

## COASTAL FISHERY REPORT CARD 2024



### Introduction

The Coastal Fishery Report Card provides annual regional reporting on the current status of Pacific coastal fisheries in relation to the goals, indicators and strategies adopted by Pacific leaders in both the Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries and *A New Song for Coastal Fisheries*. The Report Card, initiated in 2015, provides a snapshot to enable fisheries stakeholders and political leaders to monitor progress on implementing regional commitments relating to coastal fisheries.

### Context

There are over 30,000 islands scattered across the Pacific Ocean, inhabited by over 10 million people. These islands are divided among 22 Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs), characterised by vast ocean areas much greater than their land area. Coastal fisheries are fundamental to food security and livelihoods across the region, providing significant economic, social, and cultural benefits to communities. The region has extensive coral reefs, consisting of around 70 coral genera, over 4,000 fish and invertebrate species, and 30 mangrove species. These coastal resources are under increasing threat and are often fully or over-exploited.

### Method used to compile the Report Card

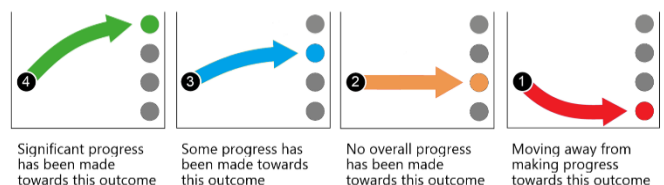
The intentional alignment between the Regional Roadmap and *A New Song for Coastal Fisheries* has enabled a single monitoring mechanism for both commitments. The 2017 Report Card was the first time a single reporting mechanism was adopted for coastal fisheries in the region.

The indicators utilised in the Report Card were identified in consultation with partners and feedback from the 10th SPC Heads of Fisheries and the 102nd FFC Officials Meeting. These indicators were revised in 2023 and endorsed by the 4th Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting.

Information gaps are noted in the Report Card with a question mark symbol.



For outcomes where progress has been noted the following ranges have been used:



## Goal 1 – Empowerment

Informed, empowered coastal communities with clearly defined user-rights



### User rights defined in 15 PICTs

User rights and tenure systems in PICTs are most recognised through constitutional arrangements, or national or sub-national legislation such as island/village councils acts, provincial acts or island state acts.



### Access rights and empowerment

The ability of rights holders to claim/control the use of their rights is unknown at the regional level, as is the level of community awareness and community action to manage coastal resources.



Defined user-rights  
Not defined  
Uncertain

Adequate and relevant information to inform management and policy



### Ratio of extension officers to fishing households

The role of fisheries extension officers is varied, but commonly includes dissemination of information, development activities and providing advice to communities. Data from eight PICTs showed an average ratio of one extension officer to 658 households participating in fisheries.



### Extent to which information informs management and policy

The extent to which coastal fisheries management measures are informed by evidence across the region is unknown at this time, as is the adequacy and accessibility of information being provided to communities.

Recognition of, and strong political commitment and support for, coastal fisheries management at a national and sub-national scale



### Increasing national resource allocation

The financial commitment of governments to coastal fisheries as a proportion of the total national budget **increased\*** from **0.27%** in 2022 from 6 PICTs to **0.41%** in 2024 from 17 PICTs (range 0.05% to 2.7%, n=18 PICTs).

The proportion of fisheries budgets allocated to coastal fisheries **increased** from **36%** in 2017 to **46%** in 2024 (range 0.6% to 74%, n=18).

The proportion of fisheries staff working in coastal fisheries is **37%** (range 10% to 91%, n=17).



### Increasing regional commitment

In 2016, Pacific leaders agreed to expand “fisheries” to include coastal fisheries. In the 2020 Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting, the ministers endorse the proposed mechanism for increasing the engagement of non-state actors in the regional coastal fisheries management dialogue.

Re-focused fisheries agencies that are transparent, accountable and adequately resourced, supporting coastal fisheries management and sustainable development, underpinned by CBFM



**18** PICTs

annually publish financial statements for their national fisheries budget.



**\$43\*\***

is the coastal fisheries' government budget per household participating in fisheries across 13 PICTs (total sum).



**17** PICTs

have a current national coastal fisheries roadmap or strategy in place.



\* There is no evidence to conclude that proportion of increase in overall national allocation to coastal fisheries included recurrent budget and staff to support for coastal fisheries management underpinned by CBFM

\*\* All \$ in this Report Card are US Dollars

## Goal 2 – Resilience

Strong and up-to-date management policies, legislation and planning



**16** PICTs

have enacted new coastal fisheries management legislation since 2015 and 9 have legislation in need of drafting.



**15** PICTs

have up-to-date and comprehensive coastal fisheries and aquaculture policies. Eight have policies in need of drafting or revision.



**17** PICTs

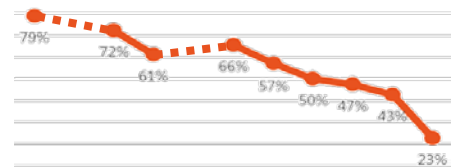
have evidence of some monitoring, control, surveillance and enforcement of coastal fisheries management measures.



Effective collaboration and coordination between stakeholders and key sectors of influence

### Projects implemented in partnership

Marine and coastal projects implemented in partnership (i.e. more than one agency) has reduced over time:



Source: [msp.csiro.au](http://msp.csiro.au) Notes: Project start year. Insufficient data for 2006 & 2009

### Level of effectiveness of partnerships



**Five** PICTs reported increased effectiveness in partnerships, collaboration, and coordination with NGOs, CSOs, non-state actors and other stakeholders.

More equitable access to benefits and decision-making within communities, including women, youth and marginalised groups

### BENEFITS



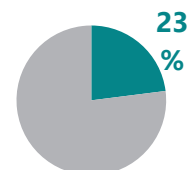
**26%**

of households participate in fishing  
Median across PICTs, range 6% to 75%  
(n=14)



**6%**

of households sell fish  
Median across PICTs,  
range 3% to 30% (n=14)



### Women's participation in fisheries

**23%** of senior managers in fisheries agencies are women, which means that women have significant opportunities to make or influence important decisions  
(n=32/139)

### SHARING



Access to benefits and decision-making relating to household fishing and selling fish among women, young people and marginalised groups is unknown from HIES data

The recent study on the Fisheries in the Economies of PICTs found that in the formal sector, such as tuna processing, women are significantly employed, often making up the majority of the work force. For example, two-thirds of the SolTuna workforce are women.

Women play a crucial role in subsistence fishing and gleaning activities, which are often underestimated in official statistics. For instance, 89% of fishers or gleaners were women in Palau.

Source: Above data is based on current HIES available for 15 PICTs. The median value across the PICTs is used.

## Goal 3 – Livelihoods and food security

### Value of fisheries and aquaculture production by year and category

Year	Coastal commercial	Coastal subsistence	Offshore locally based	Offshore foreign-based	Freshwater	Aquaculture
2007	\$217,678,210	\$263,234,098	\$784,100,037	\$1,427,507,426	\$30,367,595	\$192,955,114
2014	\$243,660,527	\$264,082,674	\$827,116,428	\$2,546,101,758	\$52,117,509	\$129,926,187
2021	\$169,506,744	\$280,086,601	\$870,956,721	\$1,210,569,797	\$45,136,465	\$85,272,242

Diversify the supply of fish, primarily through FADs and sustainable aquaculture

#### Fishing methods used by households



64% of the households use hook and line, 35% use net, 25% use gathering and 22% use spear. (Source: HIES from 7 PICTs).

#### Location fished by fishing households



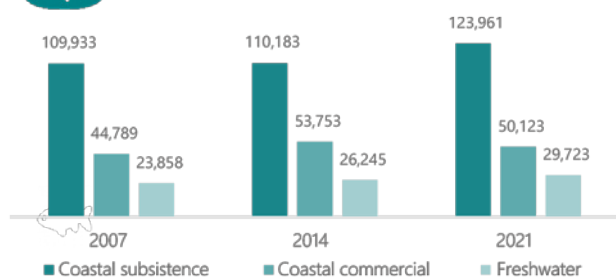
66% of households fish inshore, 62% nearshore, 33% offshore and 6% of households indicated of using FADs (Source: HIES from 7 PICTs).

#### Aquaculture production in the region

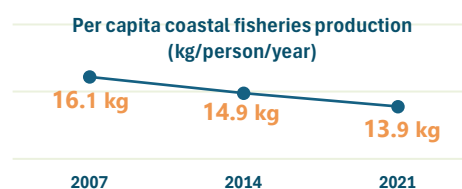


7.6 tonnes of aquaculture were produced in the region in 2021, worth \$85.3 million. (Source: Gillett and Fong 2023).

#### Volume of fishery production (t)



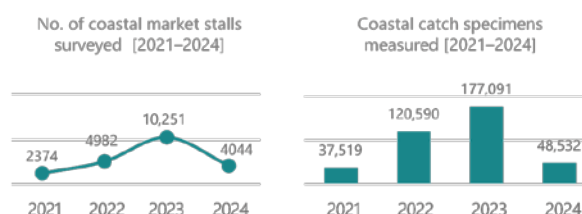
Enhanced food security from sustainable fisheries, including the supply of tuna for domestic consumption



Per capita coastal fisheries production dropped between 2007 and 2021  
Source: Gillett and Fong 2023.

Monitor catches to keep harvests within sustainable limits

25,614 coastal market stalls were surveyed between 2021 and 2023 using SPC's Ikasavea app. Creel and market surveys are valuable tools for monitoring and managing coastal fisheries sustainably, ensuring long-term health of fish stocks and livelihood of those who depend on them.



### Data notes

For further information on the regional coastal fisheries indicators utilised in this Report Card, including data sources and how figures were calculated, contact [terryo@spc.int](mailto:terryo@spc.int). Data from HIES were available for 14 PICTs (Cook Islands, FSM, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Kiribati, RMI, Vanuatu and Wallis and Futuna). Figures presented are the median across these PICTs unless otherwise stated. Data from national fisheries offices on staff numbers and budget information were received from seven PICTs (Fiji, French Polynesia, PNG, Tonga, RMI, Vanuatu, Wallis and Futuna), with some missing data. The inclusion of data from additional PICTs each year means that figures are not directly comparable with previous Report Cards. It is hoped that in future Report Cards data coverage across PICTs and data quality will continue to improve.