

CONSULTATION  
VERSION

# Unlocking Blue Pacific Prosperity

Co-designing our Future for Resilient Ecosystems,  
Robust Food Systems and Thriving People

*Consultation Version - October 2024*



Pacific  
Community  

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Communauté  
du Pacifique

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# Executive Summary



The Blue Pacific Continent spans 42 million square kilometers of ocean, five times the size of the continental United States. It is home to almost 30 percent of the world's coral, some of its richest fisheries, and most importantly, 42 million people, speaking over 850 languages, descended from the proudest stewards and champions of the ocean.

But the Pacific faces an array of challenges it did not cause but is disproportionately impacted by. Pacific Leaders call out climate change as the single greatest threat to the Blue Pacific, damaging marine and coastal ecosystems and fisheries - impacting food, water and economic security. Increasingly frequent extreme weather events, and sea level rise are eroding precious habitable land, affecting infrastructure, economies, health and well-being. Climate change is already causing an existential crisis for both people and nature in the Blue Pacific – most of whom live in coastal communities, right on the front line.

And at the same time, access to cheap, unhealthy food is causing a regional public health epidemic, resulting in alarming rates of diabetes and other non-communicable diseases.

Pacific Islands Countries have shown bold leadership to address climate, environmental, and development challenges. And yet, the necessary financial resources to operationalise these commitments are seriously inadequate in the Pacific. Globally, SDG14 is the least funded of the SDGs. The Pacific region receives only 4.6% of the global adaptation finance channelled to Asia-Pacific – representing <0.22% percent of global climate finance. Only 4% of climate finance in the region comes from private funders, compared to up to 49% globally. What we do receive is hampered by onerous administrative processes that hinder or prevent our access and entail requirements that don't match our absorptive capacity.

Unlocking Blue Pacific Prosperity, or UBPP, is a bold vision for transformation of this status quo, by unlocking **NEW** catalytic, innovative, accessible and sustained investment, aligned to Pacific values and the diversity of Pacific peoples, at a rate fast enough to solve Pacific problems now.

## We Know the Way: UBPP By Design



Unlocking Blue Pacific Prosperity will **protect, restore and rejuvenate the region's extraordinary ecosystems, foster Pacific peoples' prosperity, and empower communities**, with a focus on the intersection between healthy oceans, robust food systems, and the livelihoods and well-being of Pacific peoples in all their diversities.

UBPP aims to establish sustainable ocean management across 100 percent of the Blue Pacific Continent, making it the largest conservation effort in history. It will conserve more than 20% of the world's EEZ's, more than 2 billion hectares, to strengthen the ocean's resilience to climate impacts, with recognition of the role the ocean plays for food security, climate resilience, cultural identity and public health of Pacific Islands – and the entire world.

Historically, development & conservation projects have not leveraged the economic outcomes back into our countries and communities, or they have taken place selectively, leaving much of the region behind. Across the UBPP framework, our approach to protection and sustainable management of the Blue Pacific Continent is not only about achieving conservation outcomes, but instead leveraging the economic returns of protected and restored ecosystem services back into our communities.

UBPP connects the expertise and energy of PICTs, Pacific partners, and philanthropic foundations to co-create and connect **agile, innovative and scalable solutions** and **high-impact investment** for continent-wide results.

## Implementation Framework



The interconnected nature of development, climate, and environmental challenges in the Blue Pacific require a systems-level approach. The UBPP implementation framework is centered on three ambitious, interconnected goals to secure the health, food security, climate resilience and livelihoods of the Pacific.

1. **Sustainable management and conservation of 100% of the Blue Pacific Continent**
2. **Robust food systems underpinned by resilient ecosystems**
3. **Fit-for-purpose sustainable financing arrangements**

UBPP will establish a range of investment-ready activities to help steer investors and their contributions to address Pacific climate and development priorities, aligned to Pacific values and the diversity of Pacific peoples. Our investments will span **regional, national, and local implementation**, stressing the role of local governments, traditional governance bodies and communities in protecting and sustainably managing natural resources.

UBPP will build the region's capacity to attract, direct and absorb diverse investments, while ensuring that they are fit-for-purpose---aligned with regional, national and local priorities, and designed to meet the needs of the different phases of implementation. This means **enabling Pacific countries and implementers to identify, access and combine diverse funding sources towards the region's 2050 vision**.





UBPP is intentionally structured to lever Pacific regional assets and harness our financial architecture and expertise. Across the region, there is broad consensus on what needs to be done to address development challenges, as demonstrated by the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent*, coupled with robust regional frameworks and national strategies on ocean and fisheries management, food systems, climate action and public health. The UBPP has been designed to deliver on targeted Regional Collective Actions under the *2050 Strategy* and its implementation plan, together with its intentional alignment with a diverse array of regional frameworks and national sustainable development priorities.

UBPP will mobilise Pacific regional coordination to ensure that the diversity of country contexts is accounted for, while directing resources to the most urgent priorities. UBPP can serve as an investment pipeline that can catalyse support for other Pacific-led funding initiatives implementing the *2050 Strategy*, including the Pacific Regional Facility (PRF) and the Regional Programmatic Approach for Climate Action (RPACA).

**UBPP was unanimously endorsed by Pacific Leaders at the 52nd Pacific Island Leaders Forum in Rarotonga, Cook Islands, in November 2023, by all Pacific Island Forum countries.** UBPP was then internationally launched at UNFCCC COP28 in Dubai in December 2023. In partnership with the CROP agencies, a burgeoning consortium of investors, and a diverse array of indigenous communities, stakeholders, and global allies are poised to work together to achieve transformational impact.



*PIF Leaders at the UNFCCC COP28 in Dubai, during the announcement of the UBPP initiative*



- **UBPP is a regional vision for natural resource management of the Blue Pacific Continent.** With endorsements from Pacific leaders as a pathway for the implementation of the *2050 Strategy*, CROP agencies playing key technical advisory and implementation roles, and purposeful alignment and complementarity with regional initiatives, UBPP is poised to deliver actions across different scales of change, from regional, sub-regional, national, to local. Our region, defined by its vast ocean expanses and resilient, community-oriented societies, has long thrived on the strength of shared purpose and close cooperation, especially in the face of increasing natural disasters. Our nations commit to working together to address our unique challenges, harness shared strengths, and ensure that our individual and collective advancement brings practical benefits to all Pacific people. Harmonised regionalism will increase and optimise market opportunities, improve service delivery and institutional effectiveness, and ensure good governance for Pacific people.
- **UBPP is addressing the biggest challenges in the Blue Pacific Continent.** Climate change, integrated ocean management, and sustainable food systems have been identified by the Pacific as key development challenges for a sustainable future. But these challenges cannot be effectively addressed in siloes. Only by working together in an integrated and coherent way can we adapt and thrive in an increasingly uncertain world. UBPP will identify opportunities at these intersections that can create catalytic impact, for either new investments, or existing opportunities where an influx of new finance can create a tipping point towards enduring catalytic outcomes.
- **UBPP has already been proven to bring new finance to the region.** UBPP has attracted the support of philanthropic partners. The Bezos Earth Fund has committed US\$100M in seed funding and the Global Environment Facility has announced US\$125M for Pacific countries to draw on in support of UBPP-activities as part of their GEF8 star allocations. These anchor investments were committed to leverage public and private investment towards a target of US\$500M by the end of 2030. UBPP will work with existing initiatives, including PRF, RPACA, multilateral banks, bilateral partners, and climate financing agencies to coordinate and deploy the most appropriate capital in blending public, philanthropic, and private finance.



BEZOS  
EARTH  
FUND

The UBPP invites partners to join with the Blue Pacific to secure the Continent's critical contribution to planetary biodiversity and climate goals, while advancing the health and wellbeing of Pacific peoples in all their diversities. **Through building a diverse coalition of investors, stakeholders, and global allies, led by Pacific leaders, Unlocking Blue Pacific Prosperity will create a paradigm shift for continent-wide results.**

# Introduction

UBPP is an innovative, Pacific-led investment initiative centered on ocean & natural resource management in support of the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent*. UBPP convenes Pacific Island Countries and Territories, CROP agencies, civil society and public and philanthropic funding partners to secure the health, food security, climate resilience, and livelihoods and well-being of Pacific peoples in all their diversities.

## Co-Designing the UBPP: Development Process to Date

The UBPP initiative has been co-developed by Pacific Islands and Territories, with the support of CROP agencies, a burgeoning consortium of investors, and a diverse array of indigenous communities, stakeholders, and global allies, who are critical at various phases of the co-design process.





## Co-Design Workshop in Suva, Fiji (22-26 July 2024)

The inaugural UBPP co-design workshop convened 16 Members of the Pacific Community and 6 CROP agencies in a collaborative co-design process for the UBPP that:

1. considered the Pacific interlinkages of ocean and natural resource management, food systems, public health and regional financial architecture, and
2. articulated a proposal for initiative structure, governance and financing arrangements, as well as the initial framework for implementation pathways that align, reconcile and integrate existing regional, national and local efforts.

The workshop convened a diverse assortment of experts at the intersection of climate, oceans, food and health to map the activities required for catalytic impact; ensure alignment with regional and national frameworks, policies and priorities; and begin to map the finance available and required.

### 16 members of the Pacific community



### 6 CROP Agencies



## Purpose of this Report

This report encapsulates the vision and implementation framework for the Unlocking Blue Pacific Prosperity initiative. It is intended to be a summary for partners and participants of the co-design workshop, a briefer for leaders and potential funding partners, and a starting point for the informal working group that will drive the refinement of the Suva outputs and finalise recommendations for sub-regional consultation and decision making. It will:

- Establish a clear and common understanding of the UBPP, its purpose, and its potential catalytic impact for the Blue Pacific Continent
- Contextualise the UBPP opportunity by explaining the challenges UBPP aims to overcome, the key regional strategies and frameworks we are building on, and the political and financial landscape.
- Present the strategic plan for the implementation of the UBPP, including blueprints for action
- Present a comprehensive background of the development and co-design of the UBPP to date
- Establish the mandate, governance, roles & responsibilities of UBPP



# Context: Challenges facing the Blue Pacific Continent

## Climate change is a fundamental threat to the Pacific

Pacific leaders have identified climate change as the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security, and well-being of the peoples of the Pacific.<sup>1</sup>

The Pacific is responsible for less than 0.03% of global greenhouse gas emissions. And yet, the Blue Pacific suffers disproportionate impacts of a changing climate. Rising ocean temperatures and ocean acidification are damaging marine and coastal ecosystems and fisheries, impacting food, water and economic security. Increasingly frequent extreme weather and sea level rise are eroding cultivable and even habitable land, affecting infrastructure, economies, health and well-being. Globally, unmitigated climate-induced declines in ocean health will cost the annual global economy \$428 billion by 2050 and \$1.98 trillion by 2100.<sup>1</sup>

The convergence of climate and environmental change, including degradation of terrestrial and marine ecosystems, amplifies the vulnerability of Pacific peoples and hinders availability and access to resources such as food and freshwater. These climate and environmental impacts cut across a spectrum of human rights, including the rights of people displaced by climate impacts, and in the longer term, implications to exclusive economic zones and loss and damage.



**The sustainable management of our ocean resources in the face of climate change offers significant potential for climate resilience, food security, and economic development.** For instance, mangrove ecosystems alone are estimated to provide over US\$ 65 billion in flood protection benefits and safeguard 15 million people against flooding across the world every year<sup>2</sup>, while coral reefs provide ecosystem services worth \$11 trillion dollars annually by protecting coasts, sustaining fisheries, generating tourism, and creating jobs across the tropics.<sup>3</sup>

Pacific frameworks such as the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, [Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape](#), [Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries](#), the [New Song for Coastal Fisheries \(Noumea Strategy\)](#), and the [Pacific Coral Reef Action Plan](#) set a vision for regional collaboration around ocean and fisheries management in the face of a changing

<sup>1</sup> [IPCC Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate](#)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-020-61136-6>

<sup>3</sup> [https://sciencepolicyreview.org/downloads/2020/08/Vol1no4\\_Rivera.pdf](https://sciencepolicyreview.org/downloads/2020/08/Vol1no4_Rivera.pdf)

climate. Pacific Island Countries and Territories have also shown leadership by committing to ambitious resource management targets, including the sustainable management of 100% of the Blue Pacific Ocean. PICTs have also committed to global targets, including effective conservation and management of at least 30% of land, water, and seas by 2030 (“30x30”). Some of these targets are embedded in national ocean policies, National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, and other strategic plans. However, the finance needed to operationalise these commitments is often lacking.

## Cheap, unhealthy food is causing a regional public health epidemic

Despite a long Pacific history and culture of sustainably managing the ocean and land, food production and consumption patterns have changed amidst globalisation and climate impacts. Traditional diets, based on local, wild-caught fish, tree crops and root vegetables, are now competing with an increasing abundance of cheap, ultra-processed, imported foods. This contributes to the region’s high rates of non-communicable diseases, including diabetes, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, and cardiovascular disease.

WHO has identified critical considerations for improved nutrition and health outcomes in food systems transformation in three areas:

- **Food supply chains:** production, harvesting, storage, processing, retail, food services and markets;
- **Food environments:** food availability, economic access, marketing, nutrition labeling, food quality and safety, and
- **Consumer behaviour:** choosing where and what food to acquire, prepare, cook, store, and eat.<sup>4</sup>

The Pacific food system is globally unique, spanning 22 countries and territories, and a diversity of cultures and agro-ecological zones. The ocean is vital for Pacific food systems, livelihoods, and economies. Coastal fisheries provide between 50 - 90 percent of animal-source protein in Pacific Islands<sup>5</sup> and make up a primary or secondary source of income for up to 50 percent of households.<sup>6</sup> The Pacific also provides two-thirds of the global tuna supply, with tuna revenue a major component of the regional economy.



<sup>4</sup> WHO. Food Systems for Health: Information Brief.

<https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/350185/9789240035263-eng.pdf?sequence=1>

<sup>5</sup> FAO. Pacific food systems: The role of fish and other aquatic foods for nutrition and health ([link](#))

<sup>6</sup> Summary Brief: Advancing Blue Pacific Food Systems. SPC, 2021 ([link](#)).

Climate and environmental change threaten local food production, for example with extreme weather, soil erosion, altered rainfall patterns, water pollution, increasing risks of pathogens and pests, and climate-driven redistribution of tuna stocks.<sup>7</sup> But **reclaiming local food production and traditional diets** through sustainable management practices like agroforestry, regenerative farming, and ridge-to-reef fisheries and forestry management can transform agriculture and fisheries, build resilience to the impacts of climate change, increase local food production, and lead to improved public health outcomes.

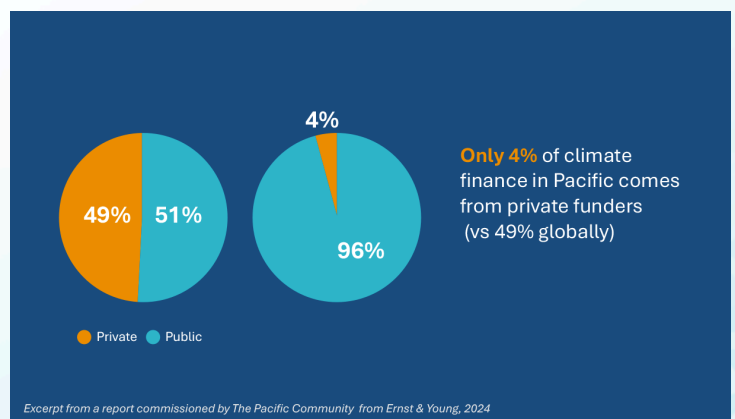
International food supply chains and Pacific trade deficits – exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic – together with small populations and vast geographic distances further complicate food distribution and increase regional food security vulnerability to climate-related disruptions. As the region confronts ongoing and emerging shocks, from climatic disasters to biosecurity threats, integrated strategies are essential to safeguard both ecosystems and livelihoods, address social determinants of health, and promote sustainable development across the region.

Pacific frameworks such as the [Pacific Non-Communicable Diseases Roadmap](#), [New Song for Coastal Fisheries \(Noumea Strategy\)](#), and the draft [2050 Strategy for Pacific Agriculture and Forestry](#), set a vision for regional collaboration around ecological determinants for public health outcomes.

## Lack of access to Development & Climate Finance

Global commitments to climate and biodiversity finance are insufficient — SDG14 on ocean-climate science is the least funded of the SDGs — and the finance that does exist is not reaching the Pacific. Our region receives less than 1% of globally committed climate finance, an amount that is less than 7% of our assessed climate finance needs. In short, existing levels of finance do not match the existential threat we face, and incremental increases will not be enough.

Our region is not receiving support fast enough because of systemic issues that must be resolved. The funding we do receive is difficult to access, slow to materialise, and comes with onerous administrative processes that are inappropriate to the Pacific context. Moreover, each funding partner imposes their own siloed processes and requirements, resulting in duplication, gaps, and capacity overload. We are over-reliant on public investment and donors, missing out on the sustainability and value-generation that private and philanthropic partnerships can bring to climate and development finance. Lastly, we lack a



<sup>7</sup> <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41893-021-00745-z>

comprehensive picture of our finance needs at the community, country, and continental levels—data and analysis that are necessary to mobilise and deploy funding that is genuinely fit-for-purpose across our development agenda.

Fit-for-purpose financing means a paradigm shift in both the amount and type of climate and development funding. It means not only **significantly more capital and climate finance than is currently flowing into our region, but also a shift to create a diversified funding portfolio including private and philanthropic funds, which can be faster, more flexible, and more risk-tolerant.** We need to unlock catalytic, innovative, accessible and sustained investment, aligned to Pacific values and the diversity of Pacific peoples, at a rate fast enough to solve Pacific problems now.

## Complex regional problems require a systems approach

The interconnected nature of the challenges in the Blue Pacific means that unilateral or disconnected solutions do not work as effectively as an integrated, coherent, systems-level approach. Some unilateral solutions do not work at all. We need a paradigm shift in how we finance and implement climate, oceans, food, and health development solutions in an integrated way.



# The UBPP Opportunity

**“We have the political will,  
but we need a paradigm shift in  
how we bridge the finance gap to  
implement these solutions:  
By the Pacific, for the Pacific.”**

*– Minister Stephen Victor, Palau*

Pacific Leaders have a bold vision to protect, restore and rejuvenate the region’s extraordinary ecosystems, foster Pacific peoples’ prosperity, and empower communities. While the Pacific region has developed clear frameworks for action and ambition around ocean and natural resource management, agriculture and health, and climate-resilient development, the nature of how development funding flows into the Pacific has resulted in an uncoordinated and disjointed approach to philanthropic and private investment.

In the face of climate, health, development, and financing challenges of the Blue Pacific Continent, the timing for tackling these issues has never been better.

**UBPP is being created in a moment of converging conditions that set the stage for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for a paradigm shift.**

- (1) The bold *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* has mapped the way forward for a Pacific regional approach to tackle challenges.
- (2) Pacific Leaders have demonstrated their unwavering commitment to tackling environmental and climate challenges together.
- (3) Global ambition is high, from the Global Biodiversity Plan, the Paris Agreement, and the High Seas Treaty.
- (4) New investors are poised to take action for the Blue Pacific Continent.

## Why Now? Converging Conditions for Change

The *2050 Strategy* has mapped the way forward for the region

*UBPP is poised to catalyse new finance and action to support the implementation of the 2050 Strategy & other regional frameworks.*

**Pacific Leaders have a bold regional vision to safeguard, secure and progress the Blue Pacific Continent.** The *2050 Strategy*, approved by Pacific Leaders in 2022, identified key thematic areas around **Ocean & Environment** and **Climate Change & Disasters**, and set key Regional Collective Actions (RCAs). The UBPP was intentionally designed to deliver on the *2050 Strategy*, by catalysing new investment and action towards supporting selected RCAs on ocean management & climate action.

The UBPP is also designed to support a diverse array of regional frameworks and national sustainable development priorities on ocean management, climate action, food systems and public health (see Annex I).

Intentionally conceived to align and advance existing and emerging regional initiatives in the Pacific, such as the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF), the Weather Ready Pacific Decadal Programme of Investment and the Regional Programmatic Approach for Climate Action (RPACA). UBPP will support cross-fertilisation of funding arrangements and architecture in the region, by identifying how funding is currently flowing, what the gaps are, and how we can ensure funding reaches prioritised activities at the national and local level.

## Our Leaders Have Demonstrated Urgency and Ambition

*Pacific political will and endorsement of the UBPP*

At the 52<sup>nd</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meeting in November 2023, PIF Leaders supported the UBPP, its alignment to the *2050 Strategy*, and its goals of **100% effective ocean management for the region and 30% protection of the Blue Pacific Continent**, aligned to Pacific country contexts, priorities, and capacities; **robust food systems underpinned by resilient ecosystems** resulting in healthy and productive Pacific people; and **fit-for-purpose sustainable financing mechanisms to support the two goals above, helping to meet selected Regional Collective Actions under the 2050 Strategy.**

At the 5th Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting (RFMM) in July 2024, Ministers underlined the need for UBPP **to define the 30 by 30 target in a way that takes into account national contexts and aspirations**, informed by scientific and technical guidance from SPC and Forum Fisheries Agency. This year, at the 53rd Pacific Islands Leaders Forum in Tonga, PIF Leaders welcomed progress on UBPP development including new crowded-in investment of \$15M via the Great Barrier Reef Foundation, funded by the BHP Foundation and earmarked for SPREP and three Pacific countries.

## Global Commitments are Inspiring Action

*Pacific islands are poised to be leaders in the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Plan and the High Seas Treaty.*

Pacific Islands have a long history of global leadership on ocean management, climate action, and biodiversity conservation – serving as critical global advocates under international frameworks on how environmental and climate issues underpin sustainable development, health outcomes, and channel investment into the region. This has included Pacific Islands pushing the world for a strong Global Biodiversity Framework, new BBNJ Agreement, and action under the Paris Agreement and global climate finance architecture, and the in-development Global Plastics Treaty.



The Pacific has a long history of utilising area-based management tools for ocean conservation and productivity outcomes, ranging from community-based coastal marine management areas and Locally Managed Marine Areas, highly protected MPAs like the Kiribati Phoenix Island Protected Area and Palau Marine Sanctuary, and the effective closure of Pacific High Seas Pockets to commercial purse seine fishing by the PNA since 2008.

Pacific Islands have committed to ambitious resource management targets, including effective conservation and management of at least 30% of land, water, and seas by 2030 (“30x30”). Some of these targets are already embedded in national ocean policies and strategic plans of a number of countries. **The Pacific is poised to be global leaders in achieving the 30x30 target, not only on a national level, but as a region.** The BBNJ Agreement presents a legal pathway for the regional accomplishment of a 30x30 target and effective protection of the *entire* Blue Pacific Continent- targeted towards both protection of biodiversity and Pacific prosperity through sustainable use of our natural resources

**As of 2024, about 17% of Pacific waters are already protected, compared to a global average of around 8%,** although these numbers need to be validated.

### *Economic impact of meeting 30x30 commitments*

Globally, the economic benefit of protecting 30% of the planet’s land and ocean are estimated to outweigh the costs at least 5:1, including in increased tourism revenue, global agricultural and forestry outputs, and fisheries productivity. The expected tourism revenue in a 30% protected global MPA system was estimated to exceed \$197 billion per year.<sup>8</sup>

The protection and sustainable management of the Blue Pacific Continent is not only about achieving conservation outcomes, but offers **huge potential for economic development and monetisation of protected and restored ecosystem services.**

<sup>8</sup> Waldron report - [https://www.conservation.cam.ac.uk/files/waldron\\_report\\_30\\_by\\_30\\_publish.pdf](https://www.conservation.cam.ac.uk/files/waldron_report_30_by_30_publish.pdf).

## New Investors are poised to take action

### *Philanthropic & Private Ambition Converge around the Blue Pacific Continent*

Historically, investments in the Pacific have mostly been from governments and multilateral funding institutions. But climate change and the global biodiversity crisis has prompted global philanthropy to step up and help meet the challenges facing underserved regions of the world with *new, additional funding*. Already, several foundations and donor consortia are supporting several Pacific nations in developing marine spatial plans and financing mechanisms, as public partners are leveling up the scale of their strategies in the Pacific.

For UBPP, the Bezos Earth Fund has committed US\$100M in seed funding, while the Global Environment Facility has announced US\$125M for Pacific countries to draw on in support of UBPP as part of their GEF8 star allocations, if they so choose. These anchor investments were committed to leverage public and private investment towards a target of US\$500M by the end of 2030.

## The UBPP will drive conservation outcomes for the economic development and prosperity of the Pacific

Historically, development & conservation projects have not leveraged the economic outcomes back into our countries and communities, or they have taken place selectively, leaving much of the region behind

With the clear vision, political will, investor interest, and global enabling conditions converging, UBPP presents an opportunity to not just achieve conservation outcomes but significant economic development and prosperity for Pacific Islanders.

Ocean health underpins Pacific economies. More than two-thirds of global tuna catch comes from the region, while coastal fisheries provide between 50-90% of animal protein in the Pacific and serve as income for up to 50% of households. The ocean also underpins Pacific tourism, worth an estimated US\$2.4 billion in 2019.<sup>9</sup>

**Protection and sustainable management of the Blue Pacific Continent is not only about achieving conservation outcomes, but offers huge potential for economic development and monetisation of protected and restored ecosystem services.**

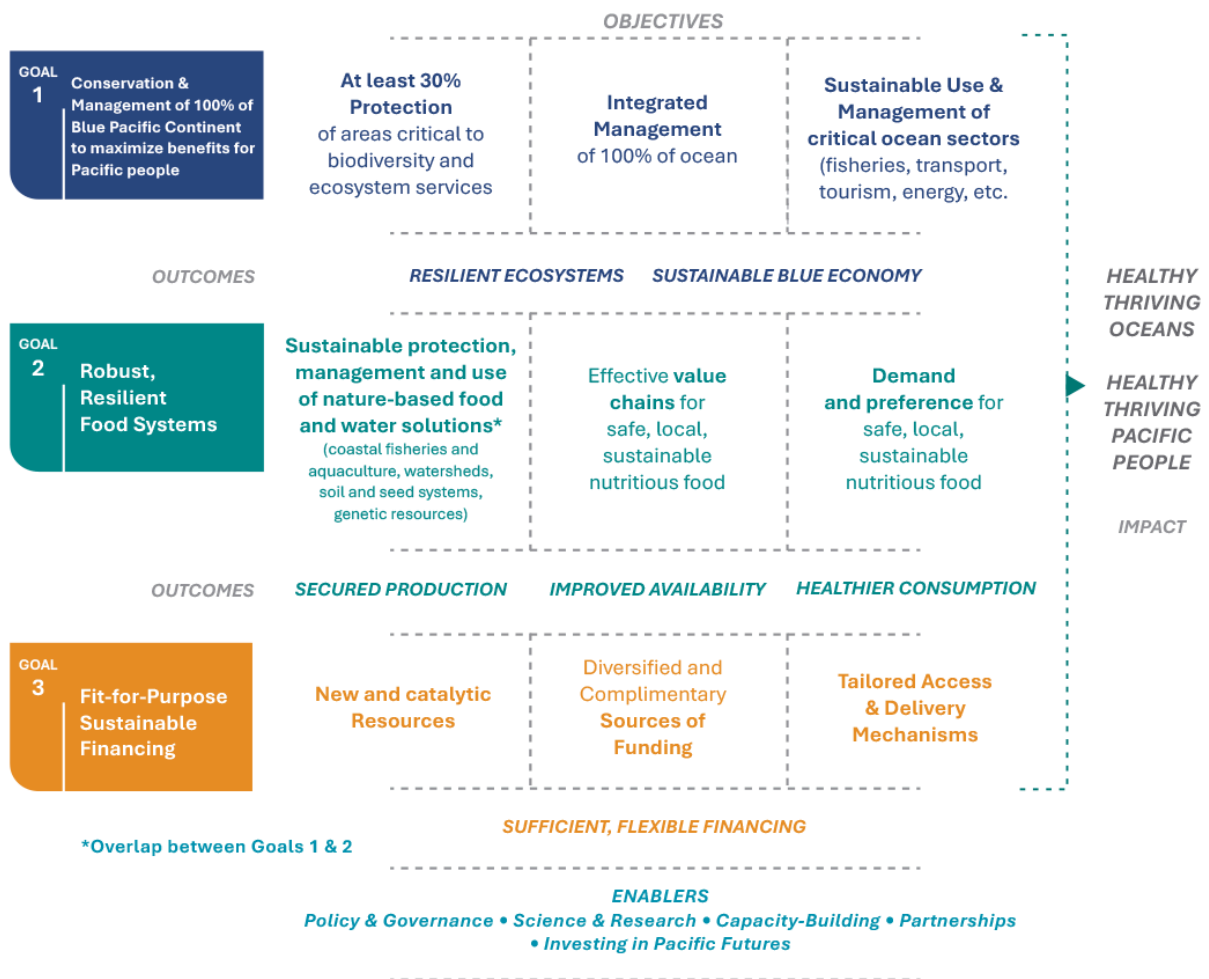
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<sup>9</sup> World Bank. 2023. The Future of Pacific Tourism.



# UBPP Implementation Framework

## Theory of Change



Pacific Islands Countries and Territories and regional organisations have co-designed the UBPP framework and theory of change to achieve three ambitious goals. These three goals are deeply intertwined, and each one is critical to the achievement of the others.

- Goal 1, with a focus on **effective protection, integrated management, and sustainable use** of the ocean, will ensure not just a **sustainable ocean economy**, but the **resilient ecosystems** that will enable the secure and resilient food production crucial to Goal 2.
- Goal 2 takes a whole Food Systems approach. While there is emphasis on the nature-based food and water solutions to secure sustainable production, the need for strategies linked to **food availability and consumption** are also called out in order to achieve impact for the health of Pacific people.
- Goal 3 is meant to drive **new and catalytic financial resources** towards the achievement of these two goals, by matching **diverse sources** to different needs and contexts and **tailoring access and delivery** mechanisms.

## Underlying Enablers

Achieving the three goals will also rely on a shared set of underlying enablers, which are also through the Regional Collective Actions of the *2050 Strategy*. UBPP hopes to harness regional and national support in the following areas:

- a. **Strong Policy & Governance** – UBPP will support the assertion of jurisdictional rights, enforcement of biosecurity regulations, and addressing trade agreements related to unhealthy food.
- b. **Science & Data for Decision Support** – UBPP will identify priority projects that can drive a Pacific-led research agenda and partnerships, build or enhance science and data systems, and support long-term monitoring, evaluation and learning around the three goals.
- c. **Institutional and Human Capacity Building** – UBPP will leverage other regional and national initiatives to advance workforce planning and human resources training for national agencies responsible for implementation.
- d. **Partnerships** – UBPP’s success will bank on the Pacific way. We will journey in partnership with others, knowing that we can go farther together.
- e. **Investing in Pacific Futures** – To sustain UBPP’s impact, youth need to be a part of UBPP from the beginning. Activities like curriculum mainstreaming, youth development and mapping career pathways will be incorporated into the goal strategies. Promoting intergenerational learning, traditional knowledge and networks will also be important.

## UBPP Principles

UBPP has established core principles to guide all activities under the Goal Pathways:

- a. **Regional Coordination coupled with National and local implementation** – While designing blueprints and tracking action at a regional level, UBPP investments will prioritise local actors & building local capacity, both in implementation & in financial access. This includes stressing the role of local governments, traditional governance bodies and communities in protecting and sustainably managing natural resources.
- b. **Traditional knowledge and governance** – UBPP is designed on a platform of optimising science, traditional knowledge, and Pacific ways of knowing. Investments will prioritise working with communities and traditional leaders, promoting intergenerational learnings, and secure and promote traditional rights and forms of governance such as *tabu*, *bul* and *rahui*.



c. **Gender Equality & Social Inclusion** – All UBPP investments will support gender equality and social inclusion priorities, ensuring that the most vulnerable and marginalised are fully represented and that investments leave no one behind. This will include (1) ensuring local inclusion and equity in the design, governance, and implementation of projects, making sure local communities' voices and values are taken into account and (2) supporting the equitable distribution of benefits.



d. **Supporting implementation of existing regional frameworks, policies, & plans** – The UBPP will support the delivery of selected RCAs of the *2050 Strategy*, together with a diverse array of regional frameworks and national policies & priorities. We understand that every country has different national priorities, needs, and capacities, and that national implementation of UBPP pathways will look different in different places.



e. **Building the Pacific's capacity to attract, direct, and absorb diverse investments** – UBPP is intentionally conceived to align and advance existing and emerging regional initiatives in the Pacific and support cross-fertilisation of funding, such as the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF), the Weather Ready Pacific Decadal Programme of Investment and the Regional Programmatic Approach for Climate Action (RPACA). Across investments, the UBPP will work to enable Pacific countries and implementers to identify, access and combine diverse funding sources towards the region's 2050 vision.



# Goal 1: Conservation & Management of 100% of the Blue Pacific Continent to maximise benefits for Pacific people

## Goal Overview

### ***Critical areas and sectors are effectively protected and managed to benefit Pacific people***

Goal 1 is focused on sustainably managing and conserving **100% of the EEZs** of Pacific Islands Countries & Territories, and potentially the high seas pockets adjacent to them. This goal will ensure that critical areas and sectors are effectively protected and managed to benefit Pacific people. Three objectives have been identified:

- At least **30% PROTECTION** of areas critical to biodiversity & ecosystem services
- **INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT** of 100% ocean to maximise benefits for Pacific people  
**SUSTAINABLE USE** through the management of key ocean sectors like fisheries, transport, tourism, energy, etc.

## Levers of Change

The Blue Pacific Continent encompasses more than 1 billion hectares of ocean (42 million square kilometers), representing more than 30% of the world's EEZs, 27% of the world's coral reefs, and serve as the largest carbon sink on the planet. This is both ecologically invaluable, and pivotal in global food production and Pacific economies. The ocean is at the heart of Pacific culture, underpinning our fisheries, tourism, economies, transport, and sustaining millions of people's diets and livelihoods both in and beyond the Pacific.

The health and integrity of our ocean resources has long been recognised as paramount for the Pacific, with a deep ancestral connection to the ocean, and has been a priority of Pacific Leaders since the very first meeting of the Pacific Island Forum in 1971. The Pacific also leads international political discourse on ocean and climate governance and plays an outsized role in the implementation of SDG14.

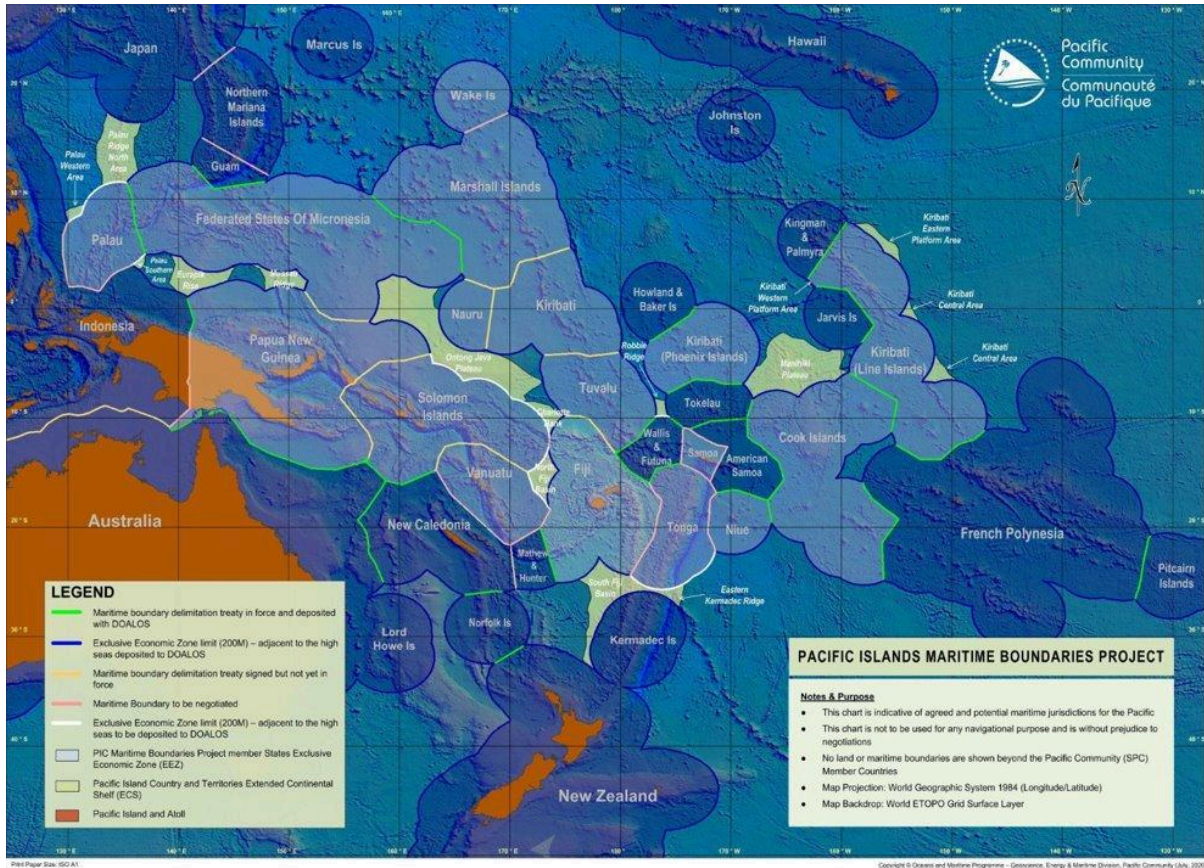
And yet, historically, investment into the Pacific Ocean has not necessarily left the region better off. Development and conservation programs designed using global standards have not successfully leveraged the economic benefits of conservation outcomes back into our countries and communities, or they have taken place selectively, leaving much of the region behind.

UBPP has identified several levers that would take advantage of Pacific regionalism, diversity and unique strengths to achieve Goal 1.

### Establishing Clear Maritime Boundaries across the Blue Pacific Continent

The 24 Pacific Islands Countries and Territories cover 30% of the world's Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) as defined under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) – representing shared management of 42 million square kilometers of ocean. Maritime zones, from territorial waters to EEZs, determine sovereign rights and responsibilities of individual countries. Clearly defined maritime zones underpin the governance, peace and security, marine





conservation, and natural resource management of the Blue Pacific. Identification, clarification and delineation of maritime boundaries between these 24 countries is critical for effective ocean governance and cooperation, particularly in the face of climate change, as land and natural maritime features used to generate maritime zones may consist of low elevation islands, sand cays, and reef systems.

As recognised in the [Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape](#), endorsed by Pacific Leaders in 2010, setting maritime zones under UNCLOS such as the EEZs enables Pacific Countries to maximise rights over critical resources, such as fisheries. One of the Framework's recommended strategic priority actions is to "fix baselines and maritime boundaries to ensure the impact of climate change and sea-level rise does not result in reduced jurisdiction of Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs)". The *2050 Strategy* also echoes the importance of fully secured and established maritime zones for jurisdictional rights.

The [Pacific Maritime Boundaries Dashboard](#) as part of the Pacific Data Hub shows that 75% (36) of the boundaries of the Blue Pacific Continent have been established, while 25% (12) are still not yet formalised.

## Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction: High Seas Pockets

The Pacific region is unique in that the high seas (maritime areas beyond national jurisdiction) in the Pacific consist of **high seas pockets** - defined as areas of the high seas continuously bounded by PICT EEZs.

The Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape demonstrated the long-term interest of PICTs in managing these high seas pockets, **setting the geographic scope of the Blue Pacific**

**Continent as “not only the area within the 200 nautical miles Exclusive Economic Zone boundaries circumscribing these island countries, but also the ocean and coastal areas that encompass the extent of the marine ecosystem that support the region”.**

Pacific high seas pockets have also been recognised and afforded some degree of protection under the Noumea Convention, the Nauru Agreement Concerning Cooperation in the Management of Fisheries of Common Interest, and the Convention for the Conservation and

Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPFC). Since 2008, Parties to the Nauru Agreement closed four high seas pockets to foreign fishing vessels and banned FADs to allow for fishery recovery, supported by the WCPFC.

The 2023 adoption of the new UN Treaty on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (the “BBNJ Agreement”) now offers a new political pathway for the protection of these high seas pockets for the benefit of tuna fisheries and sustainable ocean management for Pacific prosperity. Pacific negotiators helped to establish and drive forward the BBNJ Agreement with recognition of the unique situation of Pacific countries, including ensuring that fishery-based economies are protected and that existing regional cooperation under the FFA and the WCPFC would hold. The new Treaty now also marks an opportunity for continued Pacific leadership in what could be the establishment of the first MPAs under the new framework.

As of August 2024, 17 of 21 PICTs have signed the BBNJ Agreement, and 2 (Palau and FSM) have ratified the Treaty.<sup>10</sup>

## A Pacific Regional Approach to 30x30

In 2022, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity adopted the Global Biodiversity Plan, which set goals through 2050 focused on ecosystem and specific health, including the sustainable use of biodiversity, equitable sharing of benefits, and implementation and finance to close the biodiversity finance gap. The Global Biodiversity Plan set targets to be achieved by 2030 including: protect and conserve 30% of lands and waters by 2030 (commonly referred to as 30x30); ensure sustainable harvesting and trade of wild species (including fisheries); minimise the impacts of climate change and ocean acidification; and phase out public incentives and subsidies that harm biodiversity. PICTs led the negotiations to ensure that the GBF recognised the unique needs of Pacific island nations in conserving their unique biodiversity and vast ocean spaces.

The 30x30 target calls for 30% of the earth’s land and sea to be conserved through the establishment of protected areas and other area-based conservation measures (OECMs). While, as signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity, all Pacific countries have committed to *national* 30x30 targets – which some have already achieved – there is now discussion on what a *regional* 30x30 target would mean, implemented fairly and equitably, and targeted towards both protection of biodiversity and Pacific prosperity in sustainable use of our natural resources, while ensuring the livelihoods, tenure, and customary access of indigenous peoples and local communities to resources.

During the UBPP co-design workshop, strategies considered towards this regional approach included area-based management for the high seas pockets, or benefit sharing between PICTs protecting >30% and <30% of their EEZs. A regional prioritisation exercise was discussed as a

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<sup>10</sup> <https://highseasalliance.org/treaty-ratification/table-of-countries/>

path towards identifying and prioritising areas for protection, use, joint management and the like, which should be harmonised with national processes for target-setting.

## National Ocean Policies & Marine Spatial Plans

National ocean policies can aim to advance long-term economic and social development through both area-based and sector-based strategies, while promoting the health and management of marine ecosystems.

To date, 8 PIFs countries have set national ocean policies: Australia, the Cook Islands, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu.<sup>11</sup> These are complemented by a diverse array of regional and national fishery policies, environment policies, climate change policies, and agricultural policies.

UBPP will support a concerted effort to support Pacific Island countries to develop and implement national ocean policies, marine spatial plans or their equivalent will accelerate progress towards effective management of 100% of the countries' EEZs.

## Recognition of Traditional Governance Structures and Areas

There are multiple examples of traditional marine governance systems throughout the region that have successfully enabled ecosystem protection and sustainable use for generations, such as *tabu*, *bul* and *rahui*. Combined with sub-national and local action plans stemming from national ocean policies, these governance mechanisms are a powerful way to ensure local implementation and benefit to communities.

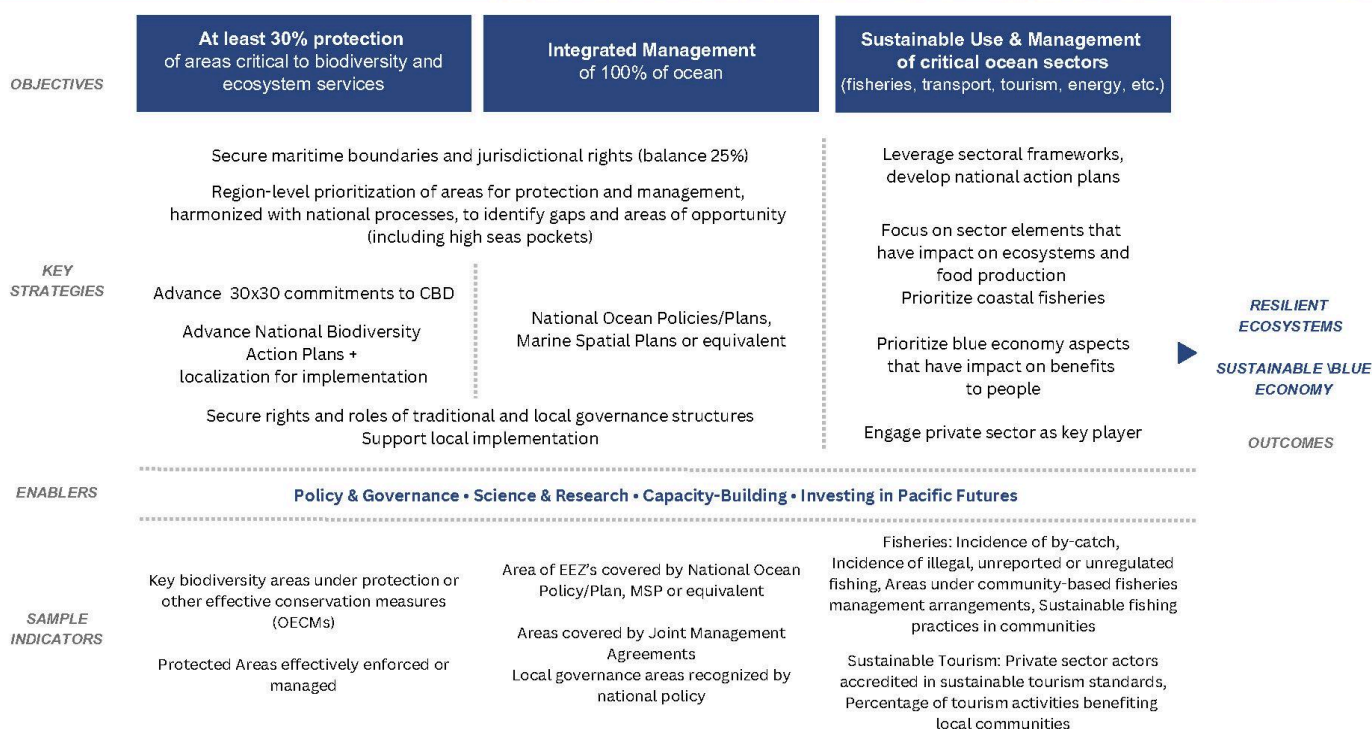
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<sup>11</sup> <https://opocbluepacific.org/ocean-policies-political-statements/>



# Strategies, Activities & Indicators

## Goal 1: Conservation & Management of 100% of Blue Pacific Continent to maximize benefits for Pacific people



A regional approach to ocean management through the UBPP will help bridge gaps between Pacific countries at varying levels of readiness or contexts and can help foster ambition.

- A regional prioritisation exercise will be implemented together with national exercises to identify areas for protection and management and align on criteria for prioritisation.
- National Ocean Policies or their equivalent (e.g. Marine Spatial Plans adopted into legislation, etc.), along with National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plans would be the primary policy and planning instruments that would be outputs of this process.
- Supporting the localisation and implementation of these regional and national plans and policies will also be a priority for UBPP. This will include activities to map, secure and support traditional governance areas, strengthen locally managed protection networks, and enable community management bodies.

Similarly, regional sectoral frameworks for fisheries, tourism, transport and energy would be the starting point for guiding national action plans. UBPP's focus would be towards strategies that will manage the impacts of these sectors on the resilience of marine ecosystems, and secure benefits for Pacific people. For example, a sustainable tourism strategy could be about supporting locally-owned ecotourism enterprises. A private sector strategy will also need to be developed.



## Illustrative Activities

Strategies	Activities
<p><b>Planning and Policy to Advance Area-based Management</b></p>	<p><u>Regional</u> Regional level MSP or equivalent to determine areas to prioritise for protection &amp; use (including key biodiversity areas, migration paths, fishing grounds etc.) Joint Management Agreements for High Seas Pockets</p> <p><u>National</u> Develop, Review &amp; Implement National Ocean Policy and Plans National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan Protected Area Network policy National Policies on OECMs Marine Spatial Planning</p> <p><u>Local</u> Mapping of local/traditional governance areas Establishment of locally-managed MPAs Training of local rangers</p>
<p><b>Secure or promote traditional rights / forms of governance</b></p>	<p><u>Regional</u> Convening of traditional knowledge holders</p> <p><u>National</u> Policy to safeguard ancestral domains/traditional fishing grounds</p> <p><u>Local</u> Support to local/traditional governance systems, e.g. tabu, bul, etc.</p>
<p><b>Strengthen Community-based fisheries management</b></p>	<p><u>Regional</u> Expand roll-out of regional CBFM framework</p> <p><u>National</u> Develop national CBFM plans &amp; policies Establish/train national/sub-national extension teams</p> <p><u>Local</u> Strengthen local fisher associations Promote sustainable fishing practices</p>
<p><b>Promote locally-led sustainable tourism</b></p>	<p><u>Regional</u> Develop regional guidelines for sustainable tourism practices for private sector</p> <p><u>National</u> Adapt regional framework into national sustainable tourism strategy, develop policies Implement guidelines for sustainable practices with private sector</p> <p><u>Local</u> Promote community-based ecotourism models</p>

### Next Steps: Areas for Further Consultation & Elaboration

As identified in the co-design workshop, further sectoral and stakeholder input is required on different themes to determine scope and level of prioritisation under the UBPP. These areas include:

- Fisheries – Pelagic and Coastal
- Sustainable Tourism
- Ocean energy development
- Maritime transport
- Nature based solutions, including blue carbon ecosystems
- Extractive industries and deep-sea research
- Plastics

# Goal 2: Robust Food Systems, Underpinned by Resilient Ecosystems

## Goal Overview

### *Connecting people, food, land and ocean through Pacific ways of knowing*

Goal 2 is focused on securing and providing locally available nutrition resources in order to improve the health of Pacific people, by practicing **sustainable management of food resources**, improving **food distribution and value chains** to improve access **and increasing demand for nutrient-rich food**. Three objectives were identified:

- Secured, resilient **Food Production**, with a focus on nature-based food and water solutions
- **Improved Availability** of safe, sustainable, nutrient-rich and locally sourced food
- **Healthier Consumption** by increasing demand for nutrient-rich, locally-sourced food

There is considerable **overlap between Goals 1 and 2 around food production**, particularly on coastal fisheries and aquaculture. Other nature-based food solutions like smallholder farming and watershed management are also incorporated as important priorities.

## Levers of Change

### A Food Systems Approach to Public Health Outcomes

In 2011, Pacific Island Leaders formally declared that non-communicable diseases (NCDs) - including diabetes, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, and cardiovascular disease - in the Pacific have become “a human, social, and economic crisis”. 75% of all deaths in the Pacific are attributable to NCDs.

Pacific governments, in collaboration with WHO, committed to the [Healthy Islands Vision](#) in 1995 to tackle the growing burden of NCDs, which recognised agriculture and the environment as tools for addressing NCDs, with ocean health added in 1999 at the Pacific Health Ministers Meeting, noting that sustaining and protecting oceans as key as not only a source of food, but a connection between different islands.

Unhealthy diets are the biggest risk factor for NCDs, driven by how food is produced, sold, marketed, and consumed in the Pacific region. Food systems are shaped by not only direct production, but socioeconomic factors including globalisation, urbanisation, and climate change. Agricultural, economic, trade, transport, and environmental and development policies create incentives for the production and access to different foods, while consumption and dietary behaviors are influenced by not only the cost and availability of food, but by culture, education, and marketing.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Transforming the Food System to Fight Non-Communicable Diseases - <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6349221/>

The food and agriculture sector is therefore inextricably linked with addressing NCDs. Transformation of Pacific food systems is thus required to address NCDs – to not only focus on supplying food, but improving availability, affordability, and access to diverse, safe and nutritious diets for all.

## Looking at Natural Resource Management with a Nutritional Value Lens

Globalisation, trade systems, and conventional thinking around food security have contributed to an influx of cheap, unhealthy food in the Pacific region. This has resulted in both skyrocketing NCD burden in the Pacific, and making PICTs increasingly import dependent, with declining per capita production, putting Pacific islands at risk of heightened food security challenges during shocks like the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>13</sup>

UBPP proposes to shift from this approach by using data on the **nutritional value of various food sources to influence decisions around management of food resources**.

For example, understanding the micronutrient contribution of reef fish to the diets of pregnant women and young children call for preferential use rights to coastal fisheries for local communities. Similarly, calculating nutrition per hectare of land used to cultivate local root crops can drive choices by policy makers regarding land conversions. The nutritional value lens will also inform strategies related to conserving genetic resources, to ensure that traditional, nutrient-rich varieties are protected.

Pacific agriculture policies, including agriculture, fisheries, livestock, forestry and biosecurity policies, will be an important starting point.

## Nature-based Solutions and Regenerative Approaches to Agriculture & Fisheries Management

Nature-based solutions – consisting of a wide range of ecosystem management activities, such as conservation, restoration and sustainable management of coastal ecosystems, forests, and wetlands – can enhance the resilience of ecosystems and the societies that depend on them. Globally, it has been estimated that NbS can reduce the intensity of climate hazards by 26 percent, with potential costs savings from climate change impacts of US\$104 billion by 2030 and US\$393 billion by 2050.<sup>14</sup>

Environmentally sustainable, regenerative agricultural and fisheries policies are interconnected to health outcomes.<sup>15</sup> These approaches can reduce environmental impacts such as deforestation and soil, air and water pollution; reduce use of antibiotics and address antimicrobial resistance; and reduce use of pesticides and chemicals used in food production that are harmful to both producers & consumers. New evidence also suggests that food from regenerative agriculture systems is higher in quality and nutritional value and density than conventionally produced foods, coupled with the environmental benefits of soil nutrient retention, improved water quality, and greater carbon sequestration.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> The role of trade in Pacific food security and nutrition.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2211912422000608#bib3>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.ifrc.org/document/working-nature-protect-people>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/guidance-mainstreaming-biodiversity-for-nutrition-and-health>

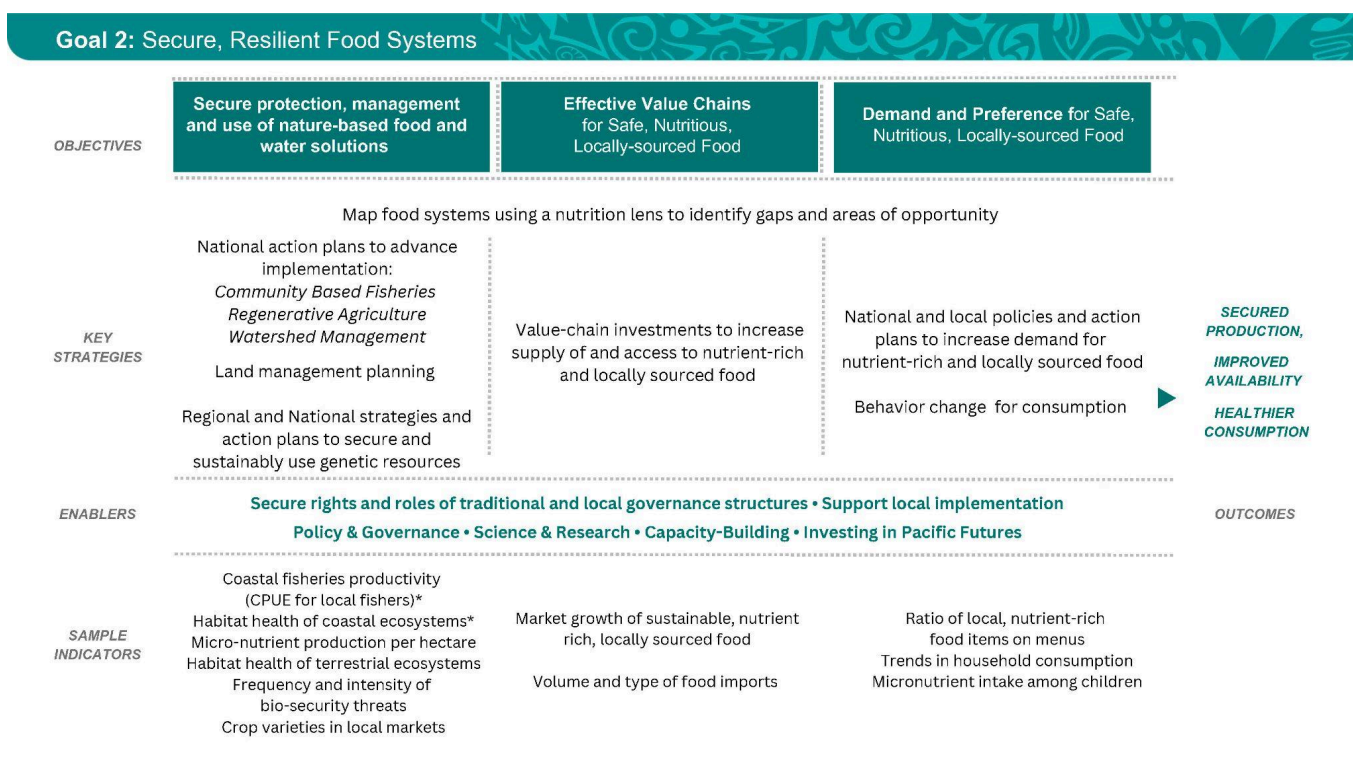
<sup>16</sup> Food for thought: Making the case for food produced via regenerative agriculture in the battle against non-communicable chronic diseases (NCDs) - <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.onehlt.2024.100734>

Pacific food systems depend on resilient ecosystems. UBPP will be anchored on ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries and agriculture. The promotion of habitat restoration, non-destructive fishing practices, traditional forms of fisheries effort management, organic and regenerative farming practices are among the activities that UBPP will prioritise.

## Food Systems Mapping and Strengthening Local Value Chains

Understanding how food moves from production to distribution to consumption will enable communities to build or strengthen closed-loop, local value chains that deliver higher value in terms of nutrition and are more resilient to disruptions. UBPP’s strategies include sub-national food hubs that optimise fishing, growing and collecting quality food, then linking the producers to local consumers through targeted programs like institutional procurement. Circular economy approaches like the use of biodigesters or turning fish waste into compost can also benefit nature and food production.

## Strategies, Activities & Indicators



A regional approach to food systems under the UBPP aims to prompt important and innovative shifts in sustainable natural resource planning and management.

- Food systems mapping would help governments and communities link agroforestry systems and coastal fisheries and their impact on nutrition, to enable planning based on increasing access to better nutrition
- Local, closed-loop food systems that connect producers and consumers would be more resilient to shocks like pandemics, while stressing the importance of maintaining healthy ecosystems.
- Securing genetic resources and ensuring proper biosecurity measures for the region be critical to maintaining the safety and variety of local and traditional food sources.



## Illustrative Activities

Strategies	Activities
<b>Advance implementation of nature-based food and water solutions</b>	Community-based fisheries management Traditional cropping calendar Sustainable aquaculture Rainwater harvesting Creating Agricultural Technician and Park Ranger Programs
<b>Secure and sustainably use genetic resources</b>	Biocontrols for pest management Establishing regional, national and local seed systems
<b>Value chain investments to increase supply and access</b>	Traditional food preservation practices Port and local market enhancements Cold chain development Institutional procurement programs
<b>Increase demand for nutrient-rich, locally-sourced food</b>	Agritourism Mainstreaming food literacy in curriculum Behaviour change campaigns

## Next Steps: Gaps/Areas for Further Consultation & Elaboration

As identified in the co-design workshop, further sectoral and stakeholder input is required on different themes to determine scope and level of prioritisation under the UBPP. These areas include:

- Public Health sector
- Value chain stakeholders for fisheries and farming
- Family and School related CSOs

# Goal 3: Fit-For-Purpose Sustainable Finance

## Goal Overview

### ***Catalyse new investments through diverse funding mechanisms to unlock support for Blue Pacific Prosperity***

Goal 3 will build the region's capacity to attract, direct and absorb diverse investments. Fit-for-purpose finance will align with regional, national and local priorities; match the needs of different phases of project implementation; and complement existing regional financial mechanisms. Ultimately, fit-for-purpose financing under UBPP aims to support a Pacific-led approach to investment in regional development and climate goals.

Three objectives have been identified:

- New and catalytic financial resources
- Diversified and complementary sources of funding
- Tailored Access & Delivery Mechanisms

## Levers of Change

### Pacific Financing Context and Barriers

Finance flows to the Pacific are limited, and the distribution of funds has never been sufficient or equitable. For example, although the Pacific is on the frontlines of climate impact, we receive only a tiny proportion of global climate finance—less than 1% of the amount committed globally. This amounts to only 4.6% of the amount allocated to the Asia-Pacific and is less than 7% of our assessed climate finance needs.

The funding that the Pacific does receive is rarely fit-for-purpose or appropriate to regional capacity and context. Despite the existential risks our countries face, very little development and/or climate financing is focused on adaptation. Most existing sources are difficult to access, slow to deploy, impose onerous administrative processes, and do not align with each other or with regional mechanisms.

The lack of private investment is a notable gap, with only 4% of development and climate finance for the Pacific coming from private sources. Greater diversity in types and sources of investment is needed to move beyond a siloed, project-based approach to financing, where funding needs to sustain gains are not necessarily factored in.

UBPP proposes to address these barriers through these key levers:

## Generate a Pacific-owned map of the regional financing landscape

While there have been attempts to consolidate information on development and climate financing in the Pacific, these have not been able to paint a full picture. Existing maps for the financing landscape all look through a limited lens, focusing primarily on public money, particular sectors, current projects, or certain donors. What is needed is a new approach that takes Pacific goals as the starting point and maps whether existing and pipeline funding will achieve them.

UBPP will generate a picture of the overall investment landscape and needs that can be overlaid with the regional and national goals to identify funding gaps as well as untapped opportunities. This will increase Pacific knowledge on where investments are and need to be, while aiding investors in understanding potential returns of their investment in terms of both impact profit (in the case of the private sector)

## Enable Access and Absorption of Finance

Although the Pacific has received more climate finance in recent years with the implementation of the GCF and contributions from multilateral and bilateral development partners, this funding predominantly uses project-based models which often lack integration with broader sectoral strategies or national budget and planning processes.

The project-specific focus of much of the climate financing impedes the replication and scaling needed to effectively tackle climate change adaptation and mitigation priorities in the region. Recent assessment by PIFS indicates that 98% of climate finance in the region is delivered through projects, 2% in budget support and technical assistance (Taloiburi, 2021).

This modality stifles and distorts long-term capacity building in the Pacific. Complex projects are mostly managed by costly, external consultants rather than local experts, thus increasing administration costs. Where projects support local capacity-building, this tends to focus on capacity to meet specific donor requirements, not the needs or priorities of Pacific countries.

UBPP will need to facilitate access to new and more agile sources of funding that build the overall capacity of regional agencies, countries and local implementers to hurdle various challenges related to access and absorption, such as accreditation, project design and financial management.

## Complement & Support Existing Financing Arrangements and Mechanisms

In response to the unique set of challenges the Pacific region faces in securing and effectively utilising international development and climate funds, the Pacific is designing and mobilising specialised financial mechanisms. One such initiative is the [Pacific Resilience Facility \(PRF\)](#), a Pacific finance facility currently hosted by the PIF that aims to mobilise up to US\$500million by 2026 to drive investment in high-impact, low-cost community-level projects that fortify resilience. Another is the **Regional Programmatic Approach for Climate Action (RPACA)**, which aims to enhance national responses to the impacts of climate change and assist regional entities that are supporting climate change activities in the Pacific. Other examples include the **Micronesia Conservation Trust**, which has almost 20 years experience of directing funds to the North Pacific, as well as the **Niue NOW Trust**, an innovative example of a national-level financial mechanism that combined 8 years of scientific evidence with an international business analysis to ensure that its design addresses national priorities while meeting global investor expectations.

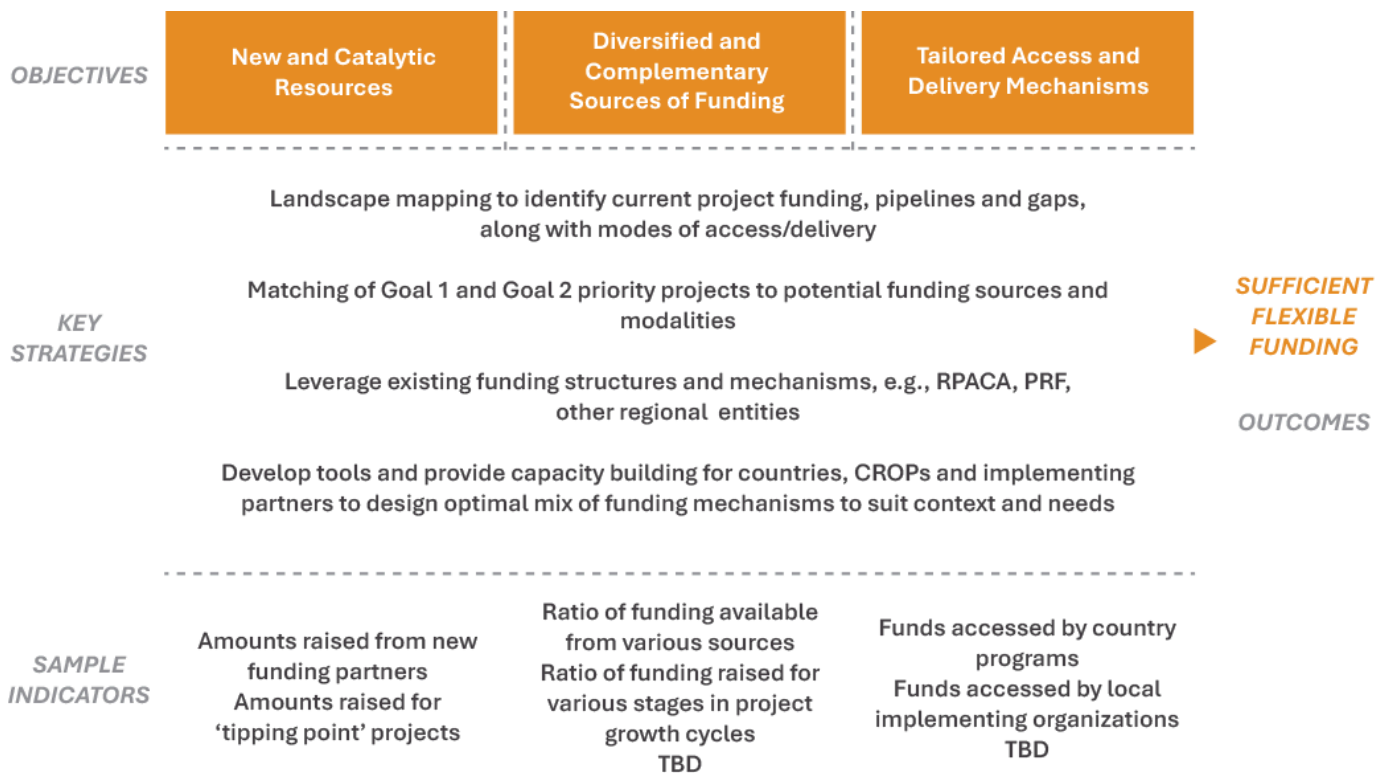
The **Pacific Women's Funds** offers a range of well-established modalities across the region that could help ensure women are empowered through UBPP actions and that the Pacific benefits from the full economic potential of its entire population.

UBPP will not duplicate these mechanisms or dilute these pathways. It will complement and augment them by supporting key actors in identifying which types of funding from different types of funders are appropriate for certain types of projects at varying stages in their growth cycle.

## Strategies, Activities & Indicators

UBPP Goal 3 aims to shift financing for Blue Pacific Prosperity onto a new path. On this path, financing not only increases exponentially through catalytic effects, but also achieves regional harmony and synergy, avoiding duplication and complementing existing mechanisms.

- Fit-for-purpose financing designs and deploys tailored funding arrangements, mechanisms and instruments that scale and sustain Goal 1 & 2 activities to achieve transformative, continent-wide impact.
- Essential programs are matched with the right combination of funder, instrument and implementor, throughout their growth phases, until the ocean management and food systems goals are met.





## Illustrative Activities

Strategies	Activities
Identify current funding, modes of delivery, and gaps	<p>Map current and pipeline investments, sources and modalities by region, country and sector</p> <p>Build an analytics and strategic financing dashboard that will align funders, instruments and projects across various growth phases to fully fund regional and national goals</p>
Match priority projects to potential funding sources and modalities	Utilise the dashboard to design and forecast investment pathways which will match new sources and types of investment to funding gaps in Goals 1 & 2.
Leverage existing funding structures and mechanisms	Conduct regional mapping to ensure that new funding complements and leverages existing Pacific-led financing mechanisms such as the RPACA and PRF.
Develop new tools and enhance capacity	Provide analytics and capacity-building that enables country planning/finance ministries and other stakeholders to design/utilise financing vehicles appropriately.

## Cross-cutting needs & next steps

Goal 3 requires research, analytics and capacity-building to inform and support all phases of the process across financial mapping, investment analysis, and financial design.

Country participants in the workshop described the data and tools needed to design/utilise financing vehicles appropriately, feeding into next steps and early investments for UBPP.

- Investment landscape mapping and analysis
- Prototype of a fit-for-purpose financing model designed for an actual proposed project
- Refinement of approach by working group, to inform further work on a final UBPP analytics and financing dashboard

# The Way Forward

## Continued co-design process to finalise UBPP architecture

Further consultation is needed to:

- (1) Refine the scope of goals 1,2, and 3, together with finalising indicators, strategies, and prioritised activities;
- (2) Establishing principles and processes for selecting and prioritising investments;
- (2) Ensure appropriate alignment and coordination with existing national and regional activities within the scope of the UBPP. The ongoing development of the PRF, and the RPACA will also inform next steps for the UBPP.

## UBPP Working Group

Emerging from the co-design workshop in July 2024, Pacific countries drove the establishment of a UBPP Working Group, currently co-chaired by Palau and the Cook Islands. The Working Group now includes 10 representatives from 10 country members of the Pacific Community and 3 CROP agencies, including Australia, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Niue, Tonga, Tuvalu, United Kingdom, Vanuatu, SPC, SPREP, OPOC, together with the Bezos Earth Fund. The participants at the workshop agreed that this group would help ensure that the co-design process continues to be Pacific-led and reflective of the development priorities across the whole Blue Pacific to ensure no one is left behind. It will work to:

- Consolidate feedback, refine the implementation framework and goal pathways of UBPP
- Establish the principles and process for prioritising investments
- Develop a prototype for a fit-for-purpose financing vehicle applied to a real project
- Work with 'First Mover' funding partners to finalize several 'proof-of-concept' investments to demonstrate that Pacific investments can be part of a safe and reliable portfolio
- Propose agile operating framework to ensure effective governance and management

SPC will function as the Hub for the Working Group, providing a blend of resource mobilization, technical science, and secretariat support.

## Sectoral and stakeholder input

Further sectoral and stakeholder input is required on different themes to determine scope and level of prioritisation for proposed activities under the UBPP. This feedback will inform the work of the UBPP Working Group.

This consultation process will involve all relevant stakeholders, including:

- Potential project implementers including national, regional and international civil society organisations.
- National and regional Youth and Community groups.
- Traditional Leaders, Indigenous and Cultural groups
- Sub regional organisations
- Donor organisations

## Member Consultations: official sub-regional consultation process

Will respond to the working group’s recommendations.

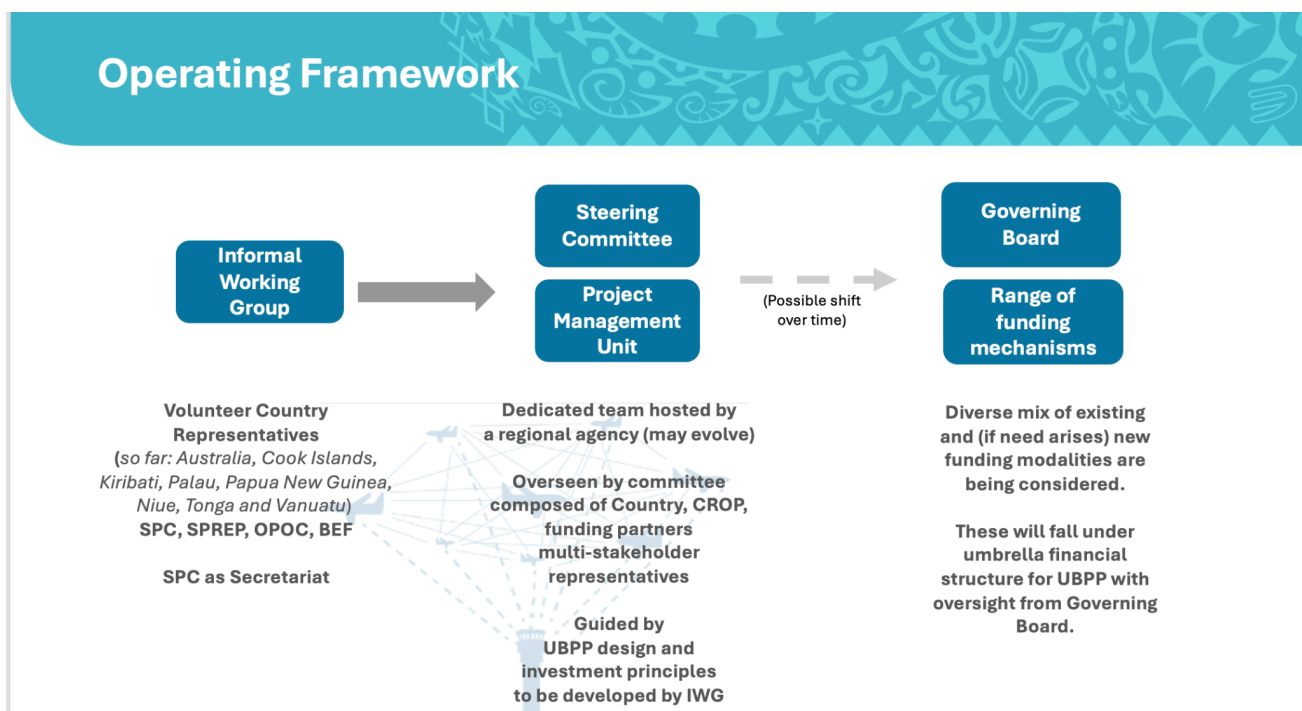
A member-driven approach substantially increases regional engagement on UBPP, strengthening Pacific ownership and creating momentum for successful implementation. In turn, as a Pacific-led initiative, UBPP will attract greater interest from a broader pool of public, philanthropic and private donors.

Complementing the policy and technical contributions of the informal working group, in-depth sub-regional consultations will ensure that UBPP develops effective implementation approaches across our diverse region. The sub-regional consultation process will also ensure that UBPP complements existing national and regional initiatives.

## CRGA Endorsement

The working group’s recommendations will be taken to an official round of sub-regional consultations through Q4 2024 – Q2 2025. Following a CRGA process for endorsement of the UBPP Design, completion is planned for the beginning of Q3 in 2025.

## Establishment of the UBPP Operating Framework



This illustrates the initial thinking on the UBPP Operating Framework. For the rest of 2024, the Working Group will serve as a more agile platform to advance work on UBPP while setting the stage for more permanent arrangements in 2025. Following consultations with the Pacific Community members and sign-off from the leaders, a Project Management Unit can be established, with oversight from a formal Steering Committee composed of regional, country, funding partner and other stakeholder representatives. The Working Group will also study options and finalise recommendations for a potential separate implementing entity for longer-term mobilisation and deployment of funds.

## Timeline

KEY MILESTONES	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025	Q4 2025
Co-design Workshop						
Form Informal Working Group						
• Finalise Goal Pathways						
• Establish principles and process for investment decisions						
• Identify initial investments & prototype financing model						
• Finalise recommendations to members						
Sub-regional/Sectoral/Industry and CSO Consultations						
Form Funding Partner Coalition						
Establish PMU and Steering Committee						
Implement 1 <sup>st</sup> Round of Investments						

## Call to Action – An Invitation to Funding Partners

Through collective action at the regional, sub-regional and national level, systems level change is possible, especially with continued investment and alignment of priorities in the region. Together, we are not just safeguarding our environment—we are securing the future of our Pacific for generations to come.

The region is calling on funding partners who share our aspirations for a thriving ocean that sustains life for the whole planet, for secure, resilient food systems that support the health and well-being of our people, who want to join us in charting our own path, in keeping with our values, our culture and our heritage.



# Annex I. Regional Frameworks

## Overarching

<p><b><u>2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent</u></b>  <b><u>&amp; 2023-2030 Implementation Plan</u></b></p>	<p>Reinforced the prioritisation of ocean and climate change considerations into regional and national policies and plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Committed to improved climate resilience, food security, prosperity and wellbeing of all Pacific Peoples including vulnerable communities and marginalised groups through sustainable management of ocean and land-based ecosystems.</li> <li>- UBPP could support RCAs under two of the thematic areas: Ocean and Natural Environment &amp; Climate and Disasters, while benefiting from developments across all seven thematic areas.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific</u></b></p>	<p>Identified environmental and ecosystem degradation, including contamination of sub-surface and coastal waters, as a driver of disaster risk and PIC exposure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UBPP could support priority actions around conservation and sustainable management of marine and terrestrial ecosystems and forests, leading to a more resilient natural environment, under both Goal 1 (Adaptation &amp; Risk Reduction) and Goal 2 (Low Carbon Development).</li> </ul>

Goal 1

<p><b><u>Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape and Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy</u></b></p>	<p>Objectives include integrated ocean management - including sustainable development, management and conservation of island, coastal and ocean services - and adaptation to environmental and climate change. Among others, UBPP could contribute to actions under:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Strategic Priority 2: Good Ocean Governance</li> <li>● Strategic Priority 3: Sustainable Development, Management and Conservation</li> <li>● Strategic Priority 5 - Sustaining Action</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>A New Song for Coastal Fisheries : The Noumea Strategy</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Called for a community and ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries management.</li> <li>● Included recognition that a holistic approach to coastal fisheries management includes integration of a wide range of impacts on coastal ecosystems in addition to fishing, including development associated with urbanisation, tourism and the growth of cities, climate change and natural disasters.</li> <li>● Among others, UBPP will support             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Outcome 1: Informed, empowered coastal communities with clearly defined user rights</li> <li>○ Outcome 5: Strong and up-to-date management policy, legislation and planning</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p><b><u>Future of Fisheries: A Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identifies that only by conserving coastal fisheries habitats, controlling pollution and addressing damage from outside the fishing sector can fisheries develop resilience to the impacts of climate change and ocean acidification.</li> <li>- UBPP could support the implementation of Oceanic Fisheries goals on Sustainability and Food Security (particularly around overfishing and by-catch), Coastal Fisheries goals on Empowerment and Resilience (on involvement of coastal communities and the management of threats to coastal ecosystems).</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Pacific Coral Reef Action Plan 2021-2030</u></b></p>	<p>Convened a regional approach to coral reef management across the Blue Pacific Continent, together with other coastal ecosystems like mangroves, from local threats including overfishing, land-based pollution and destructive development. Identified Action Areas where UBPP could contribute include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Optimise capacity building of local and regional organisations</li> <li>- Conserve reef habitat and biodiversity, including through MPAs and LMMAs</li> <li>- Improve coastal fisheries management</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework</u></b></p>	<p>Sets out a vision and actions to transform tourism towards environmental sustainability and greater benefits to Pacific communities. UBPP could contribute to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Priority 3. Mobilise Sustainable Tourism Investment</li> <li>- Priority 7. Protect Our Islands, Coastal and Ocean Ecosystems</li> </ul>

<p><b><u>Pacific Non-Communicable Diseases Roadmap</u></b></p>	<p>Pacific Islands committed to taking a multisectoral approach to address social determinants of health related to nutrition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UBPP could contribute to identified actions related to fisheries and agriculture production and distribution, including supporting value chains for healthy fisheries and agriculture products and healthy food policies in schools.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Growing the Pacific: 2050 Strategy for Pacific Agriculture and Forestry</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first ever Pacific-led regional agriculture and forestry strategy represents an ambitious shared regional agenda for agro-ecological transformation. UBPP will contribute to             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Strategic Pathway #2: Healthy: Promoting Health and Well-being Through Agriculture and Forestry</li> <li>o Strategic Pathway#3: Regenerative: Ensuring Long-Term Health of Agriculture and Forestry Systems</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Islands Region 2020-2025</u></b></p>	<p>UBPP contributes to Action Tracks under all Strategic Objectives, with emphasis under</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #1: Empower our people to take action for nature conservation,</li> <li>• #2 Integrate environmental and cultural considerations into the goals, processes, and trajectories of economic development in the Pacific;</li> <li>• #5: Manage and reduce threats to Pacific environments and drivers of biodiversity loss, and</li> <li>• #6: Grow Pacific capacity and partnerships to effectively monitor, govern and finance nature conservation action.</li> </ul>



This document was developed by The Pacific Community, Rare and Pacific Economics,  
with generous support from the Bezos Earth Fund.

Consultation Copy Ver 1.0 | October 2024

