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*. This is the fifth Report Card produced since first initiated in 2015. It 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 areas of ocean much greater than their land area. Coastal fisheries are fundamental to food security and livelihoods across the region, representing significant economic, social and cultural benefits for communities. The region has extensive coral reefs, consisting of 70 coral genera, over 4,000 fish/invertebrate species and 30 mangrove species. These coastal resources are under increasing threat and in many places either fully- or over-exploited.

Method used to compile card information

The intentional alignment between the *Regional Roadmap* and *A New Song for Coastal Fisheries* has enabled one single monitoring mechanism for both commitments. The indicators utilised in the Report Card were identified in consultation with partners and endorsed by the 11th SPC Heads of Fisheries and the Special Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting.

Given the nature of coastal fisheries, reporting on progress itself remains a key challenge in implementing regional commitments. Limitations of data availability, resource constraints, data variability and validation mean that quality of information varies between outcome areas, and not all indicators are addressed in the Report Card.

The 2019 Report Card includes information from more PICTs than 2018, improving data quality and showing increased participation in the process.

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:

- **Significant progress has been made towards this outcome**
- **Some progress has been made towards this outcome**
- **No overall progress has been made towards this outcome**
- **Moving away from making progress towards this outcome**

Abbreviations: CEAFM - community-based ecosystem approach to fisheries management; FFC – Fisheries Forum Committee; FPO – Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape; HIES – household income and expenditure survey; LMMA – Locally Marine Managed Area Network; OPOC – Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner; PICTs – Pacific Island countries and territories; SPC – Pacific Community.
### Goal 1 – Empowerment

Informed, empowered coastal communities with clearly defined user-rights

**User rights defined in 14 PICTs**
User rights and tenure systems in PICTs are most commonly 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 level of community awareness and community action to manage coastal resources.

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 a total 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 scientific 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

**National resource allocation**
The median level of government’s financial commitment to coastal fisheries as a proportion of the total national budget was 0.2% (range 0.01% to 1.4%, n=12 PICTs).

The median proportion of fisheries budgets allocated to coastal fisheries was 40% (range 3% to 100%, n=14). The median proportion of fisheries staff working in coastal fisheries is 51% (range 14% to 100%, n=17).

Data from 8 PICTs showed a total ratio of one coastal fisheries staff member to 354 households participating in fisheries.

**Increasing regional commitment**
In 2016 Pacific Leaders agreed to expand “fisheries” to include coastal fisheries. In 2019, Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting endorsed the compilation of National Report Cards on Coastal Fisheries, to be led by countries.

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

**10 PICTs** reported they annually publish financial statements for their national fisheries budget.

**USD 43** is the total coastal fisheries’ government budget per household participating in fisheries across 8 PICTs (total sum).

**11 PICTs** have a current national coastal fisheries roadmap or strategy in place.
Goal 2 – Resilience

### Strong and up-to-date management policy, legislation and planning

- **5 PICTs** have enacted new coastal fisheries management legislation since 2015.
- **9 PICTs** have current coastal fisheries management policies. Ten have policies in need of drafting or revision.
- **12 PICTs** have evidence of 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 1 agency) has reduced over time:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: msp.csiro.au

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

**Benefits**

- **30%** of households participate in fishing
  - Median across PICTs, range 10% to 64%
- **8%** of households sell fish
  - Median across PICTs, range 3% to 30%
- **20%** of working age population (WAP) is employed in fisheries, median across PICTs, range 4.9% to 45.1%

**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
- Out of WAP employed in fisheries, 18% are women (range 8% to 38%).

Data source: Above data is based on current HIES available for 12 PICTs (2010–16). The median value across the PICTs is used.
**Goal 3 – Livelihoods and food security**

**Keep harvests within sustainable limits and ensure coastal developments do not damage fish habitats**

**Key indicative species**

- **Giant clams:** Generally considered overfished region-wide

- **Sea cucumbers:** Most sea cucumber fisheries now closed due to overfishing and/or lack of survey data

**Finfish indicator species:**

Monitoring of five indicator species (*Naso lituratus*, *Naso unicornis*, *Lutjanus gibbus*, *Lethrinus obsoletus* and *Ctenochaetus striatus*) indicate mixed results across seven regional sites, where some locations show overexploitation, others appropriate exploitation, with most species data deficient with sites not assessed.

**Reefs and ecosystems**

In 2011, 48% of reefs in the Pacific were considered threatened (Source: Chin et al. 2011). Since then, reefs in multiple PICTs have been severely affected by coral bleaching and tropical cyclones.

At last calculation, 8% of coastal villages/communities practiced CEAFM (Source: Govan et al. 2015).

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

**Per capita fresh fish consumption**

- 91% of households consume fish or seafood weekly (median range 69% to 98%).
- Source: HIES data from 10 PICTs (2010–2016)

- **42kg** of fresh fish is consumed per person per annum (regional population weighted average, range 11kg to 70kg).
- Source: HIES data 12 PICTs (2010-2016)

**Diversify the supply of fish, primarily through nearshore fish aggregating devices (FADs) and sustainable aquaculture**

- Using HIES data, the locations used by fishing households were: inshore (44% of households), nearshore (69%), and offshore (34%). 7% of households indicated using FADs (median values from seven PICTs).

- 12% of household food expenditure is on fish (median, range 8% to 21%, n=12 PICTs, source: HIES)

**Data notes**

Further information on the regional coastal fisheries indicators utilised in this Report Card, including data sources and how figures were calculated, can be found in the Background Report.

Data from HIES were available for 12 PICTs (Cook Islands, FSM, Nauru, Niue, Palau, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tokelau, Tuvalu and Vanuatu ). Figures presented are the median across PICTs unless otherwise stated. Data from National Fisheries Offices on staff numbers and budget information were received from 12 PICTs in 2019 (Cook Islands, Fiji, FSM, Kiribati, PNG, RMI, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Vanuatu and Wallis and Futuna). For 5 PICTs earlier figures were used in the absence of 2019 figures (French Polynesia, Nauru, New Caledonia, Pitcairn and Tuvalu), with some missing data. The inclusion of data from additional PICTs in 2019 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.