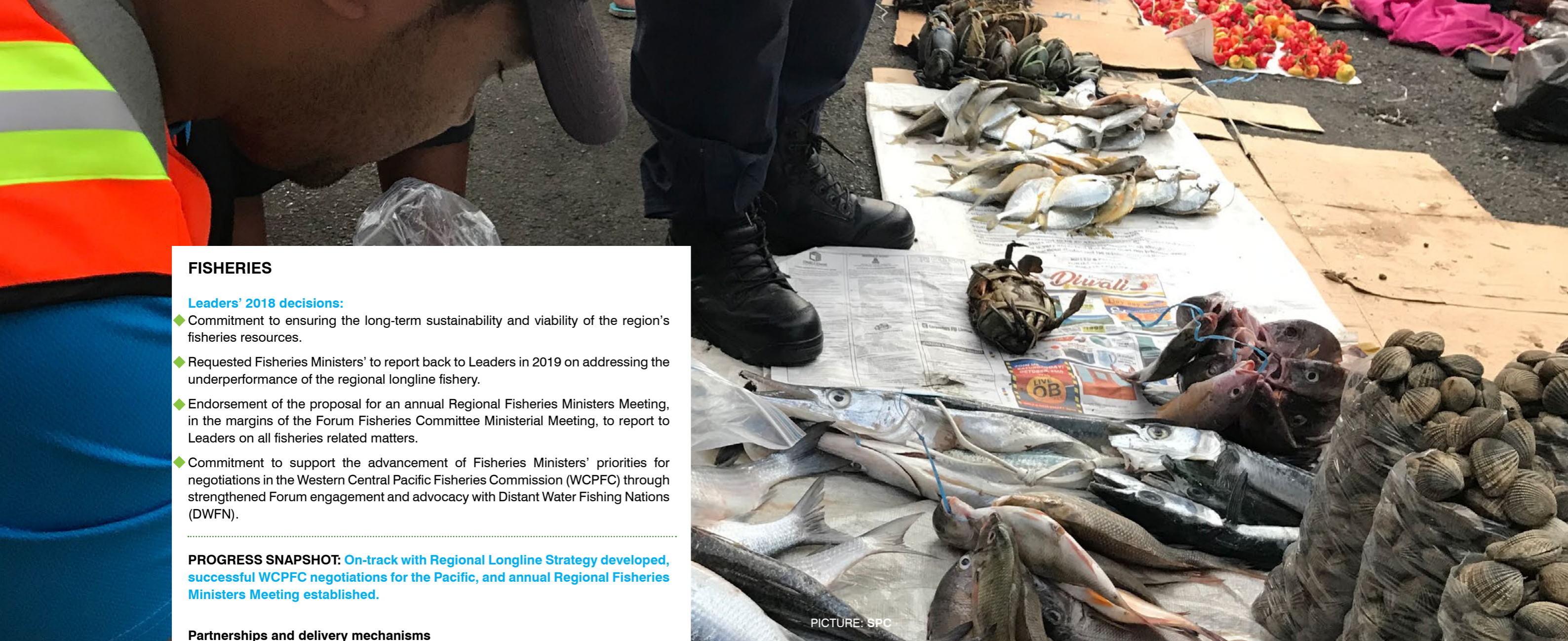
- With regards to the FRDP, competitiveness among stakeholders for increased recognition and/or resources for resilience can undermine efforts towards equal participation and inclusivity. Further, it can be challenging for Taskforce members to make time for the coordination work with their respective constituent group, required under the PRP, in addition to their regular responsibilities.
- The work of the PICCIF Taskforce has been hampered by resource shortages, however funding has now been secured to support elaborating a full proposal design.
- Monitoring and evaluation systems across the region need to be enhanced and better coordinated across sectors and partners to facilitate implementation, evidenced-based reporting and shared learning for the FRDP and resilience-building more generally.

Next steps for CROP agencies

- Continuing to support the FOC Sub-Committee for Forum International Engagement and Advocacy on climate change advocacy initiatives. This includes supporting Members to prepare Pacific priorities and approaches for the UNSG Climate Action Summit and COP 25.
- Continuing to provide secretariat support for the PRP, and to engage with the PRP Taskforce, to support the development of the resilience standards, technical working groups, and monitoring and evaluation and to support a review of the effectiveness of the governance arrangements.
- Supporting the further development of the PRF, based on Leaders' recommendation.
- Supporting the PICCIF Taskforce to further elaborate the PICCIF concept and bring a full proposal to FEMM in 2020.
- Further developing the climate finance tracking tool, to be tabled at FEMM in 2020, and the rolling out of private sector sub-regional workshops and national mapping on climate finance to other Forum Members.



PICTURE: USP



FISHERIES

Leaders' 2018 decisions:

- ◆ Commitment to ensuring the long-term sustainability and viability of the region's fisheries resources.
- ◆ Requested Fisheries Ministers' to report back to Leaders in 2019 on addressing the underperformance of the regional longline fishery.
- ◆ Endorsement of the proposal for an annual Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting, in the margins of the Forum Fisheries Committee Ministerial Meeting, to report to Leaders on all fisheries related matters.
- ◆ Commitment to support the advancement of Fisheries Ministers' priorities for negotiations in the Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) through strengthened Forum engagement and advocacy with Distant Water Fishing Nations (DWFN).

PROGRESS SNAPSHOT: On-track with Regional Longline Strategy developed, successful WCPFC negotiations for the Pacific, and annual Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting established.

Partnerships and delivery mechanisms

- Delivery on Forum Leaders' fisheries decisions has been led by FFA, strongly supported by SPC, and by PIFS, SPREP and USP in their respective areas of expertise. The Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) office was instrumental in the advancement of Leaders' decisions relating to near-equatorial fisheries, supported by the Fisheries Taskforce which consists of: FFA, PIFS, SPC and PNA.

Achievements

Roadmap for Sustainable Fisheries

- As set out in the annual Report Card against the Roadmap for Sustainable Fisheries, good progress is being made. Measures instituted by the PNA plus Tokelau, particularly the Purse-seine Vessel Days Scheme, have enabled these countries to capture much of the 'super-profit' from fishing in national waters that previously accrued to DWFN companies. Despite the lack of super-profits in the longline fishery, progress is being made on ensuring a productive and sustainable future for these fisheries. This includes the restriction of total fishing effort to a level that allows tuna stocks to support reasonable catch rates, and consistent profitability.

PICTURE: SPC

Regional Longline Strategy

- Supported by FFA, a Regional Longline Strategy was endorsed by FFC Ministers in June 2019. The Strategy is designed to assist Forum members to take control of fisheries in their own waters and, by identifying concerns shared by members, to drive high seas reforms through the WCPFC, as well as strengthening the PNA longline Vessel Days Scheme, and the management of southern longline fisheries. In agreeing to the Strategy, Ministers commissioned an Action Plan with appropriate timeframes and indicators so that progress against the Strategy could be measured and assessed.

Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting

- Led by FFA, in consultation with PIFS, SPREP and SPC, a Special Regional Fisheries Ministerial Meeting was held on 20 June to consider the draft Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting (RFMM). Ministers approved the TOR for the RFMM, and referred it to FOC and Forum Leaders, for consideration and endorsement. The Special Ministerial Meeting Statement of Outcomes included a call for, among other matters, relevant CROP bodies and partners to coordinate their respective work to assist Members to adapt to the fisheries related impacts of climate change, and for the provision of integrated advice to CROP governing council meetings on the impact of emerging environmental issues on fisheries.

Forum international engagement and advocacy at the WCPFC

- FFA supported Forum Members to achieve priorities at WCPFC15, namely 1) South Pacific albacore: adoption of a Target Reference Point (56%) which is an important milestone for management of this fishery; 2) Tropical tuna: maintaining the strength and delicate balance of the tropical tuna measure which provides for the various interests in these fisheries and particularly takes account of PNA members' interests in the tropical skipjack fishery and the operation of the Vessel Day Scheme; 3) adoption of special requirements of Small Island Developing States 4) adoption of a resolution to encourage safe and fair conditions on fishing vessels for all crew; and 5) Compliance Monitoring Scheme: adoption of a revised measure which will ensure continued focus on a scheme that is effective, efficient, fair and that helps Members to improve compliance.

Challenges

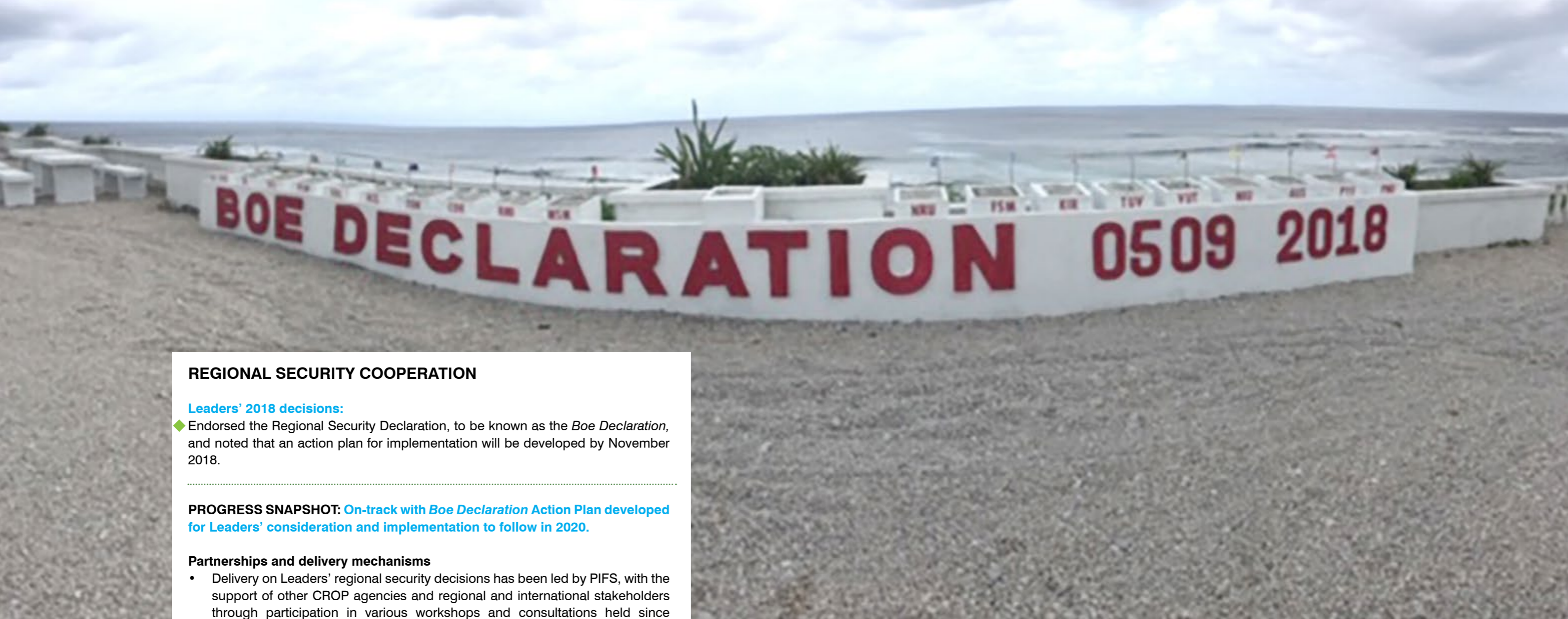
- Effectively limiting longline fishing activity on the high seas through the WCPFC. This will require a concerted regional effort supported by effective advocacy and engagement in wider forums and processes.
- The need for stronger coordination at national and regional levels, particularly through the RFMM, given the links between fisheries and trade, economic, security and environmental issues so as to ensure a whole of government and comprehensive approach to the advice provided to Forum Leaders on Blue Pacific fisheries.

Next steps for CROP agencies

- Supporting the development of an Action Plan for the Regional Longline Strategy.
- Supporting proactive advocacy and engagement at the WCPFC in December 2019 and with relevant Dialogue Partner engagements.
- Secretariat support for the next RFMM in 2020, to ensure effective oversight by Ministers on all fisheries issues and cooperation, in recognition of the multi-dimensional aspects of regional fisheries.



PICTURE: FFA



REGIONAL SECURITY COOPERATION

Leaders' 2018 decisions:

- ◆ Endorsed the Regional Security Declaration, to be known as the *Boe Declaration*, and noted that an action plan for implementation will be developed by November 2018.

PROGRESS SNAPSHOT: On-track with *Boe Declaration* Action Plan developed for Leaders' consideration and implementation to follow in 2020.

Partnerships and delivery mechanisms

- Delivery on Leaders' regional security decisions has been led by PIFS, with the support of other CROP agencies and regional and international stakeholders through participation in various workshops and consultations held since September 2018.

Achievements

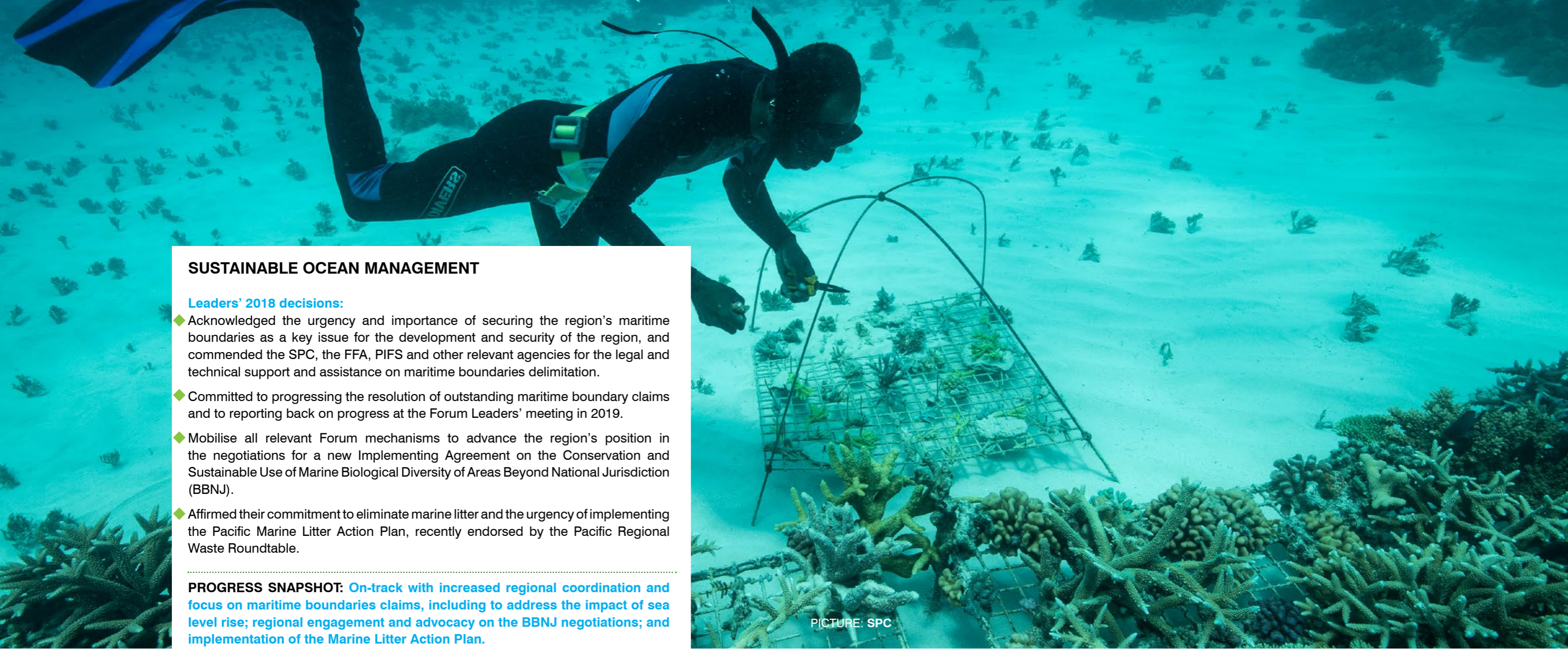
- Draft *Boe Declaration* Action Plan developed, in collaboration with Forum Members and regional and international stakeholders. The Action Plan has been endorsed by Forum Officials and Foreign Ministers, for consideration by Forum Leaders in August 2019.
- Terms of Reference for a FOC Sub-Committee on Regional Security developed, in consultation with Forum Members and stakeholders and endorsed by Forum Officials and Foreign Ministers. Sub-Committee to be established in October 2019, subject to Forum Leaders' endorsement.
- As agreed by Forum Foreign Ministers, regional security has been one of four priorities for PIF international advocacy and engagement in 2019 with key messages developed for use by Forum Members and promoted through the Shangri-la Dialogue in May; High Level Dialogue with the UN Secretary-General in May; and meetings with Forum Dialogue Partners including Japan and the United States.
- The Forum Secretariat convened a National Security Policy Development Workshop in March with the Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies and supported the development of a national drug policy for the Kingdom of Tonga.

Challenges

- Ensuring the efficient and timely exchange of information on regional security priorities (climate security, environmental and resource security, human security and humanitarian assistance, transnational crime, cybersecurity and cyber-enabled crime) amongst CROP agencies.

Next steps for CROP agencies

- Implementation of the *Boe Declaration* Action Plan including hosting the inaugural, multi stakeholder Pacific Security Dialogue.
- Establishment of the FOC Sub-Committee on Regional Security, including Members, relevant CROP agencies and other stakeholders.
- Development of a set of security indicators on climate security and environment and resource security.
- Refreshing the Human Security Framework (2012-2015) in line with the *Boe Declaration*, Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development and the global SDGs framework.



PICTURE: SPC

SUSTAINABLE OCEAN MANAGEMENT

Leaders' 2018 decisions:

- ◆ Acknowledged the urgency and importance of securing the region's maritime boundaries as a key issue for the development and security of the region, and commended the SPC, the FFA, PIFS and other relevant agencies for the legal and technical support and assistance on maritime boundaries delimitation.
- ◆ Committed to progressing the resolution of outstanding maritime boundary claims and to reporting back on progress at the Forum Leaders' meeting in 2019.
- ◆ Mobilise all relevant Forum mechanisms to advance the region's position in the negotiations for a new Implementing Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ).
- ◆ Affirmed their commitment to eliminate marine litter and the urgency of implementing the Pacific Marine Litter Action Plan, recently endorsed by the Pacific Regional Waste Roundtable.

PROGRESS SNAPSHOT: On-track with increased regional coordination and focus on maritime boundaries claims, including to address the impact of sea level rise; regional engagement and advocacy on the BBNJ negotiations; and implementation of the Marine Litter Action Plan.

Partnerships and delivery mechanisms

- Delivery on Forum Leaders' oceans decisions has been led by SPC, PIFS, FFA and SPREP including through the Marine Sector Working Group and in partnership with the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner (OPOC) and through its Pacific Ocean Alliance (POA). The open-ended membership of the POA includes regional organisations, international organisations, civil society, the private sector and academia.

Achievements

Maritime boundaries

- Technical expert group – including SPC, PIFS, FFA, Commonwealth Secretariat, Geoscience Australia, Sydney University and Attorney-General's Office Australia providing regional and national advice and support on maritime boundaries, as guided by a 2019 work plan.
- Since September 2018, the technical expert group has provided support to Vanuatu, Federated States of Micronesia, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Samoa on maritime boundary claims.
- High-level workshop on vulnerable basepoints, to address the issue of climate change impacts on the rights stemming from maritime zones, held in February 2019.
- The 18th PICs Maritime Boundaries working session, to provide technical and legal advice to Member states, held in February 2019.

International advocacy and engagement including BBNJ negotiations

- As agreed by Forum Foreign Ministers, sustainable ocean management, use and conservation has been one of four priorities for PIF international advocacy and engagement in 2019 with key messages developed for use by Forum Members and promoted through international meetings such as with the UN Secretary-General and Forum Dialogue Partners.
- For the BBNJ negotiations, OPOC has been coordinating regional technical support, working closely with PIFS, FFA, SPC, SPREP, USP and Pacific Ocean Alliance partners, in the lead up to BBNJ negotiations. This included convening a BBNJ negotiators meeting in Suva in June to discuss Pacific priorities.
- CROP agencies have also supported Forum Members in global discussions to develop a legally binding instrument to address plastic pollution that resulted in a resolution in UNEA4.

The Pacific Marine Litter Action Plan

- Led by SPREP, implementation of the Pacific Marine Litter Action Plan has included technical assistance to Member countries to implement legislation to ban single-use plastic bags and straws. It has also seen support provided to Samoa to 'green' the Pacific Games.
- SPREP is leading a revision of Pacific Islands Marine Spill Contingency Plan (PACPLAN) to ensure a cooperative response to major marine spills in the

Pacific Island region. The revision will take into account the recent international developments in oil spill response as well as recent regional oil spill incidents.

- Funding secured from donors to implement projects to reduce plastic pollution and other waste streams in the region, including from the Australian Government, EU and the UN.

Challenges

- The threat posed by sea level rise to Members' rights stemming from maritime zones under the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention, and the need to ensure an effective regional and international response.
- Lack of funding to support Member countries and Pacific Ocean Alliance experts' attendance at regional preparation meetings and negotiations in New York on BBNJ.
- Limited national and regional capacity and capabilities for oil spill response.
- Effective and efficient regional coordination, noting the cross-cutting and trans-boundary nature of maritime issues, the sovereignty issues associated therewith, and the need to involve legal, technical, policy, diplomacy and advocacy input.

Next steps for CROP agencies

- Progress report to be provided to Forum Leaders in August 2019 on the finalisation of maritime boundaries claims.
- On BBNJ negotiations, progress the development of Pacific priorities including the development of technical briefs; capacity building support to Member countries on the negotiations; and caucusing in the lead up to and at negotiations with an agreement due to be finalised in 2020.
- Hold a meeting of the Pacific Ocean Alliance from 1-4 October 2019 in Suva, to discuss ocean policy implementation and Pacific advocacy priorities for 2020 including preparations for key ocean events, such as the UN Oceans Conference and the Our Oceans Conference.
- Continue progress with implementation of the Pacific Marine Litter Action Plan including: supporting PICs to implement policies and legislation; resolution to adopt a region wide ban on single-use plastics; and community awareness campaigns and events.
- Adoption and implementation of PACPLAN at the regional level to recognise national capability for response to major oil spill incidents.





PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Leaders' 2018 decisions:

- ◆ Endorsement of the *First Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report* in 2018 as the Pacific region's Sustainable Development Report on the 2030 Agenda, S.A.M.O.A Pathway and other global commitments, recognising that it will support Leaders' participation at the 2019 UN General Assembly Special Summit on the 2030 Agenda and the S.A.M.O.A Pathway Mid Term Review, including the remaining preparatory processes.

PROGRESS SNAPSHOT: On-track with regional and international promotion and use of the *First Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report*. Pacific Steering Committee for Sustainable Development now to be established to further strengthen regional coordination.

Partnerships and delivery mechanisms

- Delivery on Forum Leaders' sustainable development decisions has been led by PIFS with technical assistance from SPC, SPREP, FFA, USP and SPTO as well as through the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG). This Working Group includes CROP agencies as well as representatives from the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (Fiji), UNDP, UNESCAP, UN Women, UNICEF, International Union for Conservation of Nature, World Wide Fund for Nature, Conservation International and Pacific Institute of Public Policy.

Achievements

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is recognised as one of four priorities for the 2019 PIF International Engagement and Advocacy Action Plan with key messages developed from the findings and recommendations from the *First Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report* and Member coordination at key events including Pacific Leaders meeting with the UNSG in September 2018; Asia Pacific Sustainable Development Forum in March 2019; Pacific Leaders High Level Political Dialogue with the UNSG in May 2019; and the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2019.
- CROP support for Member involvement in negotiations and preparations for the S.A.M.O.A Pathway Mid-term Review including a Pacific SIDS Preparatory Meeting in Tonga in September 2018 and the Inter-regional Meeting for SIDS on the S.A.M.O.A Pathway Midterm Review in October 2018.
- Holding the 2nd Annual Regional Development Partners Roundtable on the sidelines of the FEMM in May 2019, focused on engendering development partners' support for the priorities identified in the *First Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report*.
- CROP agencies, as active members of the Pacific Joint Support Team, provided support to five member countries to deliver their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) for the UN High Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development in July 2019.
- SPC established the Pacific Data Hub as a regional resource for the centralisation of Pacific data, research and information from all CROP agencies and to provide a common repository and entry point for users seeking Pacific data and information.



PICTURE: SPC

- SPC supported six Members to align the 2030 Agenda to their national development priorities, including through data and surveying support.

Challenges

- While CROP collaboration towards implementing and monitoring the *Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development (PRSD)* remains strong, there are challenges in confirming representatives for the Pacific Steering Committee, and particularly country representatives from the three sub-regions. This has delayed the convening of the first meeting of the Pacific Steering Committee.

Next steps for CROP agencies

- Continue implementation of the 2019 PIF International Engagement and Advocacy Action Plan, including targeted Member preparations for the UN High Level Forum on Accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and S.A.M.O.A Pathway High Level Mid-term Review, both being held in September 2019.
- Establishment of Pacific Steering Committee for Sustainable Development to provide strategic oversight to the CROP SDWG and annual progress reports on the PRSD implementation to Forum Economic Ministers and quadrennially to Pacific Islands Forum Leaders.
- Continued CROP support to countries as required in their VNR preparations.



NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES, CHILDHOOD OBESITY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Leaders' 2018 decisions:

- ◆ Commitment to leading a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach at the national level to address NCDs, childhood obesity and early childhood development.
- ◆ Commitment to availing sufficient resources to address NCDs and childhood obesity, to ensure the effective implementation of the recommendations of the 2014 NCDs Roadmap and the 2016 NCDs Summit.

PROGRESS SNAPSHOT: On-track at regional level but requires accelerated action at the national level and greater levels of financing.

Partnerships and delivery mechanisms

- Forum Leaders decisions on NCDs, childhood obesity and early childhood development has been led by SPC working closely with WHO and PIHOA, with wider stakeholder involvement and support through the Pacific Ending Childhood Obesity (ECHO) Taskforce and the Pacific Monitoring Alliance for NCD Action (MANA) Coordination Team including with the World Health Organisation (WHO), Pacific Island Health Officers Association (PIHOA) and Fiji National University (FNU).

Achievements

- Pacific ECHO network established, involving all PIF members, to drive work on combatting childhood obesity in the Pacific, with a focus on interventions in three areas: physical activity, fiscal measures and restriction of marketing of unhealthy foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children in the Pacific. First meeting held in February 2019 and three working groups established to support the three intervention areas.
- Pacific Monitoring Alliance for NCD Action (MANA) established and a mutual accountability mechanism developed to assist countries to monitor progress on implementing the NCDs Roadmap.
- SPC, in collaboration with WHO and PIHOA, have supported four PIF countries and one Pacific territory to establish multi-sectoral NCD Taskforces to enact whole of government and whole of society approaches. Nine PIF countries are in the process of developing taskforces. Pacific Heads of Health in 2019 committed to develop or maintain active multi-sectoral NCD taskforces.
- SPC, in collaboration with WHO and PIHOA, supported 12 PIF members to finalise national multi-sectoral NCDs strategies. Three PIF countries are in the process of developing national multi-sectoral NCD strategies.

Challenges

- Further substantial policy and legislative action is required to effectively address social, economic, environmental and commercial determinants of NCDs across the Pacific region in a sustained whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.

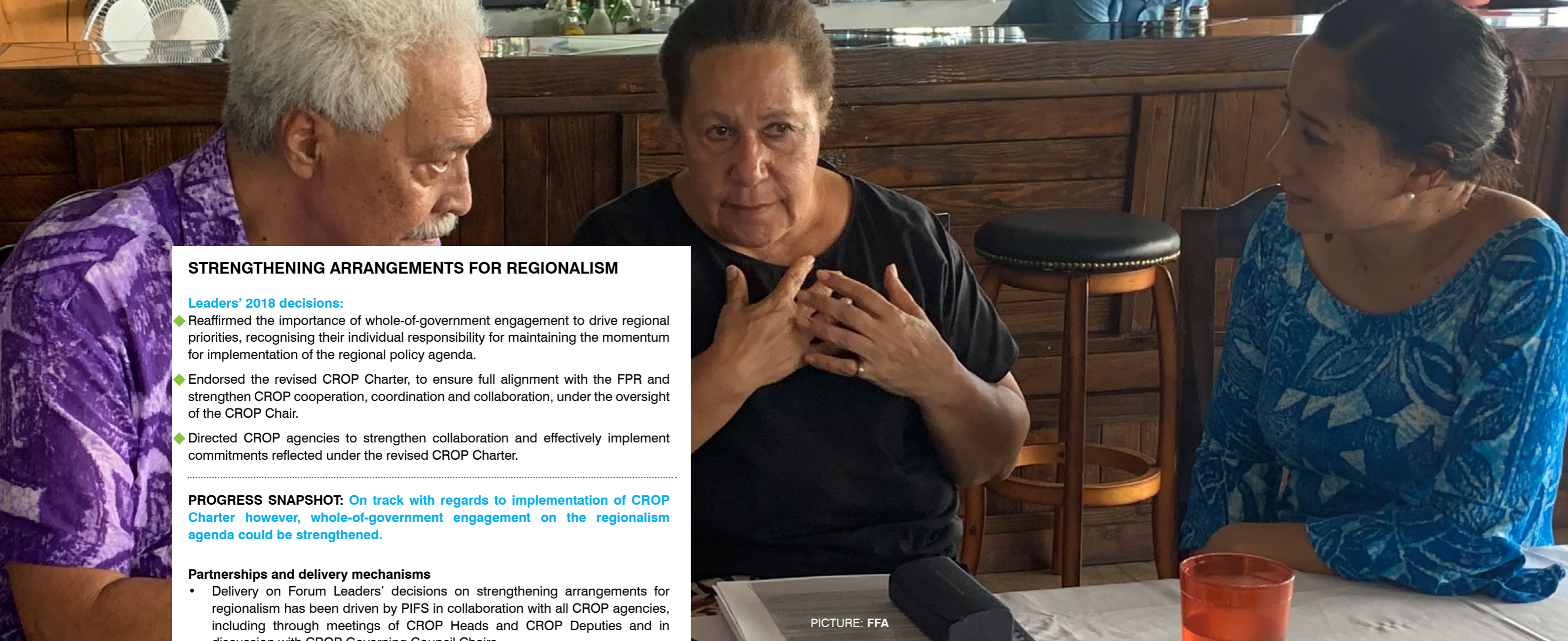


PICTURE: USP

- Existing financing to address NCDs is largely inadequate, and there is a need to increase national and regional funds to better align the level of funding to the burden of NCDs and the emerging issue of childhood obesity.
- There is a need for stronger monitoring, data and research to strengthen the evidence-base on the impact and cost effectiveness of NCD interventions.

Next steps for CROP agencies

- Continue to provide Member countries with support to combat NCDs and childhood obesity through the ECHO Taskforce and Network and Pacific MANA Coordination Team.
- Continue to support Member countries to establish multi-sectoral NCD Taskforces and put in place national multi-sectoral strategies for addressing NCDs and childhood obesity.
- Support countries to strengthen fiscal measures on tobacco, alcohol and unhealthy food and drinks in line with global recommendations.
- Explore options to increase the available regional funds to better align the level of funding to the burden of NCDs and emerging childhood obesity trends.
- Progress further work on early childhood development, including the establishment of a multi-sectoral council to guide such work; holding a regional forum on early childhood development in late 2019; developing a regional monitoring and evaluation framework on early childhood development; and promoting partnerships to mobilise greater technical and financial support.



PICTURE: FFA

STRENGTHENING ARRANGEMENTS FOR REGIONALISM

Leaders' 2018 decisions:

- ◆ Reaffirmed the importance of whole-of-government engagement to drive regional priorities, recognising their individual responsibility for maintaining the momentum for implementation of the regional policy agenda.
- ◆ Endorsed the revised CROP Charter, to ensure full alignment with the FPR and strengthen CROP cooperation, coordination and collaboration, under the oversight of the CROP Chair.
- ◆ Directed CROP agencies to strengthen collaboration and effectively implement commitments reflected under the revised CROP Charter.

PROGRESS SNAPSHOT: On track with regards to implementation of CROP Charter however, whole-of-government engagement on the regionalism agenda could be strengthened.

Partnerships and delivery mechanisms

- Delivery on Forum Leaders' decisions on strengthening arrangements for regionalism has been driven by PIFS in collaboration with all CROP agencies, including through meetings of CROP Heads and CROP Deputies and in discussion with CROP Governing Council Chairs.

Achievements

- Establishment of an Annual Meeting of CROP Heads and Governing Council Chairs - first meeting held on 21 November 2018 to agree on a CROP Strategic Work Agenda and to discuss opportunities to further strengthen the CROP mechanism.
- Establishment of the CROP Deputies Group to drive implementation - with two meetings held since September 2018.
- Finalised a review of the 'CROP Working Group' mechanism to ensure alignment with the new stipulations in the CROP Charter.
- Establishment of annual dialogue mechanisms with regional non-state actors and the UN - with first dialogues to be held in late 2019.
- Progressed CROP corporate harmonisation with regards to joint procurement and purchasing, and development of revised CROP harmonisation principles underway for consideration by CROP Heads and Governing Councils.
- CROP engagement and input into the Mid Term Review of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, with the implementation of the Review findings to be used as the channel for future CROP work on strengthening regional governance and financing, as directed by Members.

Challenges

- While noting progress on CROP collaboration, CROP Heads and Governing

Council Chairs recognise the need for an ongoing focus on strengthening the CROP mechanism - as part of one Pacific regional system⁴.

- Ongoing structural challenges remain with the CROP mechanism including: differing governing structures across CROP agencies; overlapping mandates and roles across CROP agencies; limited financing for CROP to deliver on Forum Leaders' priorities; the plethora of meetings and workshops across the region and internationally that CROP plays a role in; and limited human resourcing of CROP coordination within and across CROP agencies.

Next steps for CROP agencies

- Ensure the full implementation of the new CROP Charter, including through holding 2nd Annual Meeting of CROP Heads and Governing Council Chairs in November 2019, as well as the inaugural CROP Heads dialogues with the UN and with civil society organisations.
- Further progressing CROP corporate harmonisation, as guided by Governing Councils.
- Supporting implementation of the findings of the Mid Term Review for the FPR, particularly the recommendation to develop a long-term implementation strategy for the FPR.

⁴This point was made by CROP Heads and Governing Council Chairs at their inaugural Annual Meeting on 21 November 2018.

5. CROP FINANCING TO DELIVER

5.1 CROP expenditure on regional priorities

Based on the regional priorities for CROP's delivery, Figure 1 and Figure 2 below provide a snapshot of CROP agencies' total expenditure for the financial years of 2017 and 2018, with regards to:

1. Climate change and resilience;
2. Regional fisheries;
3. Sustainable ocean management;
4. Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and childhood obesity; and
5. Regional security cooperation.

Expenditure figures are not included for the regional priorities of sustainable development or strengthening arrangements for regionalism given these priorities are cross-cutting in nature, making it difficult to determine specific funding levels.

CROP financing for the five regional priorities was relatively stable over 2017 and 2018, at **USD \$87,571,334** and **USD \$87,050,879** respectively. In summary, for both 2017 and 2018, the regional priority that receives the highest level of CROP financing is regional fisheries (48% in 2018), followed by climate change and resilience (36% in 2018), sustainable ocean management (9%), NCDs and childhood obesity (5%), and regional security (0.5%). It should be noted that the funding figure for regional security only includes contributions from the Forum Secretariat. Noting that the work of FFA, SPC, SPREP and other CROP agencies also contributes to regional security, this figure under-represents CROP expenditure on regional security.

Overall, it should be noted that these figures include CROP funding levels for regional thematic priorities in a broad sense, rather than being specific to Forum Leaders' decisions in each thematic area. In future years, CROP agencies will work to provide greater specificity on annual funding levels specific to Forum Leaders' priorities.

FIGURE 1 - 2017 CROP SUPPORT TOWARDS REGIONAL Priorities (USD)

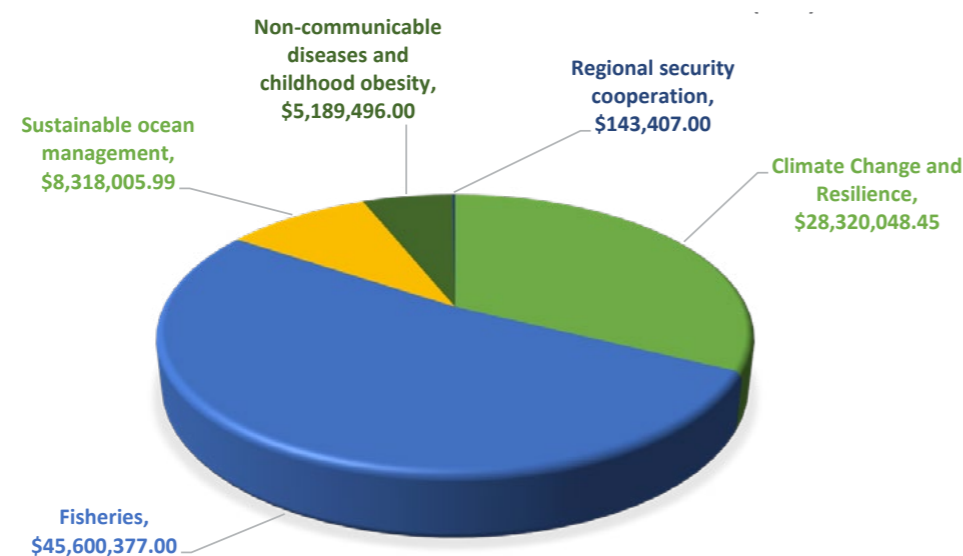
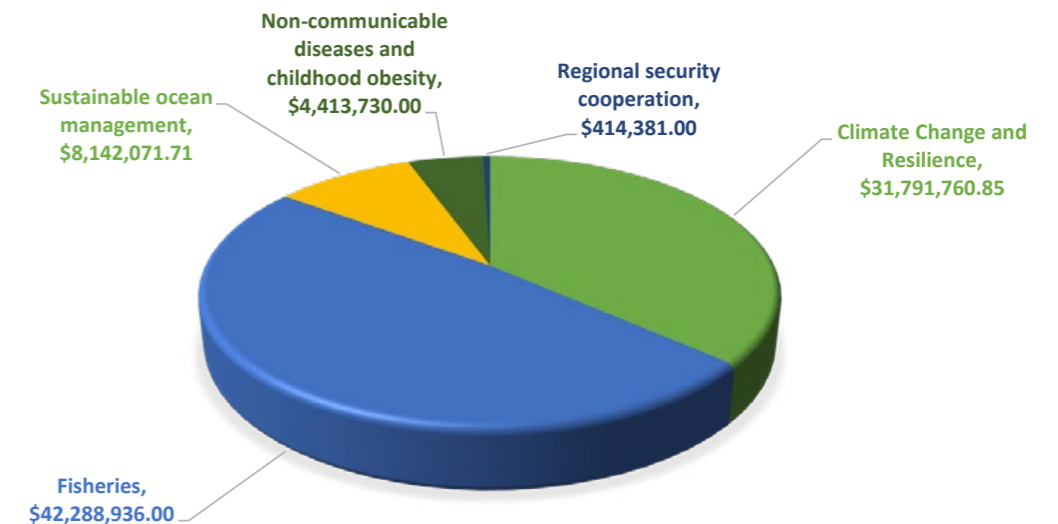


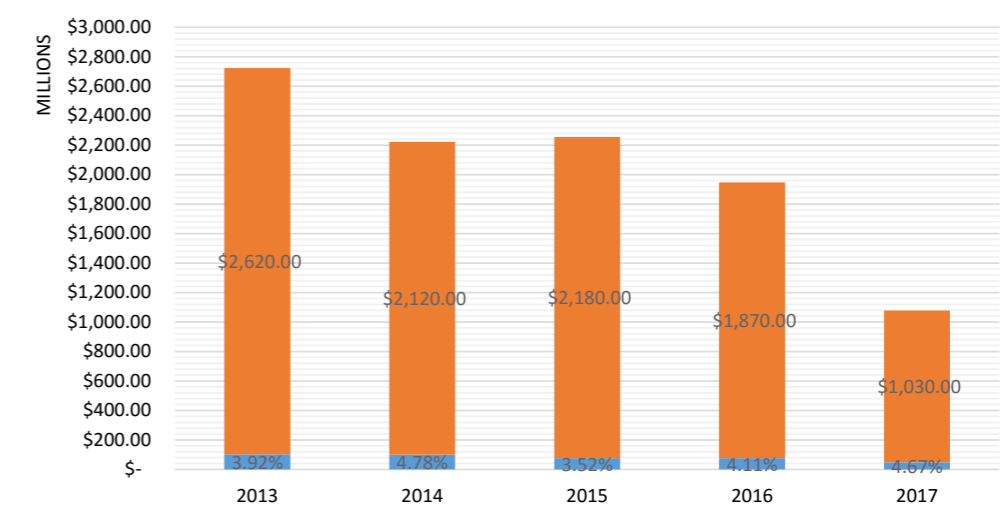
FIGURE 2 - 2018 CROP SUPPORT TOWARDS REGIONAL Priorities (USD)



5.2 Development financing flowing to CROP

Based on data from the Pacific Aid Map⁵, Figure 3 below sets out the levels of donor finance flowing to CROP agencies annually, as a percentage of total donor finance flows to the region. It shows that for the past five years, CROP agencies have received less than 5% of total donor finance flowing to the region, highlighting the limited levels of donor financing available to support CROP agencies' delivery on regional priorities.

FIGURE 3 - Regional Donor Financing through CROP Agencies: 2013 - 2017* (USD)



NB: The Pacific Aid Map's 2017 data is still being updated and may not reflect the complete picture. The Pacific Aid Map also acknowledges limitations in its full coverage of donor financing flows to the region, particularly for China and India.

⁵The Lowy Institute's Pacific Aid Map can be accessed here: <https://pacificaidmap.lowyinstitute.org/about>

6. CROP DELIVERY ON SIS STRATEGY

6.1 Role of CROP

The SIS Strategy 2016-2020 identifies CROP as a strategic partnership for implementation against the five priority areas of: climate change; labour mobility; marine resources management; health; and air and sea transportation.

As a result, SIS Officials have continued to promote SIS issues in CROP Governing Council meetings and in relevant CROP working groups, as well as to advocate specific activities and resources to address the expected results of the SIS Strategy.

Since the endorsement of the Strategy, a number of CROP agencies (particularly PIFS, SPC, SPREP and SPTO) have incorporated key actions of the Strategy into their organisational results and resourcing framework. Other CROP agencies have been encouraged by SIS Leaders to do the same. However, the challenge has been keeping abreast on all SIS-related activities across CROP through the CROP Working Group mechanism.

A summary of CROP progress on SIS Strategy priorities is provided below, noting that a detailed report will be presented to the SIS Leaders meeting on 13 August 2019.

6.2 CROP progress on the SIS Strategy priorities

A. CLIMATE CHANGE

- All SIS took part in COP 24 regional preparations, as supported by SPREP and the One CROP Plus team, including funding provided by SPREP to have one additional delegate funded to participate in COP 24.
- SPREP, working with CROP and other partners, has helped support SIS access to the regional Pacific NDC Hub, IMPACT project, Global Climate Change Alliance Plus, Scaling up Pacific Adaptation project and the PACRES project.
- SPREP also delivered workshops, trainings and in-country assistance to SIS members.
- USP's Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development has provided capacity building and high level advisory support including on loss and damage, agriculture, tourism and building community resilience.
- SPC provided support in designing a GCF project for Cook Islands and capacity building and technical assistance in areas related to biosecurity, sustainable energy and agriculture.
- PPA provided capacity building and technical assistance through its Sustainable Energy Industry Development Project.

B. LABOUR MOBILITY

- SPTO provided business marketing training for tourism related stakeholders as well as support for the hospitality industry to improve standards and service.

C. MARINE RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

- FFA assistance included work attachments/training; consultancies and technical advice in the areas of fisheries management, combatting IUU and fisheries development; provision of economic information on the contribution of tuna fisheries; and legal advice on fisheries arrangements and employment standards.

- SPC contributed through capacity building; technical assistance including reviewing coastal fisheries management plans and policies; provision of new and updated internet-based tools to acquire and manage tuna fishery data; and a review of the Regional Deep-Sea Minerals Agreement.
- SPREP provided workshops and training on coastal and marine issues as well as in-country assistance on ocean monitoring.

D. HEALTH

- SPC continues to be the lead CROP agency for the implementation of activities emanating from the 'health' priority of the SIS Strategy focusing on training and workshops.

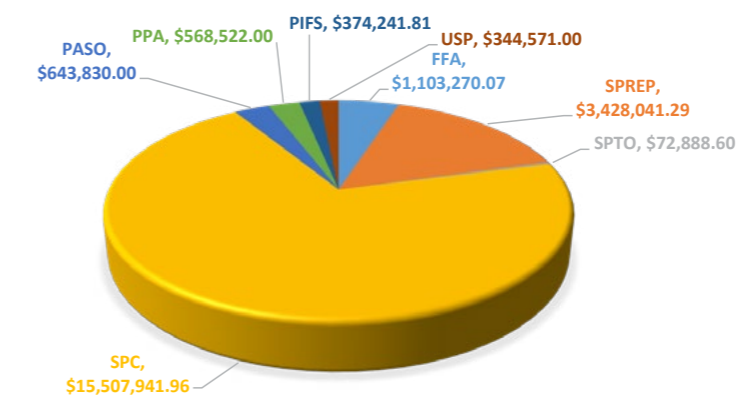
E. AIR AND SEA TRANSPORTATION

- PASO provided technical assistance with regards to aviation safety and security.
- PASO has worked with the Forum Secretariat to re-instate a Regional Aviation Ministers Meeting.
- USP delivered education and training activities in partnership with the Micronesian Centre for Sustainable Transport.
- SPC contributed to the maritime component of the 'air/sea transportation' priority under the Strategy.

6.3 CROP expenditure on SIS priorities

The financial assistance and support by CROP agencies to SIS countries amounted to approximately **FJD 22,043,307** for the period 1 July 2018 – 30 June 2019. This marks a decrease of **FJD 84,984,122** since the 2017-2018 report, noting that USP focused its reporting on climate change-related activities only and FFA did

FIGURE 4 - 2018/2019 CROP Support to SIS



not factor in human resource and corporate service costs for the delivery of services, nor did it factor in the ODA component provided by the United States under the US Tuna Treaty, which has been included in past reporting.

CROP support was mainly channelled through capacity building support activities including, but not limited to, workshops, direct technical assistance, training and mentoring. The majority of the Forum Secretariat's assistance to SIS was provided through airfares, accommodation, and per diems for SIS Leaders and Officials to attend the High-Level Dialogue with the United Nations Secretary-General in May 2019, in-house costs to support the SIS Attachment Programme as well as remuneration for the SIS Officers.

A breakdown of the total value (FJD) of eight CROP agencies' assistance provided to SIS (excluding Taiwan/ROC Scholarships) is provided in Figure 4.

7. 2020 AND ONWARDS

Following the 50th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Meeting, to be held in Tuvalu in August 2019, CROP agencies will collaborate to develop a CROP Strategic Work Agenda for 2020, to deliver on Forum Leaders' decisions. This Strategic Work Agenda will be considered for endorsement at the 2nd Annual Meeting of CROP Heads and Governing Council Chairs in November 2019, and then shared with all CROP Governing Councils.

As well as considering the CROP Strategic Work Agenda for 2020, the 2nd Annual Meeting of CROP Heads and Governing Council Chairs will have a particular focus on assessing implementation of the new CROP Charter, and strengthening CROP's role in regional governance and financing.



Pacific Aviation Safety Office
(PASO) General Manager
Andrew Valentine



Pacific Community (SPC)
Director General
Dr Colin Tukuitonga



Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries
Agency (FFA) Director General
Dr Manu Tupou-Roosen



Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
(PIFS) Secretary General
Dame Meg Taylor



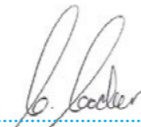
Pacific Power Association (PPA)
Executive Director
Andrew Daka



Secretariat of the Pacific Regional
Environment Programme (SPREP)
Director General
Kosi Latu



The University of the South Pacific
(USP) Vice Chancellor & President
Professor Pal Ahluwalia



South Pacific Tourism Organisation
(SPTO) CEO
Chris Cocker

CROP AGENCY EXPERTISE



Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO)
General Manager – **Andrew Valentine**

PASO is a regional organisation overseeing aviation safety and security in the Pacific Islands. Its goal is to provide specialist technical regulatory aviation oversight services to Members to enable a safe and secure aviation environment at a lower total cost than Members would have to meet if they funded regulatory aviation separately. Established in 2005, with a secretariat based in Port Vila, Vanuatu, PASO currently has 13 Pacific government members. PASO delivers its services through a consultancy model underpinned by the standards and recommended practices as set by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).



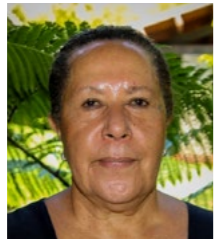
Pacific Community (SPC)
Director General – **Dr Colin Tukuitonga**

SPC is the principal and largest scientific and technical organisation in the Pacific region, owned and governed by 26 country and territory members. SPC works for the well-being of Pacific people through the effective and innovative application of science and knowledge, guided by a deep understanding of Pacific Island contexts and cultures. SPC's focus is on major cross-cutting issues, such as climate change, disaster risk management, food security, gender equality, human rights, non-communicable diseases and youth employment. Using a multi-sector approach in responding to members' development priorities, SPC draws upon skills and capabilities from around the region and internationally, and supports the empowerment of Pacific communities and sharing of expertise and skills between countries and territories.



Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)
Director General – **Dr Manu Tupou-Roosen**

FFA strengthens national capacity and regional solidarity so its 17 members can manage, control and develop their tuna fisheries now and in the future. Based in Honiara, Solomon Islands, the FFA was established to help countries sustainably manage their fishery resources that fall within their 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs). FFA is an advisory body providing expertise, technical assistance and other support to its members who make sovereign decisions about their tuna resources and participate in regional decision making on tuna management through agencies such as the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC).



Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS)
Secretary General – Dame Meg Taylor

PIFS supports the 18 Forum Members to work together through deeper forms of regionalism in support of sustainable development, economic growth, good governance and security. Its role is policy advice, coordination and ensuring the effective implementation of Forum Leaders' decisions, leading to tangible improvements in the lives of the people of the Pacific. Its key focus is on innovative, game changing initiatives for regional action. PIFS promotes an inclusive regional public policy approach to arrive at proposals for Leaders to consider and endorse.



Pacific Power Association (PPA)
Executive Director – Andrew Daka

PPA is an association of electricity utilities, organisations, and individuals who have an interest in the operations and development of the power industry in the Pacific region. The main objective of PPA is to create an environment of “cooperative partnership” with the private sector, funding institutions, and others with interest in the development of the power industry and to enhance the role of the power sector in Pacific Island countries. PPA is an inter-governmental regional organisation founded by the electricity utilities operating in the Pacific island countries and territories. Established in 1992 with the Secretariat based in Suva, Fiji, PPA currently has a membership of 25 electricity utilities operating in 22 Pacific island countries and territories and 110 Allied Members world-wide.



Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)
Director General – Kosi Latu

SPREP promotes cooperation in the Pacific region and provides assistance in order to protect and improve the environment and to ensure sustainable development for present and future generations. Based in Samoa, SPREP has 26 member governments including 21 Pacific island countries and territories. As outlined in the SPREP Strategic Plan 2017-2026, climate change resilience is its principal concern and oceans is a cross cutting theme. Other priority areas include: island and ocean ecosystems; environmental monitoring and governance; and waste management and pollution control. SPREP is an accredited entity to the Adaptation Fund and Green Climate Fund and host of the JICA funded Pacific Climate Change Centre.



South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO)
CEO – Chris Cocker

SPTO is the mandated organisation representing tourism in the Pacific Islands region. With 21 government members and 145 private members, SPTO works to market the Pacific, collect data for informed decision making enhance the ‘South Pacific’ brand and support the capacity of government and the private sector for sustainable tourism. Its key functions include strategic management, advocacy, communications, partnership development, governance and reporting.



The University of the South Pacific (USP)
Vice-Chancellor & President - Professor Pal Ahluwalia

USP is a multi-modal teaching and learning institution providing innovative, cost-effective, relevant and internationally recognised education and training. Jointly owned by the governments of 12 Pacific Island countries, USP has 14 campuses and 11 centres. In keeping with its charter, USP provides all levels of education and training to enhance regional capacity in a wide range of disciplines including agriculture, computing studies, economics, laws, environment, sciences, climate change, accounting, management and teacher training. With the largest concentration of Pacific expertise, USP undertakes research in all aspects of the Pacific islands. It aims to significantly lift its research profile by pursuing strategic partnerships and linkages.



2019
August

CROP Annual Report
to Pacific Island Forum Leaders

