

A Shared Vision for the Ocean Decade in the Pacific - Nothing About Us Without Us

The entrenched wisdom and communal management approaches uphold the distinct significance of the ocean in Pacific cultural and societal contexts. Nevertheless, the vast oceanic nations of the Pacific are confronting significant and urgent challenges linked to climate change, ineffective ocean governance, pollution, declining biodiversity and coastal habitats. These issues pose threats to the resilience and welfare of both ecosystems and the communities dependent on them. Implementing knowledge-driven effective ocean management is imperative to counter prevailing negative patterns and plays a pivotal role in attaining the objectives outlined in the 2050 Strategy for a Blue Pacific Continent.

The United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (Ocean Decade) defines oceans as vast bodies of saltwater covering approximately 71% of the Earth's surface, encompassing various marine ecosystems and supporting diverse forms of life. Ocean plays a critical role in regulating the Earth's climate, providing food and livelihoods for millions of people and numerous economic and recreational opportunities. They are integral to global environmental health and sustainable development.

The UN Ocean Decade provides a convening framework for Pacific actors to lead efforts toward 100% effective sustainable ocean management through:

- Reclaiming, revitalizing, and restoring the traditional knowledge to formulate a shared vision of the ocean for the future
- Reinforcing and sustaining regional and national leadership to identify priorities for relevant ocean science and knowledge
- Collaborating within the Pacific and externally to develop fit for purpose infrastructure and services to underpin the sustainable management of the ocean
- Nurturing the skills and capacities of the current and future generation of ocean stewards and professionals to lead the development of a sustainable ocean economy
- Communicating and sharing ocean science and knowledge so that it can be accessed and used by society for decision making at all levels, from local to global, and enhancing transparency and accountability in decision making
- Mobilising partnerships and sustained financial and in-kind resources from within and outside the Pacific, to close the massive gaps between aspirations and existing funding.

Pacific leaders demonstrated a strong commitment to the Ocean Decade initiative by coming together to address the unique challenges faced by their region in protecting the Pacific. Emphasizing the importance of traditional knowledge and indigenous practices, Pacific nations have worked in tandem with scientific communities, governmental bodies, and non-governmental organizations to enhance ocean science, promote sustainable resource management, and address climate-related threats. Through regional partnerships and joint initiatives, since 2019, Pacific leaders have taken proactive steps to ensure the health and resilience of the Pacific Ocean, contributing not only to the global goals of the Ocean Decade but also to the well-being of their local communities and the broader marine environment.

Ocean Decade Roadmap for the Pacific

This Ocean Decade Roadmap for the Pacific contains specific priority actions that have been constructed through collaborative efforts, drawing insights from the 1st Pacific Islands Conference on Ocean Science and Ocean Management held last September 2023 in Nadi, Fiji. Links are indicated between these Roadmap Priority Actions and the Regional Collective Actions from the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan. It also integrates essential components from various strategic ocean documents developed during previous regional ocean meetings since the Pacific Community Workshop on the UN Ocean Decade held in Noumea in 2019.

The Ocean Decade Roadmap serves as a directive for action in the Pacific region, encompassing all stakeholders and partners involved in advancing the goals of the Decade. This includes governments, as well as national and regional institutions, civil society organisations, research partners, early career ocean professionals, traditional knowledge holders, and communities working collectively to contribute to its success.

Priority Actions for the Ocean Decade in the Pacific

A. Science and Knowledge

(i) Discoveries, knowledge, and solutions related to marine pollution, ecosystems and biodiversity, and the ocean-climate nexus with a focus on:

- Intensifying identification, research, and control of marine invasive species
- Monitoring and building better understanding of multiple interacting ocean stressors
- Developing and sharing knowledge on water quality
- Implementing nature-based solutions within climate change adaptation strategies
- Supporting national services (maritime, meteorology, fisheries, etc.) with adequate data and information
- Understanding and predicting sea level rise and its impacts
- Implementing climate change adaptation, and community resilience
- Enhancing climate mitigation potential in the ocean space and alignment with potential leveraging resources
- *Addressing all forms of marine pollution.
- Supporting and enhancing monitoring approaches that supports community-led management

(ii) Generation of a shared understanding of a sustainable and resilient ocean economy in the Pacific and knowledge and solutions to:

- Further implement ecosystem-based fisheries management
- *Develop ocean accounting, financing mechanisms and systems as a means of sharing data and information and tracking progress towards a sustainable ocean economy
- *Strengthen marine conservation efforts
- Promote efficient, clean, and sustainable maritime transport
- *Incorporate blue economy and ocean economy into ocean management approaches.

B. Strategic Assets & Infrastructure/Infrastructure and Services

- Develop fit for purpose operational observations and forecasting in synergy with existing initiatives in the Pacific
- Co-design observations systems with traditional knowledge holders and embrace traditional knowledge in observations
- Implement early warning systems integrating traditional knowledge
- Invest in strategic science assets, research centres, instruments, wet and dry laboratories, and other research infrastructure
- Develop climate resilient port infrastructures.
- Design and promote sustainable shipping and renewable energy

C. Capacity development

- Mainstream capacity development initiatives to build a skilled workforce in each Pacific Island country and territory
- Foster professional development at all career stages and promote and strengthen career pathways for Pacific Islanders in Pacific Island countries and territories
- Accreditation and recognition of Pacific-led capacity development initiatives
- Strengthen linkages and collaboration between universities for applied research in the region and beyond
- Ensure Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion approaches are included in capacity development initiatives
- *Create or strengthen regional centres of excellence for priority themes (biodiversity, resilience, climate change, ocean science, deep sea research, etc.)
- *Seek best regional practices and share knowledge, experiences on development relating to ocean management
- *Empower and build the capacity of Pacific youth and Early Career Ocean Professionals (ECOPs) for ocean leadership.

D. Traditional knowledge and practices

- *Operationalise frameworks to study, protect, promote, and share traditional knowledge
- Create pathways for communication, listening and learning from traditional knowledge
- *Work with Pacific communities along a spectrum from participation to partnership to leadership
- Embed traditional knowledge in school curricula
- Use accessible local languages to communicate and share information
- *Build traditional ocean management knowledge into ocean policies and legislations.

E. Community engagement

- *Develop ocean literacy for Pacific Islanders of all ages
- Improve science communication and its visibility
- Partner with the media and effectively use social media for maximised reach
- Open annual regional platform for Pacific Ocean Science
- Scaling proven, realistic, effective, and relevant community-based approaches to 100% ocean management (from the coast to the open ocean)

- Increased engagement of private sector in supporting effective ocean management by leveraging innovative technologies, resources, and expertise to develop sustainable solutions and promote responsible stewardship of marine resources.

F. Ocean & Climate Financing/Sustainable Financing Options

- *Coordinate sustainable long-term financing aligned with policies and priorities
- Simplify administrative processes and requirements to access climate finance
- *Address capacity gaps and invest in capacity development for ocean financing
- Increase transparency of financial commitments and expenditures, improving financial monitoring and reporting
- Increase the engagement of the private sector to support effective ocean management by mobilizing crucial financial resources to implement sustainable practices, mitigate climate change impacts, and enhance resilience in marine ecosystems and coastal communities
- *Explore other innovative possibilities in sustainable financing options (in addition to climate finance) to ensure long-term resilience and effective stewardship of marine ecosystems

G. Policy & Governance

- *Co-design and formulate policies, plans, and projects in collaboration with coastal communities, civil society, private sector partners, and stakeholders from all sectors
- *Improve national and regional collaborations for integrated ocean management and ocean financing
- *Progress the implementation of national ocean policies through mandated line agencies within Governments in Pacific Island countries and territories
- *Progress and implement regional ocean-related policies
- Establish or strengthen Marine Scientific Research Committees/Organisations, in accordance with national law and policies, that function to capture, collate and authenticate scientific research data that will be used to make policy decisions.
- *Support regional coordination in the establishment of maritime zones and extended continental shelf under the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea
- *Support the ratification and implementation of the new legally binding instrument on biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ)
- *Implement a regional and global ocean framework to manage various interests, especially on contentious issues such as on deep-sea mining, joint management of continental shelf, shared bilateral areas and high seas pockets
- Use traditional knowledge and connections between indigenous people to settle disputes over Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) boundaries and enhance the setting up of joint management areas in these areas
- *Strengthen joint management in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) in line with the current aspiration of the region moving towards a 100% effectively managed Blue Pacific Continent.

Conditions for Successful Implementation of Actions

A. Partnerships

1. Exploring incentives for industry-led ocean sustainability initiatives and practices including a shared vision of a sustainable ocean economy
2. Local and national governments supporting sustainable ocean management programmes and initiatives
3. Industry participation (shipping, port development and management, fishing, etc.) in sustainable ocean management programmes and initiatives.

B. Resource mobilisation

1. Priorities driven by the region
2. Coordination of resources
3. Long term sustainability of resources to support Pacific priorities and ambitions
4. Mobilise all types of resources (finance, people, technology, infrastructure, data)
5. Empower and support local communities initiatives
6. Source and utilise technical expertise available in the region.

C. Regional and national coordination

1. Cohesive engagement of Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) agencies and partners in the Ocean Decade via Pacific Islands Decade Collaborative Centre (PI-DCC)
2. Support from the PI-DCC to member countries and territories to help members create purposeful National Focal Point mechanisms and processes for information and resource consolidation and sharing
3. Clear responsibility over ocean management between fisheries and environment agencies
4. Clear processes of monitoring, evaluation, and learning
5. Clear measurement of progress and adaptive management

A Way Forward

This Shared Vision for the Ocean Decade in the Pacific is building on regional consultations for the Ocean Decade in Pacific held in Noumea in 2019, and the Pacific Islands Conference on Ocean Science and Ocean Management held in Nadi in 2023. It sets a course and contributes to the following event, goals, and strategies:

1. The 2024 Ocean Decade Conference in Barcelona
2. The 2030 Sustainable Development Goals
3. The 2050 Strategy for a Blue Pacific Continent
4. The 2024 Ocean Climate Dialogue in Bonn (June)

Appendix I.

Summary Matrix of Ocean Decade Roadmap Priorities & 2050 Blue Pacific Strategy Implementation Plan 2023-2030 Regional Collective Actions

Ocean Decade in the Pacific Priorities	2050 Blue Pacific Strategy Implementation Plan 2023-2030 Regional Collective Actions
SCIENCE & KNOWLEDGE	
<p>1. Knowledge and solutions related to marine pollution, ecosystems and biodiversity, and the ocean-climate nexus with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Intensifying control of invasive species ● Monitoring and building a better understanding of multiple interacting ocean stressors ● Developing and sharing knowledge on water quality ● Implementing nature-based solutions within climate change adaptation strategies ● Supporting national services (maritime, meteorology, fisheries, etc.) with adequate data and information ● Understanding and predicting sea level rise and its impact ● Implementing climate change adaptation, and community resilience ● Enhancing climate mitigation potential in the ocean space and alignment with potential leveraging resources ● Addressing all forms of marine pollution. ● Supporting and enhancing monitoring approaches that supports community-led management 	<p>Climate Change & Disasters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ *Increase investment in climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction to ensure improved. implementation of measures to effectively minimise impacts of climate change and disasters including mainstream adaptation and disaster risk management measures and capabilities across key development sectors.
<p>2. Generation of a shared understanding of a sustainable and resilient ocean economy in the Pacific and knowledge and solutions to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Further implement ecosystem-based fisheries management ● Develop ocean accounting, financing mechanisms and systems as a means of sharing data and information and tracking progress towards a sustainable ocean economy 	<p>People Centered Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ *Regional procurement mechanism for assistive technologies for disability inclusion.

Ocean Decade in the Pacific Priorities	2050 Blue Pacific Strategy Implementation Plan 2023-2030 Regional Collective Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen marine conservation efforts • Promote efficient, clean, and sustainable maritime transport • Incorporate blue economy and ocean economy into ocean management approaches. 	
INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop fit for purpose operational observations and forecasting in synergy with existing initiatives in the Pacific ■ Co-design observations systems with traditional knowledge holders and embrace traditional knowledge in observations ■ Implement early warning systems integrating traditional knowledge ■ Enhance knowledge management and the accessibility of data and information with adequate data management practices, standards and systems implemented ■ Improve knowledge management and in particular data collection, storage, and dissemination of information ■ Invest in strategic science assets, research centres, instruments, wet and dry laboratories, and other research infrastructure ■ Develop climate resilient port infrastructures. 	<p>Resource & Economic Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ *Development of regional fisheries Hubs and Spokes Initiative. <p>Technology & Connectivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ *Increase research, adoption and implementation of green and low carbon transport options and technology, noting the varying circumstances across the Pacific. ■ *Enhancing supply chain resilience and strengthening sustainable connectivity. <p>Ocean & Environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop a Pacific Centre of Excellence on Deep Oceans Science.
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mainstream capacity development initiatives to develop a skilled workforce in each Pacific Island country and territory ■ Foster professional development at all career stages and promote and strengthen career pathways for Pacific Islanders in Pacific Island countries and territories 	<p>Ocean & Environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop a Pacific Centre of Excellence on Deep Oceans Science. ■ *Support Members efforts to the signing, ratification, and implementation of the new legally binding instrument on BBNJ and strengthening management in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) in line with the current aspiration of the region moving towards a Blue Pacific Continent.

Ocean Decade in the Pacific Priorities		2050 Blue Pacific Strategy Implementation Plan 2023-2030	
Ocean Decade in the Pacific Priorities		Regional Collective Actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Accreditation and recognition of Pacific-led capacity development initiatives ■ Strengthen linkages and collaboration between universities for applied research in the region and beyond ■ Create or strengthen regional centres of excellence for priority themes (biodiversity, resilience, climate change, ocean science, deep sea research, etc.) ■ Seek best regional practices and share knowledge, experiences on development relating to ocean management. ■ To empower and build the capacity of Pacific ECOP for ocean leadership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ *Support members’ efforts in relation to the pursuit of an ambitious, comprehensive, international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. ■ *Adoption of ecosystem-based tools and customary approaches to manage and improve ecological integrity, biosecurity, sustainable productivity, and climate resilience of ocean and land-based resources. ■ *Meaningful participation of all Pacific peoples, particularly women and girls in all their diversity, in ecosystem-based management, that is in harmony with cultural practices and knowledge and contributes to strengthen sustainable use of land and ocean-based resources <p>People Centered Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ *Strengthening the capacity of University of the South Pacific (USP) to serve the region’s priorities, including its collaboration with national universities and training providers. <p>Climate Change & Disasters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ *Further build the technical capacity of, and enhance the regional coordination between, national practitioners and institutions, to effectively address the incremental challenges of climate change and disasters including on vulnerable communities and marginalised groups. <p>Resource & Economic Development</p> <p>*Empowering Pacific Education for Workforce Development Initiative</p>	TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE & PRACTICES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Operationalise frameworks to protect, promote and share traditional knowledge ■ Create pathways for communication, listening and learning from traditional knowledge ■ Work with Pacific communities along a spectrum from participation to partnership to leadership 	<p>People Centered Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ *Regional support for benchmarking to attain international certification and also meet global education standards for Pacific formal and non-formal education at all levels 		

Ocean Decade in the Pacific Priorities	2050 Blue Pacific Strategy Implementation Plan 2023-2030 Regional Collective Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Embed traditional knowledge in school curricula ▪ Use accessible local languages to communicate and share information ▪ Build traditional ocean management knowledge into ocean policies and legislations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ *Regional support to encourage the ratification of internationally agreed conventions to achieve internationally recognised qualifications. ▪ *Regional Support for Empowering Pacific Education for Workforce Development Initiative. ▪ *Regional support for cultural policy development guidelines for the protection, safeguarding and cross-sectoral use of traditional knowledge and access benefit sharing. ▪ *Strengthen relations with relevant international partners towards increasing documenting, tracking, and recording of physical, oral, intellectual, and visual Pacific cultures and cultural heritage including traditional skills, knowledge, spirituality, practices, and languages.
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop ocean literacy for Pacific Islanders of all ages ▪ Improve science communication and its visibility ▪ Partner with the media and effectively use social media for maximised reach ▪ Open annual regional platform for Pacific Ocean Science. ▪ Scaling proven, realistic , effective, and relevant community-based approaches to 100% ocean management 	<p>Ocean & Environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ *Strengthen political leadership, stewardship and coordinated advocacy to influence global policies and commitments. ▪ *Continue advocacy and promotion of the Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the Face of Climate Change - Related Sea-Level Rise. <p>People Centered Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strengthen the implementation of regional policies, frameworks and declarations on human rights, gender equality, equity and social inclusion. <p>Climate Change & Disasters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ *Enhance community preparedness for, response to and recovery from disaster events through strengthened humanitarian action and risk-informed investments. ▪ *Meaningful participation of all Pacific peoples particularly women and girls in all their diversity, in climate change action including access to climate finance, disaster risk management, the protection of persons affected by climate change-related sea-level rise and climate security.

Ocean Decade in the Pacific Priorities		2050 Blue Pacific Strategy Implementation Plan 2023-2030	
Ocean Decade in the Pacific Priorities		Regional Collective Actions	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ *Ensuring the safety and protection of all Pacific peoples particularly women and girls in all their diversity including climate security <p>Technology & Connectivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ *Strengthen regional approaches to enhance the capacity of Pacific broadcasting networks
OCEAN AND CLIMATE FINANCING			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordinate sustainable long-term financing aligned with policies and priorities ▪ Simplify administrative processes and requirements to access climate finance ▪ Address capacity gaps and invest in capacity development for ocean financing ▪ Increase transparency of financial commitments and expenditures, improving financial monitoring and reporting ▪ Conduct an inventory of ocean and climate financing options and explore new avenues for ocean financing. 	<p>Ocean & Environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ *Coordinated regional engagement with international funders to access new areas of financing to improve the resilience of natural ecosystems. <p>Climate Change & Disasters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ *Leverage long term, predictable climate finance to support capacity development, retention and supplementation in PICs enabling strong country driven climate change agendas. ▪ *Mobilise resources to support people centred, end-to-end multi-hazard early warning for all PICTs in the implementation of the Weather Ready Pacific Programme in collaboration with national, regional, and global partners ▪ *Pacific tailored modalities of climate finance management are being used, including the PRF, as the preferred means to disburse climate finance, simplifying administrative and transaction costs and time, and allowing for greater ease of absorption and sustainability of effort. ▪ *Establish and enhance mechanisms to tag and report on climate change financing including for GESI actions to enable effective monitoring and report of climate finance flows. ▪ *Ensure climate finance is clearly traceable, accessible, and accountable from source, uses fair principles and systems of allocation and disbursement and are not limited or constrained by the rules of ODA where relevant. 		

POLICY & GOVERNANCE

- Co-design and formulate policies, plans and projects in collaboration with coastal communities, civil society, private sector partners, and stakeholders from all sectors
- Improve national and regional collaborations for integrated ocean management and ocean financing
- Progress the implementation of national ocean policies through mandated line agencies within Governments in Pacific Island countries and territories
- Progress and implement regional ocean-related policies
- Support regional coordination in the establishment of maritime zones and extended continental shelf under the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea
- Support the ratification and implementation of the new legally binding instrument on biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ)
- Implement a regional and global ocean framework and to manage various interests, especially on contentious issues such as on deep-sea mining, joint management of continental shelf, shared bilateral areas and high seas pockets
- Strengthen joint management in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) in line with the current aspiration of the region moving towards a 100% effectively managed Blue Pacific Continent.

Ocean & Environment:

- Develop a regional approach for addressing the removal of hazardous wastes including nuclear contamination such as the Runit dome, WWII wrecks, UXO and wartime debris.
- *Review the regional waste and pollution policy framework (Cleaner Pacific 2025) and other relevant regional policies to ensure a regional approach to support and monitor Safe Circular Economy including Sustainable Consumption (and Production).
- *Review of the regional ocean policy framework (Framework for the Pacific Oceanscape) and relevant regional environment policies to ensure effective and timely consideration of overlapping sectoral and national interests and helps to integrate sectoral ocean policies as well as ocean governance across jurisdictions.
- *Develop as appropriate regional models for managing natural resource sectors, including ensuring that all environmental, social, and economic risks are comprehensively understood.
- *Protection of key biodiversity areas through well-designed networks of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures to prevent extinctions and reduce extinctions risk for threatened native species.

Climate Change & Disasters

- *Enhance strategic engagement and participation in relevant international climate change governance mechanisms, including calling for boards and committees to have representation for the Pacific region, to ensure the Pacific voice is heard and unique Pacific concerns are advocated for.
- *Appointment of and continued support to Pacific Climate Change Champions for strengthened political advocacy at the global climate change discussions.

Regional Collective Actions

- *Ensure a strong Pacific voice in support of climate action in line with the best available science of the IPCC, including peaking by 2025 and net zero by 2050.
- *Pacific leadership on global responses to climate change, including in relation to the Pacific-led initiatives requesting advisory opinions from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea (ITLOS).
- *Strong Pacific voices and coordinated messaging on climate security issues facing the region in all fora, including the UNSC, Human Rights Commission, ITLOS, UNGA, ICJ and negotiations on climate actions.

Resource & Economic Development:

- Support the ratification and effective Implementation of trade agreements.