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FIFTH REGIONAL FISHERIES MINISTERIAL MEETING

24 July 2024

Agenda Item:	5.a
Paper No:	RFMM5-WP2
Title:	2024 Coastal Fisheries Report Card - DRAFT

Summary

This paper includes the initial draft of the Coastal Fishery Report Card as of July 2024 for Ministers consideration.

Recommendations

Ministers are invited to:

- i. **Note** the progress made towards the *Future of Fisheries Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries*, as reported in the draft 2024 Coastal Fishery Report Card.
- ii. **Note** improvements in data quality and availability at both national and regional levels.
- iii. **Acknowledge** challenges in accurately capturing the contribution of fisheries and aquaculture to national GDPs.

Introduction

The 2024 Coastal Fishery Report Card is the ninth Report Card under the [Future of Fisheries Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries](#). The Report Card provides high-level advice on the status of Pacific coastal fisheries in relation to the goals, indicators and strategies approved by the 10th SPC Heads of Fisheries and FFC102.

This paper includes the initial draft of the Coastal Fishery Report Card as of July 2024. Some figures may change in the final version as additional information is received.

Key highlights

Since 2015, significant progress has been made towards the three goals, notably:

- *Improvements in the quality and quantity of data from Members.*
- *Increased capacity and capability in the region for coastal fisheries management policy, legislation, and planning.*
- *Increased political commitment and support for coastal fisheries management.*
- *Increasing availability of data on resourcing in fisheries agencies to support coastal fisheries management.*

Areas which have seen no clear progress include:

- *Informed and empowered coastal communities with clearly defined user rights.*
- *Effective collaboration and coordination between stakeholders and key sectors of influence.*

Due to data gaps progress is unknown in the areas of:

- *adequate and relevant information to inform management and policy.*
- *more equitable access to benefits and decision making within communities.*
- *enhancing food security from sustainable fisheries.*

Challenges and actions

Coastal fisheries play a crucial role in the economies of Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs), significantly contributing to their GDP, food security, and livelihoods. However, accurately assessing this contribution is hindered by challenges in comprehensive data collection, particularly from informal and subsistence fishing activities, making it difficult to quantify the full economic impact.

The 16th SPC Heads of Fisheries Meeting also *noted the challenges in capturing the contribution of fisheries and aquaculture within standard calculations of national accounts and urged SPC to consider these critical resource areas when performing wider evaluations of national economies*¹.

Addressing these data collection challenges is crucial for PICTs to fully understand the economic value of their coastal fisheries and aquaculture sectors. Accurate data is essential for informed decision-making, effective policy formulation, and sustainable management strategies. By investing in robust and integrated data collection infrastructure, promoting transparency, and enhancing national and regional cooperation, these challenges can be mitigated.

¹ 16th SPC Heads of Fisheries Meeting Outcomes - <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/m6zak>

Methodology update

- Following agreement by the 11th Heads of Fisheries, almost all Members have since nominated a focal point to facilitate data collection for the annual Coastal Fishery Report Card.
- Following the suggestion of national level report cards by several Members, SPC has developed an interactive dashboard to enable filtering and display of country level data. It is currently available online – www.fameresults.org/cfreportcard/.
- Each year SPC circulates a questionnaire to Members asking for information on indicators relating to staff numbers, budget allocation and the status of national policies and legislation. Those Members who have not yet provided this information via their focal points are encouraged to do so prior to the Report Card being finalised for submission to the Pacific Island Forum Leaders. Please contact Terry Opa (terryo@spc.int).

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 Strategy. 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

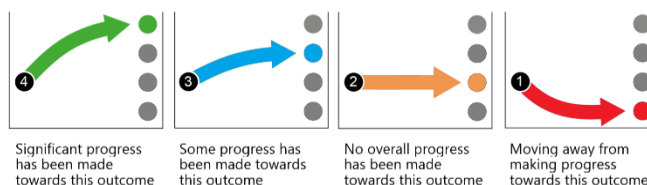
The intentional alignment between the Regional Roadmap and A New Song for Coastal Fisheries Strategy has enabled one single monitoring mechanism for both commitments. The 2017 Report Card was the first time a single reporting mechanism was adopted for coastal fisheries in the region.

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 & 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 & 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 governments' financial commitment 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 USD

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.



* Note: 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

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 legislations 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

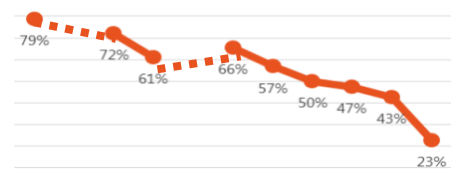
have evidence of some monitoring, control, surveillance & enforcement of coastal fisheries management measures.



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 1 agency) has reduced over time:



* Source: 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



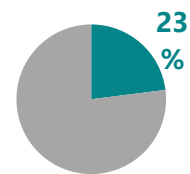
26%

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 majority of the work force. For example, two-third 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 & 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).

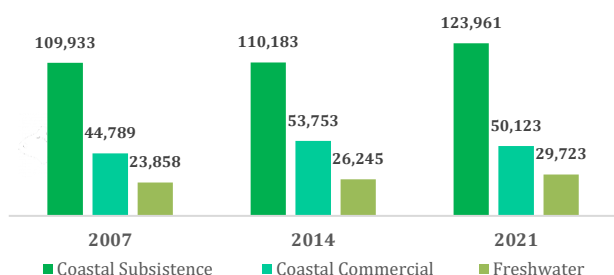


Aquaculture production in the region

7.6 tonnes of aquaculture were produced in the region in 2021, worth US\$5.3 million. (Source: Gillett and Fong, 2021).



Volume of fishery production (t)



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

Per Capita Coastal Fisheries Production (kg/person/year)

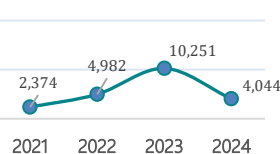


Per capita Coastal Fisheries Production dropped between 2007 and 2021
Source: Gillett and Fong, 2021.

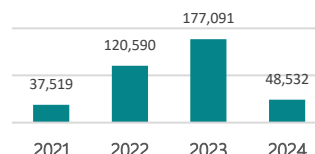
Monitor catches to keep harvests within sustainable limits

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.

No. of coastal market stalls surveyed [2021-2024]



Coastal Catch Specimens Measured [2021-2024]



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 terry@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 & 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.

FORUM FISHERIES COMMITTEE EYES ONLY