

# Independent Institutional Review (IIR) of the Pacific Community (SPC)

Final report



Pacific  
Community  
Communauté  
du Pacifique



HUMANITARIAN  
ADVISORY GROUP



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# CONTENTS

<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Executive summary</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Section 1: Introduction</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Section 2: Context overview</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Section 3: Findings</b> .....	<b>16</b>
Finding 1: SPC’s contribution to meeting members’ needs .....	16
Finding 2: SPC’s role as a regional organisation and partner .....	21
Finding 3: Fit-for purpose governance .....	25
Finding 4: SPC’s operating style .....	29
Finding 5: Strengthening approaches to risk identification and management .....	33
Finding 6: Driving progress to strengthen HR approaches .....	35
Finding 7: Implementation progress of the Strategic Plan: Goal 4 and KFA 7 .....	38
<b>Section 4: Where to from here?</b> .....	<b>45</b>
Recommendations .....	45
Conclusion .....	47
<b>Annex 1: Review framework</b> .....	<b>48</b>
<b>Annex 2: List of documents reviewed</b> .....	<b>53</b>
<b>Abbreviations</b> .....	<b>55</b>

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In early 2024, the Pacific Community (SPC) engaged Humanitarian Advisory Group (HAG), in partnership with Collaborate Consulting Pte Ltd (CoLAB), to undertake an Independent Institutional Review (IIR). The IIR was initiated in response to recommendations from the Friends of Chair Group's 2022 Technical Review Report Prepared for the Chair of the Twelfth Conference Of The Pacific Community and the recommendation from the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA) to review SPC within the broader context of the Review of Regional Architecture (RRA) process, under which the Pacific Island Forum Leaders agreed to consider the suitability of the current architecture to achieve the vision articulated in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.<sup>1</sup>

The approach to this review was grounded in a Pacific methodology, the *Kakala* research framework; a Tongan-developed framework that centralises Pacific world views in research and evaluation processes.

The review methodology was designed to be participatory, iterative and flexible within the parameters of the *Kakala* research framework. In practice, this meant that the team remained open to shifts in approaches to data collection, to ensure that the perspectives were being captured in appropriate ways and at the right time. This also meant that the scope of consultations outlined in the initial inception report (May 2024) was exceeded. The review team welcomed the strong participation and engagement that led to a rich and extensive dataset for analysis.

The review identified **seven key findings** and **eleven key recommendations** to strengthen SPC's ability to meet member needs and regional priorities into the future.

The key take aways from the seven findings are summarized below:

## Key take aways

### Finding 1: SPC's contribution to meeting members' needs

- SPC's role in meeting member needs is largely appreciated, with members and partners feeling that SPC contributes to member needs and priorities, and that technical services are largely relevant
- In meeting member needs, specific ways of working and delivering are valuable, including co-locating staff, capacity-strengthening initiatives and connecting and convening
- Challenging practices include frequent trainings that take staff out of country, gaps in timely delivery and lack of adherence to country protocols in line with agreed needs
- Tailored approaches to country engagement are valued and should be scaled up
- Smaller island states have unique needs that require tailored approaches, including working across Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) agencies
- Progress in decentralisation is a shift in the right direction and should be scaled up

<sup>1</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (2022) 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent

### **Finding 2: SPC's role as a regional organisation and partner**

- SPC's positive relationships contribute to it being a well-regarded and well-resourced agency
- SPC is valued for convening across technical areas to meet regional priorities. This is resource intensive and could be strategically and centrally supported
- Funding partners regard SPC highly, and SPC should continue to work with metropolitan members and donors to obtain more flexible core resourcing
- SPC is an influential CROP agency but can strengthen its relevant practices, including resource and information sharing, avoiding mission creep and ongoing commitment to coordination and CROP harmonization
- SPC manages complex partnerships of considerable depth and breadth. There is appetite for more and deeper engagement between SPC and partners, including civil society and private sector organisations, which would benefit from a strategic organisation-wide approach to partnerships

### **Finding 3: Fit-for-purpose governance**

- SPC's governance structure is largely fit for purpose, with minor changes required to strengthen governance between SPC and its members, and internally
- Clear, strategic and simple communication around governance is needed to deepen understanding and engagement with staff and members
- Members feel well supported in governance processes, but want more space and time for robust discussion
- There is scope to strengthen the role and accountability of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) through revisiting the SLT ToR

### **Finding 4: SPC's operating style**

- Key operational challenges are well documented, as are their impacts on SPC's ability to meet member needs and regional priorities
- Recent and planned investments in key areas including procurement, travel, finance modelling and human resources (HR) operations, as well as mapping operational processes and barriers, are underway. These investments require close monitoring to determine their impact and further course corrections
- SPC should pause on growth/expansion to allow time for the above investments to take hold and their impacts to be clear. This will allow a more informed approach to future shifts

### **Finding 5: Strengthening approaches to risk identification and management**

- Recent progress reflects SPC's investment in strengthening risk identification and management, though some areas still need improvement
- Key ongoing risks include operational risk (as highlighted by the Noumea crisis), HR risk, and risks related to project-based funding
- A stronger culture of risk ownership and accountability is required, including devolving risk management to staff

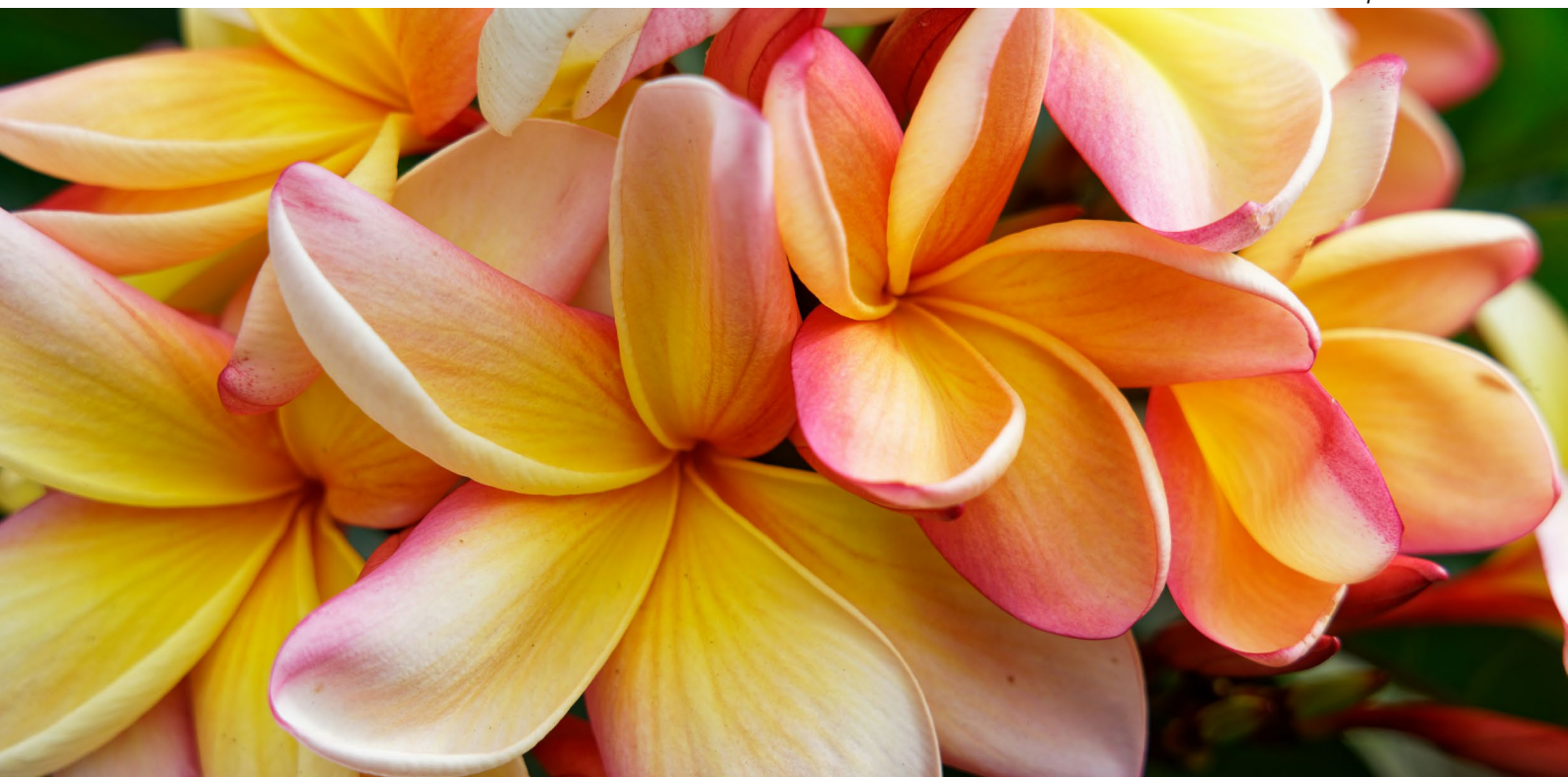
### **Finding 6: Driving progress to strengthen HR approaches**

- HR processes, systems and capabilities are being strengthened in response to identified risks and challenges
- Despite recent improvements, communication around strengthened HR approaches remains ineffectual
- The right people must be recruited to the right roles, and barriers to recruitment of Pacific-based staff must be addressed

### **Finding 7: Implementation progress of the Strategic Plan: Goal 4 and KFA 7**

- Strong examples demonstrate SPC is progressing towards Goal 4 (*"One SPC delivers integrated programmes through streamlined services"*), particularly the visibility and progress of the flagships as an integrated approach
- Learning from the flagships can be applied more consistently to integrate ways of working across SPC
- SPC's progress towards KFA 7 (*"Transforming Institutional Effectiveness"*) is underpinned by strong examples, particularly investments in monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL), gender equality and social and environmental responsibility. Enablers from these areas can be leveraged to progress other priorities, including disability inclusion

Photo: Colin Watts on Unsplash



The recommendations and aligned actions for consideration by SPC are as follows:



Continue to **decentralise presence, decision making, and member engagement and planning processes**

- Increase autonomy, technical capability and capacity at the sub-regional level to make more region-specific decisions, be closer to members and link with sub-regional mechanisms.
- Prioritise country-level planning processes with members, led by the Regional Offices.
- Consider piloting a Smaller Island State Desk Officer role, including discussing a shared resource model with CROP peers to optimise value for money.



Intentionally and **strategically pause growth/expansion ambitions at the organizational level for an agreed period.**

- Enable investments in systems and processes to catch up, take hold and produce results.



**Leverage enablers to scale up integrated approaches and Social and Environmental Responsibility (SER) priorities.**

- Apply lessons emerging from the flagships to other ways of working that complement and amplify single-sector work
- Consider how lessons from success in gender equality could inform efforts across SPC to progress key areas that are lagging, such as disability inclusion.



**Scale up investment in strategic communication and engagement** internally and externally, at all levels.

- Develop a strategic framework and protocols for communications to ensure that information is communicated clearly, consistently, effectively, in a timely way and accessible for diverse audiences. Note this does not mean an increase in volume of communications, rather ensuring that messages (e.g on governance, on HR, on country-level results, on change processes) are clear and have cut through.
- Establish processes to measure the effectiveness of communications.



Centralise **and resource convenings** to make them more efficient and streamlined.

- Consider a resource shared by Divisions to support the end-to-end process of key sectoral convenings to improve consistency of service-provision and capture and share lessons on what works and what doesn't.
- Ensure that outcomes from SPC sectoral meetings are systematically connected to PIF processes to ensure alignment and elevation of priorities to Leaders.



Continue to remove **structural barriers in recruitment policies and processes** to make SPC positions more accessible to Pacific candidates.

- Agree on nuanced approaches to screening criteria, for example, valuing Pacific experience more highly than tertiary qualifications.
- Introduce policies to support staff mobility (such as secondments) within the Pacific, enhancing SPC's regional representation and local insights.





Formalise **two-way technical line ministry engagement** in Governance processes.

- Develop a draft protocol and template for members to officially and consistently gather technical line ministry updates and perspectives for feeding into CRGA and reporting back.
- Create a space for learning across members on how to effectively, efficiently and systematically link line ministries with governance processes.



Strengthen the **function and accountability of the SLT** and its connection to the Executive and to the broader organisation.

- Revisit the ToR of the SLT to consider including decision-making authority for this group.
- Increase transparency and predictability of communication across SPC about what this group discusses and the resulting actions.



Strengthen the **culture of risk ownership and accountability**.

- Devolve risk management responsibility across SPC.
- Embed accountability for risk in roles and performance management processes.



Scale up understanding of and resourcing in partnerships.

- Build on SPC's existing strong performance in this area through an expanded definition of and focus on partnerships (decouple partnerships and resource mobilisation)
- Develop a strategic approach to a complex partnership landscape.



Continue to **coordinate and collaborate on key technical and operational areas of mutual interest with CROP peers**.

- Keep a strong and consistent line of sight to mandate, existing capabilities and recommendations to pause and reflect over further growth or expansion in the context of post-RRA discussions.

*Photo: Mick Haupt on Unsplash*





# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

## Background

In early 2024, the Pacific Community (SPC) engaged Humanitarian Advisory Group (HAG), in partnership with Collaborate Consulting Pte Ltd (CoLAB), to undertake an Independent Institutional Review (IIR). The IIR was initiated in response to recommendations from the Friends of Chair Group's 2022 Technical Review Report Prepared for the Chair of the Twelfth Conference Of The Pacific Community and the recommendation from Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA) to review SPC within the broader context of the Review of Regional Architecture (RRA) process, under which the Pacific Island Forum Leaders agreed to consider the suitability of the current architecture to achieve the vision articulated in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.<sup>2</sup>

## Purpose and objectives

The overall purpose of this review was to *provide an independent opinion and set of recommendations to the full CRGA membership on the Pacific Community as a Pacific-owned scientific and technical capability in service to the region.*

The member-led review had five key objectives:

1. To assess to what extent the organisation is fit for purpose to deliver regional aspirations and priorities
2. To assess to what extent the organisation is fit for purpose to deliver the aspirations in its strategic plan in relation to Goal 4 and KFA 7
3. To assess SPC's operational model, governance arrangements and institutional capacities and identify strengths, areas for improvement and opportunities
4. To assess relevance in relation to member needs and service delivery
5. To review the alignment and implementation process at the three-year horizon of the SPC Strategic Plan 2022–2031 within the broader context of this institutional review.

## Structure

This report has four key sections. Section 1 (this section) introduces the report. Section 2 provides an overview of the broader context for the review. Section 3 outlines the seven key findings from this review mapped against the Objectives in the Terms of Reference. Section 4 concludes the report, including providing 12 recommendations for consideration by SPC, and closing remarks from the review team.

## Methodology

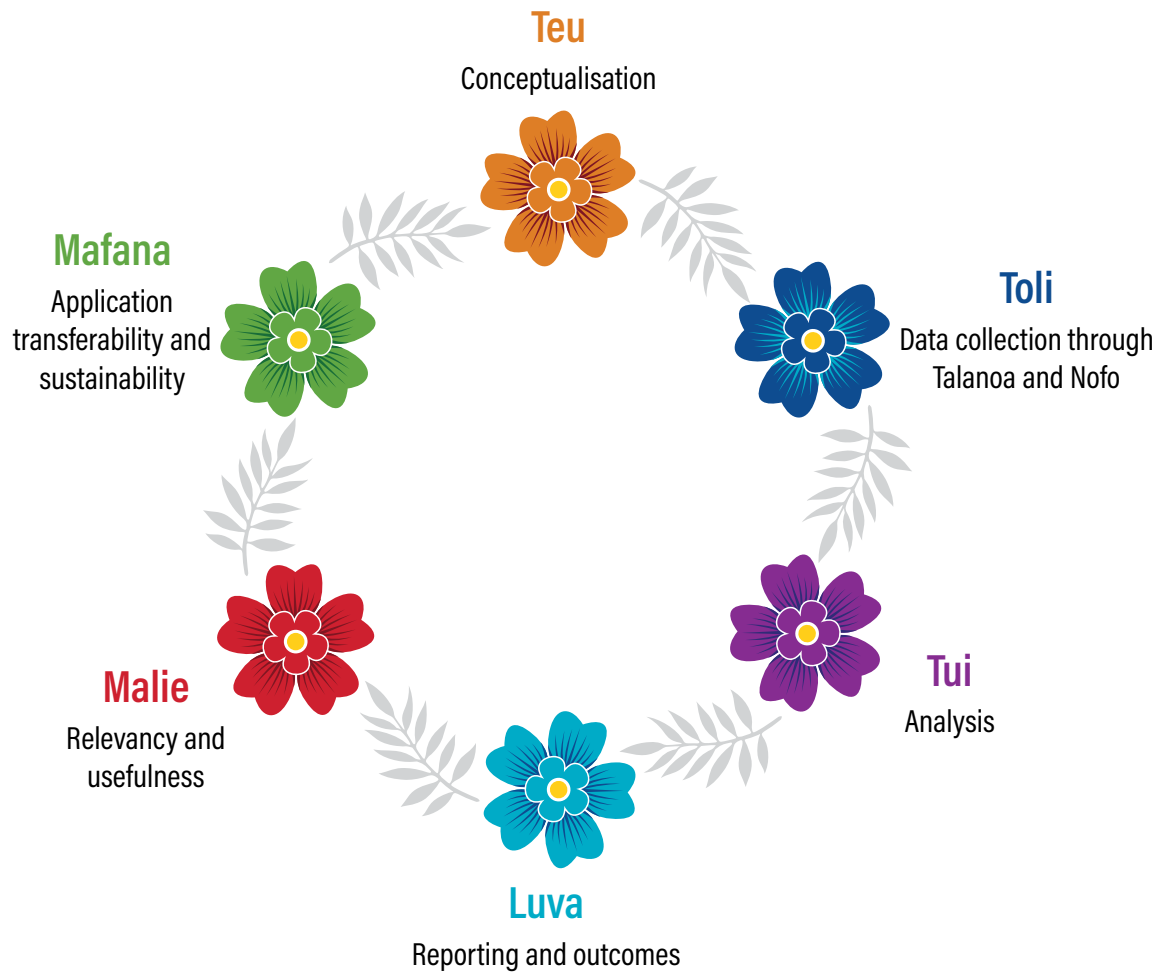
Consultations for this IIR occurred between June and October 2024.

The approach to this review was grounded in a Pacific methodology, the *Kakala* research framework; a Tongan-developed framework that centralises Pacific world views in research and evaluation processes. Figure 1 provides an overview of the stages of the *Kakala* research framework.

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2 [Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat \(2022\) 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent](#)










Figure 1: Kakala research framework



The review methodology was designed to be participatory, iterative and flexible within the parameters of the *Kakala* research framework. In practice, this meant that the team remained open to shifts in approaches to data collection, to ensure that the perspectives were being captured in appropriate ways and at the right time. This also meant that the scope of consultations outlined in the initial inception report (May 2024) was exceeded. The review team welcomed the strong participation and engagement that led to a rich and extensive dataset for analysis.

Figure 2 provides an overview of the data collected through the *toli* phase (June to October).

Figure 2: Methodology

-  Review of over 35 documents
-  15 Member consultations
-  3 in-country visits
-  40 Key Informant Interviews with SPC, CROP staff and donor / implementing partners
-  9 focus group discussions/talanoa sessions with SPC staff and partners
-  5 open door staff consultations (4 in English and 1 in French)
-  Survey reaching over 240 staff
-  Survey reaching 114 members and partners
-  Journey mapping of 2 key convenings

## Limitations

The review team foresaw several limitations during the *Teu (Conceptualisation)* phase, some of which did not eventuate. We anticipated that stakeholders would be difficult to reach due to competing priorities, but many more were available than expected, allowing our consultations to extend the initial scope. We also anticipated little ability to triangulate our findings, but the rich data enabled strong themes to be triangulated across qualitative and quantitative sources. However, the following limitations were faced by the team:

- **Low RRA engagement.** The review was intended to mesh with the ongoing RRA process, but the team did not engage with the RRA in depth. We hope that the findings and recommendations in this review inform the ongoing RRA discussions.
- **Broad scope limited depth of analysis.** The reviews' scope was always ambitious. The review team endeavored to meet the five objectives (see Annex 2 – review framework) equally, but some were unavoidably prioritised. Our findings and recommendations relate to what we understand to be the most critical factors.
- **Full member representation.** The review team invited all SPC members to participate and circulated the member and partner survey widely to encourage representation. Representatives of all 27 Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICT) participated, but national or territory samples were not large enough to be representative.
- **Difficulty in communicating complexity.** This report presents a lot of information. We endeavored to communicate it as clearly and directly as possible to maximise engagement with and uptake of findings.
- **Limited ability to assess the impact of recent or planned interventions.** This review uncovered a series of initiatives (detailed throughout) that are efforts to overcome existing challenges. Whilst these demonstrate an intent to overcome identified challenges, the impacts of them cannot and have not been assessed and is thus a limitation of this review.

## Audience

The primary audiences for this report are SPC's governance bodies including the CRGA, and the CRGA Subcommittee for the Strategic Plan and SPC Leadership (including both the Executive and SLT). Secondary audiences include all SPC staff and external stakeholders including development partners, Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) agencies, implementing and other partners.

*Photo: Vonita Buirski on Unsplash*



## SECTION 2: CONTEXT OVERVIEW

SPC is the principal scientific and technical organisation in the Pacific region. Comprising 27 country and territory members, it is a member-owned organisation that conducts research and applies science and knowledge to development. It works in 25 sectors and contributes to all 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals. SPC's Strategic Plan (2022–31) outlines four goals, seven key focus areas (KFAs) and five pathways through which the organisation is progressing towards the vision, being that;

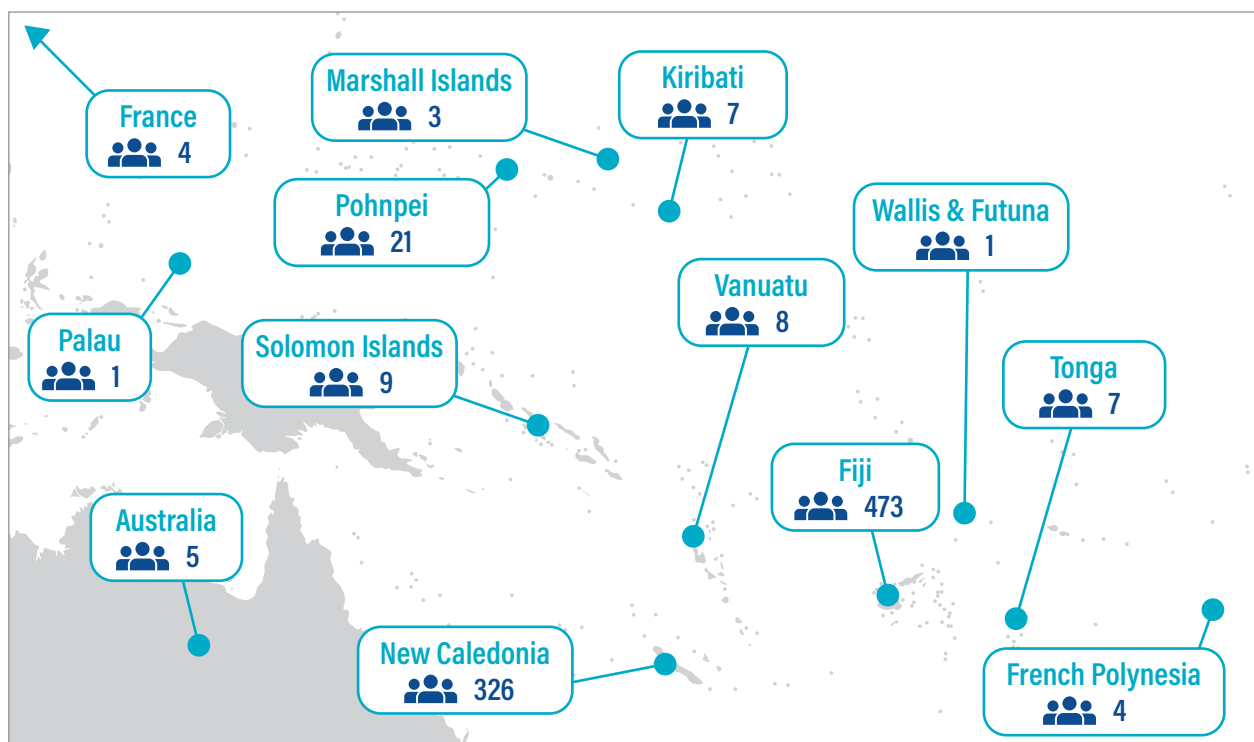
*We are voyaging towards a resilient Pacific. A region of peace, harmony and prosperity, where all our people and communities live safe, free, healthy sustainable and productive lives. As wayfinders, our paths are intertwined with the culture, environment and resources of our Blue Pacific Continent. We recognise our role as stewards of our Pacific Ocean and are responding with urgent collective action to the threat of climate change.<sup>3</sup>*

### SPC – structure and operations

SPC is currently guided by a Director General, two Deputy Directors General (Science and Capability and Operations and Integration) and an SLT comprised of 23 members representing technical divisions, service areas and sub-regional offices.

Structurally, SPC is headquartered in New Caledonia (Noumea), with core functions also being housed in Fiji (Suva). In recent years, it has invested in sub-regional offices in Vanuatu (Port Vila, Melanesian regional office), Tonga (Nuku'alofa, Polynesian regional office) and Pohnpei (Federated States of Micronesia, Micronesian region office). At the time of writing, the full staff complement within the organisation was 869, of whom 57% are female, having grown consistently since 2021, where 53% of staff were female. Figure 3 provides a snapshot of where SPC staff are located.

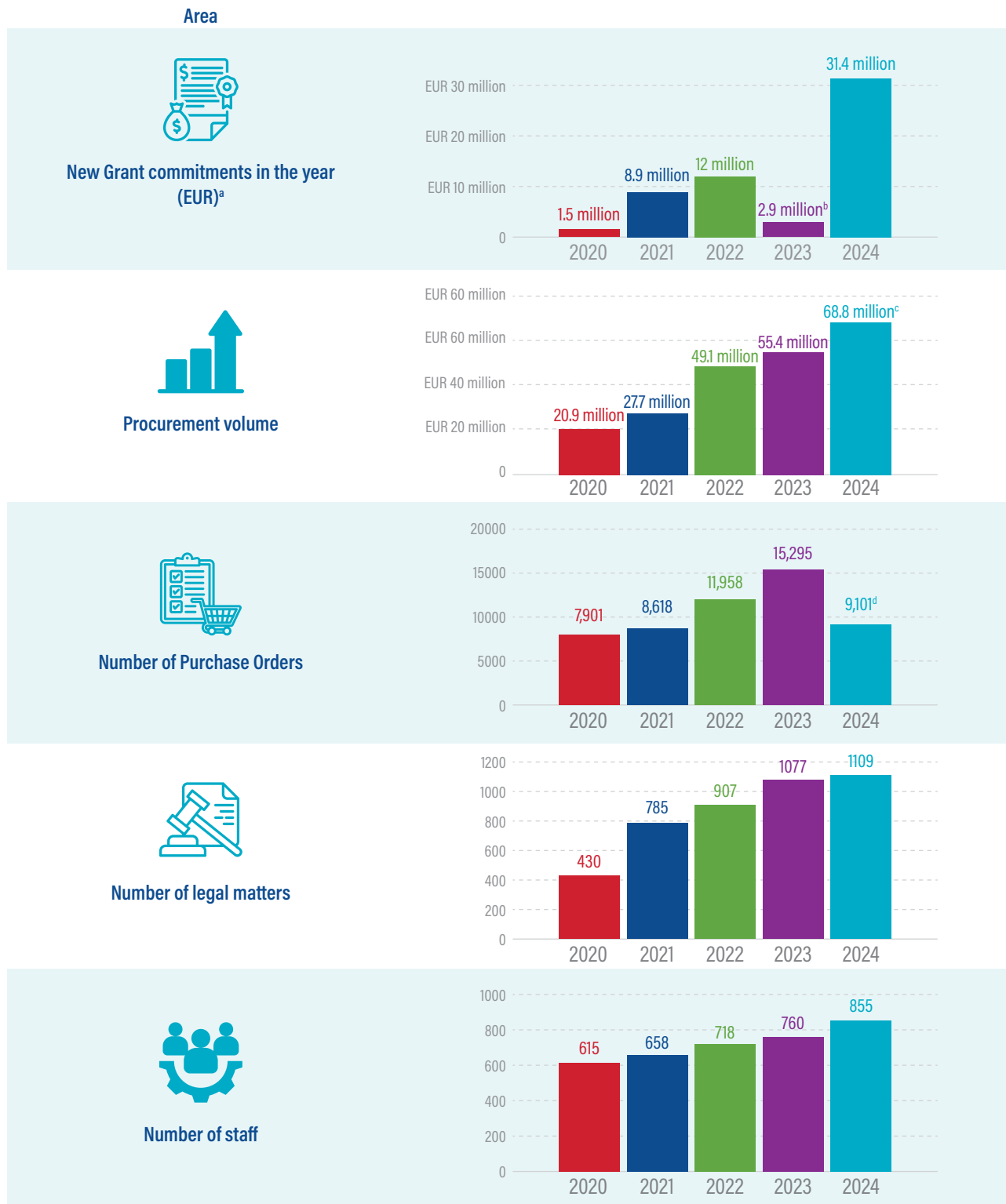
Figure 3: SPC staff distribution



3 SPC (2022) Strategic Plan 2022–31

Over recent years (particularly since 2020) SPC has grown significantly, both financially and in personnel. This growth demonstrates trust from funding partners (see Finding 2), but compounds ongoing operational challenges (see Finding 4). Figure 4 illustrates the growth across the organisation.

Figure 4: Growth since 2020



a. New grant commitments made each financial year by SPC (not SPC's portfolio of grants)

b. Grant commitments decreased in 2023, however there was a significant amount of work involved in grant commitments in the subsequent year (to 31.4 million in 2024).

c. Procurement volume from 1 January to 30 November 2024. Annual numbers to be reported to ARC in March 2025

d. The reduction is a result of streamlining and improvements made to travel processes in 2023, which means that a new PO is no longer required for each trip



## SPC's role in the region

In 1947 the Pacific Community was established to “*be a consultative and advisory body to the participating Governments in matters affecting the economic and social development of the territories within the scope of the Pacific Community and the welfare and advancement of their peoples.*”<sup>4</sup> SPC continues to play a significant role in the region, including to regional and sector-specific frameworks and the region’s overarching strategy, the **2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent**. SPC’s support has focused on at least 25 sectors and disciplines as articulated in the Strategic Plan.<sup>5</sup>

At a strategic level, SPC’s KFAs are aligned to the thematic areas of the 2050 Strategy, and KFA 7 directly contributes to thematic areas on political leadership and regionalism, peace and security, technology and connectivity. Additionally, the targets and work under each of the SPC flagships (integrated programmes of work in four key areas – Oceans, Food Systems, Gender Equality and Climate Change – for further detail see further Box 9) enable a coherent approach to progress regional priorities and drive collective impact toward the 2050 Strategy (see Finding 7). During interviews, stakeholders acknowledged SPC’s leadership in supporting development and implementation of key regional frameworks.

The review identified multiple examples of SPC’s direct contributions to regional frameworks that have been adopted to resolve development challenges facing the Pacific region. This support is underpinned by a strategic approach within SPC, and partnerships with other CROP agencies that foster joint ownership and collaboration (see Finding 2). Box 1 provides examples of how SPC is contributing to regional priorities.

### Box 1: SPC’s contributions to regional priorities: a snapshot

Through the **2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent**, SPC promotes cooperation among member states on shared challenges in Political Leadership and Regionalism, People Centred Development, Peace and Security, Resource and Economic Development, Climate Change and Disasters, Ocean and Natural Environment and Technology and Connectivity.<sup>6</sup>

SPC has made significant contributions in gender equality, contributing financial resources, technical assistance, convening and influence to support implementation of the **Revitalised Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration** through the **Pacific Platform for Action on Gender Equality and Women’s Human Rights** and mainstreaming at a sector level. For example, SPC supported development of the **Pacific Energy Gender Strategic Action Plan (2021–30)**, which provides a framework for PICTs to reduce gender imbalance in the renewable energy sector.<sup>7</sup> SPC also leads efforts to advance human rights and good governance for all Pacific people, including youth. At the 4th Pacific Ministers for Youth Meeting in 2024, ministers endorsed SPC and the Pacific Youth Council as co-custodians of the forthcoming **Pacific Youth Development Framework**.<sup>8</sup> SPC also led development of the Pacific Regional Culture Strategy 2022 – 2032, building on lessons from the previous iteration (2010 – 2020).

In the transportation sector, SPC was tasked by members to develop a **Recognition Framework** to support implementation of the **Pacific Ports Vision 2030–2050** of resilient, green and clean Pacific Ports.<sup>9</sup> At the 2023 Transport Ministers Meeting, members tasked SPC with establishing the Pacific Regional One Maritime Framework (POMF) to respond to needs, challenges and emerging issues in the Maritime sector.

4 [The Pacific Community Governance Compendium](#), Sixth edition. October 2024.

5 SPC (2022) Strategic Plan 2022–31, p. 9

6 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent / Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. Suva, Fiji : Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, 2022

7 SPC 2022 results reporting.

8 SPC November 2024 *First Pacific Ministers of Youth Meeting in more than a decade recognises the need to pass the baton to our youth - the leaders of tomorrow*. Accessed from <https://www.spc.int/updates/news/media-release/2024/09/first-pacific-ministers-of-youth-meeting-in-more-than-a-decade>

9 SPC 2022 results reporting.

SPC is the statistical systems, governance and technical lead for the Pacific, and provides technical assistance and convening and coordination support to improve the quality of education at national and regional levels through the **Pacific Regional Education Framework (PacREF)**. In 2022, SPC supported 15 PICTs with data collection for mid-year and annual PacREF reporting.<sup>10</sup> In 2023, SPC developed the Pacific Assessment for Lower Secondary assessment tool for assessing lower secondary students across 15 PICTs, an initiative driven by regional collaboration on the 2050 Strategy, and that includes a scientific focus on climate change and sustainability.<sup>11</sup>

SPC also contributes to protecting natural resources and biodiversity. SPC's scientific and technical advice informed the development of five regional policy frameworks and management plans: **the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)'s Climate Resolution**, Pacific Framework for Action on Scaling up Community-based Fisheries Management 2021-2030, Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries, and New Song for Coastal Fisheries – Pathways to Change (Noumea Strategy), the **Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape**, the **Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific**, the **Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)'s Climate Change Strategy** and the **WCPFC's Harvest Strategy**.<sup>12</sup> SPC also supported development of the **Framework for Pacific Regional Agriculture and Forestry Research Collaboration (RRA Framework) and Pacific Regional Agriculture and Forestry Strategy**. The Regional Research Agenda - RRA Framework will support PICTs to identify research priorities and strengthen collaboration.<sup>13</sup> In the digital space, SPC has been involved in shaping the Information and Communications Technology (ICT)-related statements in the 2050 Blue Pacific Strategy and contributed to the drafting of the Lagatoi Declaration<sup>14</sup> which affirms regional commitment to advance ICT and digital transformation for an inclusive digital Pacific. Digital transformation continues to be a critical priority for the region, and for SPC.

In the area of economies and livelihoods, SPC, is collaborating with other CROP agencies<sup>15</sup> and providing data and resources to support the implementation of the **Framework for Energy Security and Resilience in The Pacific (FESRIP)**. The FESRIP guides work towards achieving energy-related priorities including renewable resources, energy security and resilience.<sup>16</sup>

SPC provides key technical assistance, capacity building, leadership and governance to support PICTs produce, disseminate and use statistics. SPC provides oversight for regional frameworks and action plans on data, statistics and knowledge, including the **Strategic Framework for Pacific Statistics 2022–2030**, and the **Pacific Roadmap on Gender Statistics**. SPC also leads the governance and coordination of the Pacific regional statistical infrastructure by convening the Heads of Planning and Statistics, Pacific Statistics Standing Committee, Donor and Development Partner Group, Brisbane Accord Group and the Pacific Statistic Methods Board meetings, which drive and guide implementation of statistical priorities for partners at national and regional levels.<sup>17</sup>

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10 SPC 2022 results reporting.

11 <https://www.spc.int/updates/blog/blog-post/2024/05/development-of-the-pacifics-first-regional-science-assessment>

12 SPC 2023 results reporting.

13 Ibid, and <https://www.spc.int/updates/blog/blog-post/2024/11/regional-research-agenda-researchers-convene-to-investigate-findings>

14 <https://wanpasifik.org/lagatoi-declaration/>

15 CROP agencies include PIFS, USP, SPREP and PPA.






16 SPC 2023 results reporting.

17 Ibid.

# SECTION 3: FINDINGS

This section outlines the seven key findings that emerged from the review. Icons located next to the themes show the review objectives to which they correspond (Table 1).

**Table 1: Mapping findings to objectives**

Objective	Icon
Objective 1: To assess to what extent the organisation is fit for purpose to deliver regional aspirations and priorities	
Objective 2: To assess to what extent the organisation is fit for purpose to deliver the aspirations in its strategic plan in relation to Goal 4 and KFA 7	
Objective 3: To assess SPC's operational model, governance arrangements and institutional capacities and identify strengths, areas for improvement and opportunities	
Objective 4: To assess relevance in relation to member needs and service delivery	
Objective 5: To review the alignment and implementation process at the three-year horizon of the SPC Strategic Plan 2022–2031 within the broader context of this institutional review	

## **Finding 1: SPC's contribution to meeting members' needs**

**SPC is contributing to meeting member needs, but there is scope for deeper, contextualised country-level engagement to align priorities and agree on expectations**

*This is probably one of the biggest challenges facing SPC ... it is a challenge to try and make sure that everybody has a voice that is taken on board. SPC has such a broad mandate that it has such a challenging role trying to meet the needs of the members – this is what we can actually do for you, and to turn that into a programme of work.<sup>18</sup>*

### **What's working well**

SPC's role in meeting member needs is well regarded and appreciated, providing technical support that is in most cases, well aligned to the priorities of Pacific Island members. Ninety-one per cent of members and partners either agreed or strongly agreed that SPC contributed towards member needs through current services and support (Figure 5).<sup>19</sup> Several examples were given of specific scientific and technical areas in which members value SPC's role, including fisheries, incorporating Pacific values into all aspects

<sup>18</sup> Interview 6

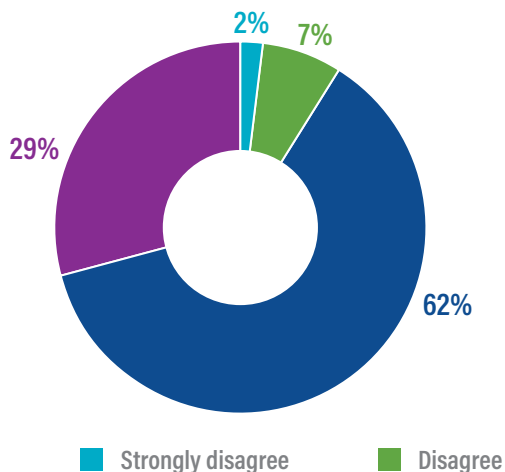
<sup>19</sup> Member and partner survey

and ways of working (e.g. education, health and climate change), data (including the Pacific Data Hub), monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL – including Pacific MEL, or PACMEL), education quality, water resource management, climate change (including help in accessing Green Climate Fund technical support), and promoting gender equality and human rights. Overall, 35% of members and partners strongly agreed that SPC’s technical services are relevant to PICTs, and 58% agreed (Figure 6). Stakeholders that disagreed reflected that the right staff are required with appropriate knowledge of the Pacific (see Finding 6), the need to not compare smaller island states with bigger countries (see Box 2) and designing programmes that are member-led rather than donor driven.

*In the projects that we are working with, SPC is very prompt, very helpful and dedicated to providing relevant TA support and assistance.<sup>20</sup>*

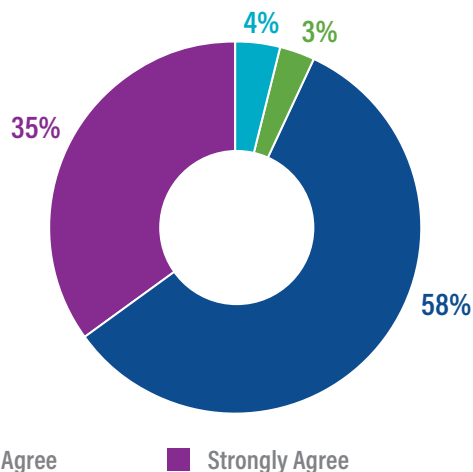
**Figure 5:**

**SPC is contributing towards member priorities and needs through its current scientific, technical services and support**



**Figure 6:**

**The current technical services delivered by SPC are relevant to PICTs**



Delivering on scientific and technical areas requires not only technical capacity but specific ways of working that translate these areas into practical outcomes. Members identified a range of practices they value, including some key delivery modalities (Figure 7).

20 Member and partner survey respondent

*Photo: Vijesh Dash on Unsplash*



**Figure 7: practices and approaches that are valued by members**



## What's not working so well

Despite the identified value in the areas and ways in which SPC supports members, both members and other stakeholders noted challenges for SPC to overcome to enable it to better meet member needs. These included:

- Frequent trainings or capacity-building opportunities that take member staff outside of their country for long periods of time, causing resource gaps in-country, or are not coordinated with other agencies
- Lack of coherence in communicating with members on some issues (e.g. workshops taking place on specific issues in countries without member knowledge)
- Untimely delivery of finances and services, funding that does not meet needs, delays and scheduling conflicts
- Perceived differences between the priority needs of members and what SPC can deliver
- Perceived differences in the extent to which SPC is driven by member needs or priorities
- Ensuring that all technical services and support adhere to country communication and coordination protocols.

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*SPC need to work on strategies & approaches that compliment or advance national efforts. There's too many regional and national workshops that occupy govt officials from actually carrying out their jobs. The approaches should be on spending adequate time at national level to implement instead of using the 'fly in, fly out' approach. Investment should be directed to bolster national capacity, i.e. more national staff & less regional advisors.<sup>21</sup>*

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At the heart of many of these challenges is the fact that member needs and priorities are unique and diverse. Approaches that work for one member may not work for the collective. Some members opined that Pacific Territories receive less support than States. For example, for French Polynesia, SPC is viewed more as a development partner, emphasising technical cooperation over assistance. In contrast, some smaller island states called for greater support and focus on capacity building and local engagement in addition to a focus on approaches that recognise their size and capability. Box 2 provides more information about the unique needs and priorities of smaller island states.

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21 Member and partner survey respondent



## Box 2: Calls for specific ways of working for smaller island states

“We greatly value the scientific and technical assistance received from SPC, but has not always been possible to get a snapshot of that partnership in a year...this is especially a challenge felt by small[er] island states ... at PIFS, what is supported is an Officer to support during the year for PIFS meetings ... SPC results are not as visible.”<sup>22</sup>

Throughout this review, the unique needs of smaller island states were elevated as a priority for SPC to consider. The Smaller Island States (SIS) represent the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Tuvalu. SIS are a subgroup within the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), recognised by CROP agencies. SIS members hold a stand-alone Leaders’ Meeting before the large PIF Leaders’ meeting. Unique factors including their size, lack of natural resources and remoteness are barriers for SIS, limiting their capacity to ensure resilience and long-term sustainable development.<sup>23</sup> Several participants, in particular members, spoke to the unique challenges of smaller nations due to their size and resources, and few staff in government line ministries with large workloads and competing priorities. This makes it difficult to respond to a high volume of requests for information and engagement in addition to meeting national priorities. During this review, the model of the Pacific Island Forum Smaller Island State Officers (SISOs) was raised as something SPC could consider replicating, or contributing towards. This idea – which several members endorsed – was expanded to a centralised CROP Desk Officer model, which would align with moves to harmonise across CROP agencies and use resources more effectively. It warrants exploration by SPC and CROP peers (see also Section 4).

## The value of nuanced approaches to country engagement

This review identified several examples of strategic country-level engagement and planning being well received by members because they enable both SPC and members to understand how SPC can support priority areas, such as those outlined in national development plans and frameworks. There is, however, a recognition that undertaking these processes regularly with each member would be extremely resource intensive and may also put strain on some members. For example, one member described an unwieldy country-level planning process with overly heavy requirements for planning and reporting. This points to the need for clearly contextualised and scalable processes across the diversity of the membership that meet member priorities, needs and timelines, as well as SPC capacity. There was also recognition that individual CROP agencies and development partners find undertaking such processes burdensome; SPC could institute a regular planning process with partners in line with the CROP harmonisation agenda.

*Strategic country arrangements is a way to find a structured way every 2–3 years to sit down with member countries ... if SPC does it [strategic country planning] they will have the same conversation with SPREP, the UN and others ... Maybe we could do a structured visit every 3 years and that is the moment that one country articulates its priorities and the different agencies go off and work on those?<sup>24</sup>*

22 Interview 9

23 <https://forumsec.org/governance>

24 Interview 57

## Proximity to members: ongoing efforts to decentralise

Recent establishment and expansion of regional offices were largely welcomed for demonstrating commitment to closer and consistent engagement with members. SPC's Regional Directors are valued for their experience and expertise.

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*Regional Directors are fundamental, [SPC] have recruited awesome people who know the region, and are incredible political conduits and if you don't have people sitting at that level- without them SPC will be distant to its members, too far, Suva and New Caledonia is just too far.<sup>25</sup>*

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Some members however expressed concerns that regional offices were an additional layer of bureaucracy rather than adding value and that these roles could be elevated further in terms of delegated authority, however these perspectives were less frequent. Others suggested that further capability could augment the role of the regional offices (e.g. through increased technical expertise in the region). There were also calls for stronger and more consistent communication about the purpose and abilities of the regional offices, and for stronger engagement of these offices with sub-regional forums such as the Melanesian Spearhead Group and Micronesian Island Forum (MIF).

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*SPC needs to decentralise their services ... the physical presence of SPC is very important.<sup>26</sup>*

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### Finding 1: Key takeaways

- SPC's role in meeting member needs is largely appreciated, with members and partners feeling that SPC contributes to member needs and priorities, and that technical services are largely relevant
- In meeting member needs, specific ways of working and delivering are valuable, including co-locating staff, capacity-strengthening initiatives and connecting and convening
- Challenging practices include frequent trainings that take staff out of country, gaps in timely delivery and lack of adherence to country protocols in line with agreed needs
- Tailored approaches to country engagement are valued and should be scaled up
- Smaller island states have unique needs that require tailored approaches, including working across Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) agencies
- Progress in decentralisation is a shift in the right direction and should be scaled up

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25 Interview 3

26 Interview 47





## Finding 2: SPC’s role as a regional organisation and partner



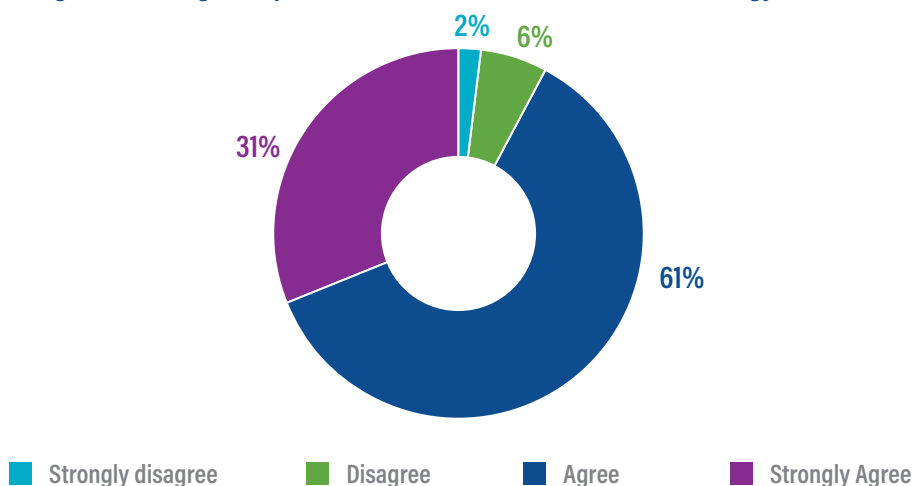
SPC is a leading and well-resourced CROP agency, with a mandate built on a legacy of trusted partnerships and convening power and reach across the Pacific region. SPC can enhance coordination and cohesion with existing and new partners to progress shared agendas.

*We need to understand that not all CROP agencies work with the same government focal point ... when it boils down to how well we deliver and do partnerships we fail because we tend to work across different government bodies and perpetuate disconnect amongst the government bodies.<sup>27</sup>*

SPC is held in positive and high regard by its partners across member governments, donor and development partners and CROP agencies. They view it as the leading scientific and technical organisation that advocates for the region and responds to PICTs’ development needs and priorities. Ninety-two per cent of member and partner survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that SPC is contributing towards regional priorities as articulated in the 2050 Strategy (Figure 8).

Figure 8:

SPC is contributing towards regional priorities as articulated in the 2050 Strategy for a Blue Pacific Continent



SPC is seen to be working in a strategic and collaborative way with its partners. Stakeholders perceive that SPC’s approach to partnerships promotes trust, open communication and responsiveness. An example of SPC working well with partners was its collaboration with the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on identifying data needs and gaps. Other examples of areas in which SPC is collaborating well include in strategic future and foresight, agroforestry research and risk-informed development.

Stakeholders also reflected on the importance of SPC focusing on partnerships within the scope of its mandate and ensuring effective partnering with others working on aligned priorities. Stakeholders acknowledged the difficult task SPC faced in managing the scale, complexity and diversity of its partnerships, and the tailored approaches required to meet the unique needs and priorities of different groups.

27 FGD 33

## Partnerships for policy: SPC's critical role in convening

The breadth of SPC's partnerships is evidenced by the numerous events that SPC convenes across key thematic areas. This is a major part of SPC's role, with 27 Ministerial and official meetings convened over July 2023 – May 2024<sup>28</sup>.

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*I have not seen a single coordination convened and led by government where SPC is not there with government.*<sup>29</sup>

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At the heart of this approach is connecting into government and inter-governmental processes and mechanisms at community, national, sub-regional and regional levels to ensure SPC support is aligned to member needs and coordinated with key partners such as other CROP agencies, or organisations with similar priorities. Box 3 illustrates how SPC has elevated youth voices via convening the 2024 Pacific Ministers for Youth Meeting.

### Box 3: SPC's contributions as a convener – the Pacific Ministers for Youth Meeting

SPC seeks to empower young people across the Pacific region. By engaging youth in policy discussions and decision-making, SPC ensures that the perspectives of young people are considered in regional strategies and frameworks. SPC facilitated three major meetings in 2024 to decide on priorities and actions for Pacific youth and to inform the next iteration and governance mechanisms for the Pacific Youth Development Framework (PYDF).<sup>30</sup> SPC's Human Rights and Social Development (HRSD) Division took over the youth portfolio in 2021 and had to build trust with the Pacific Youth Council (PYC).<sup>31</sup>

*After the merger<sup>32</sup> there was really nothing being done and it hasn't been an easy relationship in the past – we [HRSD] inherited a lot of the angst and disappointment and so we have had to build trust. We didn't want the PYC to feel that we had not listened to them. We could have had the ministerial meetings two years ago but we started to build trust – we have worked hard to build trust and those relationships.*<sup>33</sup>

The mid-term review (MTR) of the PYDF for 2019–21 identified PICTs' lack of awareness of the PYDF and advised better coordination between PICTs, CROP, international development partners and national youth councils. In response, SPC convened the PYC General Assembly in May 2024, resulting in development of priority areas and strategic pathways in alignment with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent; a Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) in August 2024, which proposed recommendations for the Pacific Ministers for Youth Meeting (PMYM); and the PMYM itself, at which all recommendations from the SOM were endorsed. SPC has also facilitated separate briefings for development partners, UN and CROP agencies.

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*Our tradition is talanoa, not contained in time or space. Let's not force the issues we have to discuss, these are real issues, real people. Thank you PYC for yielding – my plea to us Ministers still stands, as custodians of the future, let us facilitate the future.*<sup>34</sup>

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28 [The Pacific Community, Director Generals Report](#); Annex 1. 2024

29 Interview 12

30 The PYDF was designed as a collaborative effort between SPC and the PYC, who regularly combine to bring youth representatives from various Pacific nations to discuss priorities, share experiences, and elect new leadership.

31 The PYC represents youth voices from across the Pacific region. It is dedicated to promoting youth empowerment, leadership, and advocacy for sustainable development, and partners SPC in implementing youth priorities.

32 SPC's Regional Rights Resource Team and Social Development Programme merged and relinquished their youth focus.

33 Independent Institutional Review Interview

34 Fiji representative at the Pacific Ministers for Youth Meeting 2024

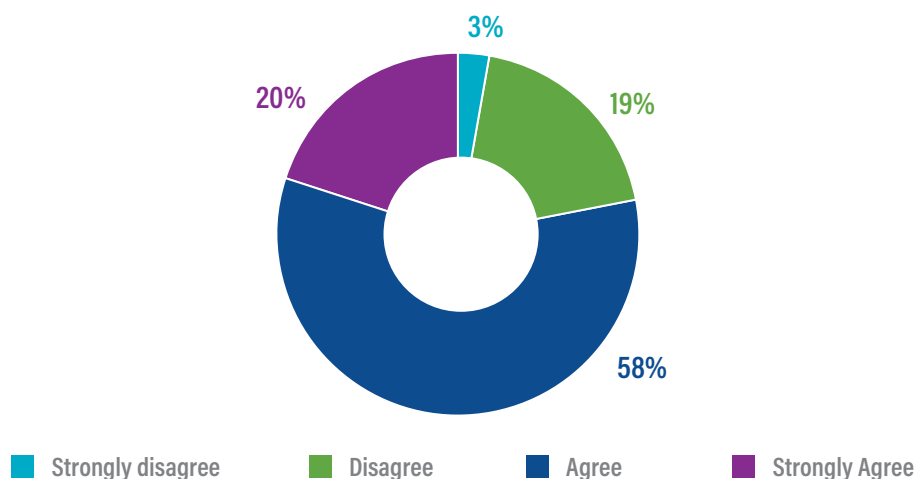
Convening large and complex meetings requires considerable resources. One partner queried SPC’s current approach to resourcing convening, suggesting that a more strategic and long-term view would be beneficial rather than ad hoc requests to development partners. In shifting towards a One SPC model, support for convenings can be centralised to streamline the process and enhance learning about effective, strategic, and sustainable convening. Further, the key outcomes from convenings must be tracked and followed up. Efforts to do this systematically are under way in SPC, with a portal summarising key outcomes and progress against these to be launched in 2025.

## Funding partners

Donors regard SPC as efficient and effective in channeling funding, based on its demonstrated capacity and results and its reach across the Pacific region. Trust in SPC is also evident in the organisation’s funding growth over recent years, with cash inflows totaling €125 million in 2023<sup>35</sup> vs €72 million in 2019.<sup>36</sup> Seventy-eight per cent of member and donor survey respondents felt that SPC is appropriately resourced to meet member needs and deliver against regional commitments (agree or strongly agree) vs 22% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing (Figure 9). Several respondents that disagreed with the statement referenced the gap between funding and absorptive capacity, including insufficient human resources to deliver against budgets.

**Figure 9:**

**SPC is appropriately resourced to meet member needs and deliver against regional commitments**



Funded partnerships built on trust and multi-year and flexible approaches enable SPC to progress in key areas. Many stakeholders spoke of the critical role of SPC’s partnerships with Australia (DFAT) and New Zealand (MFAT), echoing findings from both the MTR of MFAT’s Core Funding (2020–24)<sup>37</sup> and of the Australia–SPC Partnership evaluation.<sup>38</sup> Such partnerships facilitate progress in priority areas, such as delivering gender-inclusive and socially responsible programs (see Finding 7).

SPC must manage donor expectations whilst meeting member priorities, negotiating occasionally opposing agendas. Efforts to provide flexible funding that meets member needs are underway. The inaugural (2023)

35 [SPC Financial Statements for 2023](#)

36 [SPC Financial Statements for 2020](#)

37 Winterford K, Gero A, Low I, Robinson L (2022) Evaluation Report: Australia-SPC Partnership evaluation 2022: prepared for The Pacific Community (SPC), University of Technology Sydney.

38 *ibid.*



Resource Mobilisation Strategy (RMS)<sup>39</sup> outlines SPC's approach to funding, underpinned by three pillars: Income flexibility, SPC Value, and One SPC needs. The RMS requires funding partners to provide an enabling environment for SPC in meeting member needs.

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*SPC just need to be careful they stay focused and don't follow the money and other work that is not core work for SPC.<sup>40</sup>*

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*[This review] could do something that is quite hard for us to do, which is to point out the fundamental tension between organisational aspirations and project delivery model. Members like us to have strategy and business plans, but then a donor comes along with a project and says do this – we try and make these things consistent but there is a fundamental tension between those.<sup>41</sup>*

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### SPC as a CROP agency

SPC is regarded as a CROP agency with valuable scientific and technical capacity and for their role in driving specific regional priorities in a way that complements other CROP agencies' efforts. Nevertheless, stakeholders called for SPC to:

- Share resources and information more regularly, particularly at the sectoral level to help connect partners and work in a more coherent way and for greater impact
- Avoid 'mission creep' via sticking clearly to its mandate and respecting those of CROP peers
- Coordinate better with other CROP agencies and retain commitment to CROP harmonisation.

Several stakeholders reflected that these challenges are not unique to SPC but relevant across CROP.

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*Coordination with other CROP [agencies] is in process and part of a broader, common challenge amongst CROPs. There are times when we experience mandate creeps – which are attended to in the ongoing organisations and meetings we have. Where we fail to strengthen partnership is in working with national government when we do not plan and coordinate and then overload and duplicate work at the national level.<sup>42</sup>*

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#### Box 4: Partnerships into the future

Many stakeholders desire more and deeper engagement and partnership with SPC. For example, there is clear appetite for SPC to form stronger civil society partnerships and partnerships with private sector and other organisations.

The review team could not identify a clear definition of partnership at SPC, which obscured understanding of who SPC partners with, why, in what ways, and where those partnerships are held. SPC's Partnerships, Integration and Resource Mobilisation (PIRMO) unit focuses on funding partnerships. SPC should define partnerships and outline a consistent approach for managing them.

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39 [https://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/SPC/Corporate/Resource\\_Mobilisation\\_Strategy\\_2023\\_2025.pdf](https://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/SPC/Corporate/Resource_Mobilisation_Strategy_2023_2025.pdf)

40 Interview 3

41 Interview 44

42 Interview 33



### Finding 2: Key takeaways

- SPC’s positive relationships contribute to it being a well-regarded and well-resourced agency
- SPC is valued for convening across technical areas to meet regional priorities. This is resource intensive and could be strategically and centrally supported
- Funding partners regard SPC highly, and SPC should continue to work with metropolitan members and donors to obtain more flexible core resourcing
- SPC is an influential CROP agency but can strengthen its relevant practices, including resource and information sharing, avoiding mission creep and ongoing commitment to coordination and CROP harmonization
- SPC manages complex partnerships of considerable depth and breadth. There is appetite for more and deeper engagement between SPC and partners, including civil society and private sector organisations, which would benefit from a strategic organisation-wide approach to partnerships



### Finding 3: Fit-for purpose governance

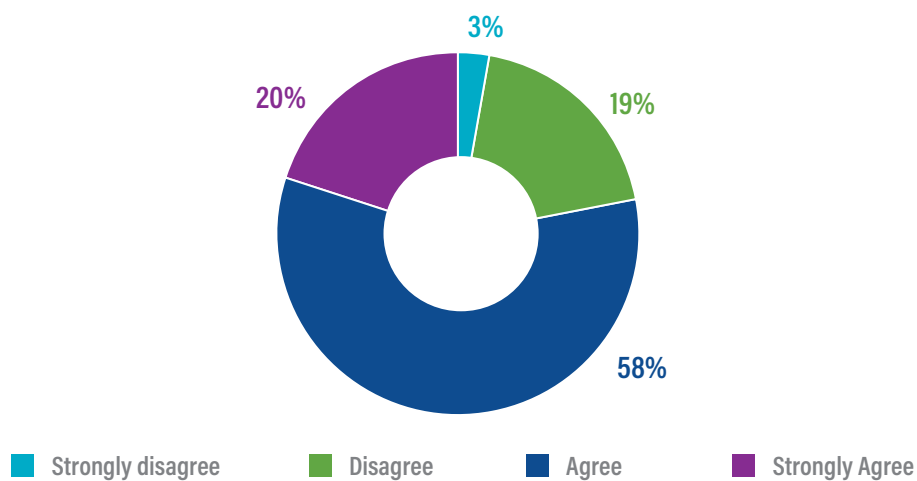


#### SPC has robust, grounded governance arrangements but critical disconnects are creating barriers to effectiveness and efficiency

SPC’s governance arrangements across multiple levels are perceived and experienced differently across stakeholder groups. For example, most members and partners agree that governance arrangements are fit for purpose (Figure 10), whilst SPC staff largely feel that its governance arrangements are bureaucratic, layered and complex (Figure 11).

Figure 10

#### SPC is appropriately resourced to meet member needs and deliver against regional commitments



Both governance arrangements and communication around governance could be strengthened, although this review did not find strong appetite for significant changes. The 2014 governance review put forward important framing that could guide any shifts in governance to make current arrangements work more effectively after this IIR. Framed in the 2014 review as a ‘conservative’ approach, this review proposes to maintain current arrangements but make them work better.<sup>43</sup> Box 5 provides an overview of some of the challenges and linkages between governance and communication.

**Box 5: Complexity and confusion: The critical role of communication around governance**

Stakeholders, especially SPC staff, lack clarity around SPC governance, with perceptions including that it is complex, layered, bureaucratic, slow and not fit for purpose. Figure 11 provides a snapshot of the terminology used in consultations with SPC staff and members to describe SPC’s governance.

*Figure 11: Word cloud – SPC staff and members’ descriptions of SPC’s governance*



Efforts have been made to strengthen communication around governance, both internally and externally. For example, SPC’s governance compendium was updated during this review (6th edition, October 2024) and its usability was improved, and videos are available that summarise governance within SPC. Nonetheless, confusion around governance prevails.

Strategic communication about the technical and scientific work of SPC in a way that resonates with Foreign Affairs representatives is difficult. SPC must continue to work effectively across technical divisions and with Foreign Affairs to support enhanced information sharing and understanding (explored further below).

**Upwards Governance: SPC and its members**

Many members feel well supported by the Secretariat through their guiding as part of the governance processes, specifically their involvement in the CRGA and CRGA Subcommittee for the Strategic Plan. Members feel that the organisation is effective, communication timely and of high quality, and that they are actively and proactively supported to engage meaningfully in governance. For example, interviewees spoke about receiving briefing materials in advance of meetings and being well supported with transport or technology to simplify participation. The role of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) as one of the three subsidiary governance bodies is discussed further under Finding 5 and was welcomed as advancing

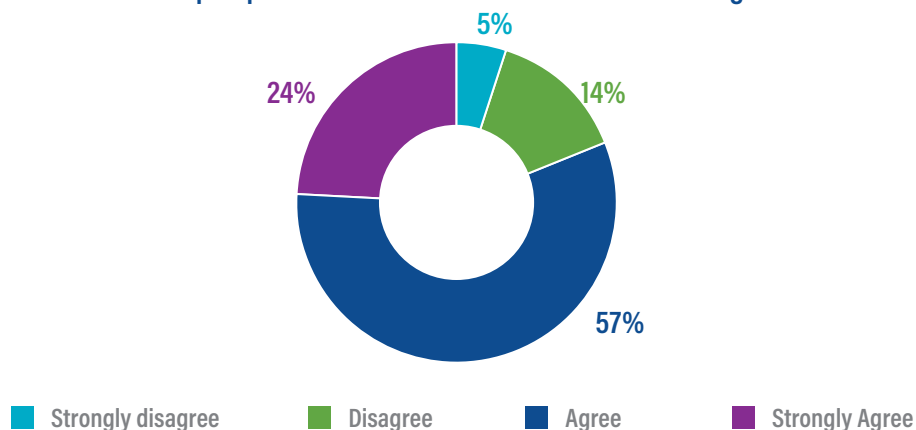
43 Bazely P, Liston T (2014) Review of SPC’s governance arrangements – final report to the working group.

risk management within SPC. The role of the Pacific Board for Educational Quality was less visible during stakeholder consultations, suggesting that it is less well recognised as part of formal governance.

The perception of appropriateness of existing arrangements is further validated by the survey results, which show that members and partners felt that SPC largely centralises the perspectives of members in decision-making and direction setting, as highlighted in Figure 12.

**Figure 12:**

**SPC centralises the perspectives of its members in decision-making and direction setting**



This review found that whilst SPC’s governance processes mostly work well, there could be more time in agendas for discussion and less for update presentations. Lighter agendas and shorter presentations would allow more space for this dialogue. Figure 13 provides a snapshot of the CRGA evaluation feedback with respect to time for discussion, which aligns with other evidence collected during this review.

**Figure 13: Creating space and time for discussion**



The most widely reported challenge with the current governance arrangements is the perceived disconnect between the member representatives (who sit within Ministries or Departments of Foreign Affairs within PICTs) and technical line ministry representatives, who are closer to the day-to-day work of SPC at the divisional level. In some cases, there is no consistent process for technical line ministries to formally or structurally feed into governance, creating gaps in two-way information flows. These processes sit at the Member level, so are largely outside the Secretariat’s scope of influence, though highlighting some members’ effective processes may help others strengthen theirs. Further, time and investment are needed to ensure that new representatives have the information required to feed into critical discussions and decision-making (notably at CRGA).

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*The tricky thing with governance is you will have different people turning up to CRGA. So, there is something to recommend that Pacific countries to be consistent in their membership. Not getting consistent country positions as well that is the other thing to come through and reminder to SPC members that they ensure their positions and interventions are consistent.*<sup>44</sup>

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### **Inwards Governance: The Secretariat**

There is scope for improvement of governance within SPC itself. Whilst some stakeholders welcomed the establishment of the SLT, it functions as an advisory group, not a decision-making body. Some participants revealed that they did not understand the role of the SLT and its relationship to the Executive. Further, some staff had little knowledge of what is discussed at SLT and the Executive, how decisions are made and how those are communicated.

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*The decision-making body (Exec) – doesn't have minutes/papers or records of decisions that were taken. I don't know how often they meet or what is on the agenda.*<sup>45</sup>

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Lower levels of governance within SPC, for example at the programme level, are seen as enabling effective communication about progress and improving programme delivery but sit outside of the established governance mechanism. If perpetuated at scale, this approach could lead to fragmented and inconsistent governance and undermine progress towards Goal 4 (see Finding 7). As such, program- or project-level governance should be scrutinised as to fit within SPC's broader governance structure and strategic direction, particularly given the number of projects and volume of project funding.

To strengthen internal governance, some participants suggested an interim layer between SLT and the Executive might be a more appropriate decision-making body in support of the Director General and Deputy Directors General, though this would complicate an already complex governance architecture. Alternatives included revisiting the SLT's TOR to provide more decision-making authority. Further, staff called for more transparency and greater communication around senior leadership's decision-making.



#### **Finding 3: Key takeaways**

- SPC's governance structure is largely fit for purpose, with minor changes required to strengthen governance between SPC and its members, and internally
- Clear, strategic and simple communication around governance is needed to deepen understanding and engagement with staff and members
- Members feel well supported in governance processes, but want more space and time for robust discussion
- There is scope to strengthen the role and accountability of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) through revisiting the SLT ToR

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44 Interview 11

45 Interview 1





## Finding 4: SPC’s operating style



The operating challenges SPC faces are well known, well documented and have been exacerbated due to rapid growth. Change is underway but progress takes time and requires investment and collective effort.

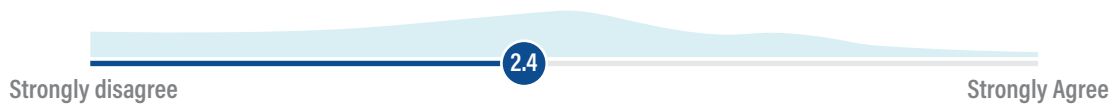
*[SPC needs to] strengthen the [operational] side of the shop to keep up and sustain growth. Procurement can’t manage the volume ... we don’t have knowledge information systems across Divisions, recruitment cannot move roles fast enough ...this is the foundation of what our technical work should be able to sit on.<sup>46</sup>*

### Legacy challenges

Ten reviews over the last 10 years, in addition to other evaluative activities and the development of the Strategic Plan 2022–2031, mean SPC’s key operational challenges are well documented. In this review, thirty per cent of member and partner survey respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed that SPC’s service delivery to PICTs was efficient, meaning this statement had one of the highest proportions of negative responses. Further, when asked whether SPC’s operating style is fit for purpose, more than half of staff disagreed – the lowest-scoring survey item (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Staff perceptions on SPC’s operating model.

#### SPC’s operating style is fit for purpose



Key operational challenges include:

- Lack of appropriate resources for centralised functions, including finance, procurement, grants, legal and HR
- Systems being outdated or unable to cater for organisational growth
- Processes that have not been updated (alongside systems) or that are perceived to be overly bureaucratic and therefore inefficient
- Restrictive, project-based funding models that do not allow for investment in central functions (such as HR, procurement, finance, grants and legal)
- An entrenched culture of siloes that undermines intentions to shift ways of working, despite progress (see also Finding 7).

Many of these operational challenges are well documented and stem from common factors. The most frequently cited barrier to more effective and efficient ways of working was lack of appropriate resources, primarily with respect to key business units. This lack of resources creates, with the most common examples related to delays in procurement that greatly reduce SPC’s ability to deliver services in an efficient and timely way.

46 Interview 30

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*We need to strengthen [the] Operations and Management Directorate<sup>47</sup> side of the shop then we won't be able to keep up and sustain growth we have at the moment. Procurement can't manage the volume, not getting things done fast enough.<sup>48</sup>*

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## Existing and planned investments

SPC's systems, structures and processes are struggling to cope with the speed and scale of its growth (see Figure 4). Examples include procurement systems, knowledge and information management systems, and crisis management systems and processes. Some of the challenges relate to human resourcing and capabilities within key units (see also Finding 6), but system strengthening requires significant investment. This review found several examples of investments in key systems taking place, including:

- Automation of SPC's travel system, which aims to 'boost efficiency and integrate advanced mechanisms across procurement, HR and communications'<sup>49</sup>
- Implementation of a finance shared services model<sup>50</sup>
- Development of the RMS, prioritising more flexible revenue streams (see Finding 2)
- A dedicated Grants and Collaborations team (distinct from procurement) to manage the organisation's grants and collaboration projects with implementing partners more effectively<sup>51</sup>
- Significant investments in HR operations (discussed in further detail under Finding 6 below)
- Revised procurement policy update, planned to go live in the first quarter of 2025
- Broader Manual of Finance Policies, planned for the first half of 2025
- Procurement systems improvements

Changes resulting from these initiatives will take time to have effect and become visible across SPC and externally. They are unlikely to have shifted perceptions of inefficiency and ineffectiveness yet. Their impacts should be monitored and communicated effectively both internally and externally.

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*When you look through the archives don't think SPC has not invested we have done a lot to strengthen systems and processes- but I think we could connect things more, looking at things in one perspective that is how we have done things.<sup>52</sup>*

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During this review, a business case was being considered by the Executive to inject critical resources (an additional 27 roles) into procurement, travel, grants and legal. Whilst not all positions are funded and the results of any new roles in these areas remains to be seen, though demonstrates that SPC is working to solve its resource problems and boost efficient and effective delivery in critical areas. Additional planned initiatives to strengthen operations include a detailed operational review, which will continue to drive SPC's operational improvements and implement necessary changes, and intentionally linking with broader resource mobilisation efforts.<sup>53</sup>

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47 Renamed to Operations and Integration

48 Interview 30

49 [Pacific Community Results Report 2023](#), p. 64

50 *ibid*

51 SPC CRGA 54 (2024) [Working Paper no. 6](#)

52 Interview 43

53 SPC CRGA 54 (2024) [Working Paper no. 6](#)

### Box 6: Working with the status quo – making the best use of project funding

The limitations and risks associated with project-based funding relative to more flexible, long-term funding models are well known to SPC, and it is working to change the balance of funding and models to better support centralised resourcing. In addition to strategic shifts towards more flexible funding in line with One SPC intentions (see Finding 7) are recent efforts to change cost recovery models. Increasing the amount of SPC’s overall budget that is funded through flexible core funding from 20% to 30% and obtaining more flexible and core funding will enable SPC to focus on its strategic goals. These shifts will drive increased operational efficiencies, enabling more effective delivery at the project level. With a larger and consistent core and flexible funding base, ongoing project funding will become less of an operational barrier<sup>54</sup> and enable targeted and necessary initiatives.

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*SPC is not alone in its funding dilemma – because its budget setting is 20% flexible core funding and 80% project based funding – but now it is good that they have a resource mobilisation strategy. We see it with their procurement and sometimes with HR and doing their best but SPC continues to grow and are their systems keeping up and how to do this when budget models are not flexible to do this as well.<sup>55</sup>*

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During consultations, internal and external participants suggested SPC should reflect on its internal systems to ensure it can keep up with programme implementation and deliver on its commitments. Such reflection can help SPC recalibrate its operations, align resources with priorities, and eliminate inefficiencies. Pausing to reflect is not just a one-time event – it should lead to a continuous improvement mindset in which systems are assessed and refined regularly, ensuring that the organisation stays adaptive and responsive to evolving needs and that resources are aligned accordingly (see further Box 7).

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54 Winterford K, Gero A, Low I, Robinson L (2022) Evaluation Report: Australia-SPC Partnership evaluation 2022. University of Technology Sydney.

55 Interview 11

Photo: Joydeep Pal on Unsplash





### Box 7: The value of strategic pauses in organisational planning

Strategic pauses, a strategic process aimed at strengthening the organisation's foundation, help organisations adapt to change by fostering deliberate decision-making, optimising resources, and aligning actions with long-term goals. They enhance decision-making through strategy assessments, mitigate risks by addressing potential challenges, resource optimisation by reallocating investments to high-impact areas, and enabling coherence between short-term actions and overarching objectives.<sup>56</sup> For instance, in 2023, UNICEF undertook a strategic consolidation to enhance programme effectiveness, focusing on optimising resource allocation and strengthening internal systems with a thematic funding approach, which allowed the organisation to better align its initiatives with its Strategic Plan for 2022–2025.<sup>57</sup>

A strategic pause would also allow SPC to reassess its strategies and actions, align with long-term objectives like the 2050 Blue Pacific Strategy, and strengthen internal systems including finance, human resources, and procurement to enhance operational efficiency. By strengthening existing programs and building cohesion through the One SPC approach, SPC can improve service delivery, address capacity gaps, and mitigate risks like resource strain. This is not a pause on progress but rather a strategic recalibration which would enable SPC to consolidate its strengths, scale up what is working, and refine its operational model to better serve members.

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*Systems are way behind and it's not keeping up with expansion of organisation so at the highest level need to take strategic level to pause and catch up in our enabling support systems. All these things cannot happen while we are expanding – otherwise we will be playing catch up.<sup>58</sup>*

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*[We need to] reconcile the growth with the services that can support that growth and ambitions we have about the organisation. Make a decision about how far we can grow until OMD can catch up. We need to sit for where we are and refocus back on the members in the way are doing the engagement work with them which is critical work at the moment.<sup>59</sup>*

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#### Finding 4: Key takeaways

- Key operational challenges are well documented, as are their impacts on SPC's ability to meet member needs and regional priorities
- Recent and planned investments in key areas including procurement, travel, finance modelling and human resources (HR) operations, as well as mapping operational processes and barriers, are underway. These investments require close monitoring to determine their impact and further course corrections
- SPC should pause on growth/expansion to allow time for the above investments to take hold and their impacts to be clear. This will allow a more informed approach to future shifts

56 Bryson J & George B, Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations: A Guide to Strengthening and Sustaining Organizational Achievement, 2018; Tuff G, Goldbach S and Johnson J, Harvard Business Review, [When an Active Pause Is the Best Strategic Choice](#), 2024

57 UNICEF Global Annual Results Report 2023

58 Interview 53

59 Interview 30



## Finding 5: Strengthening approaches to risk identification and management



### Despite recent advancements in identification and management of risks, stronger organisation-wide approaches need to be rolled out, and risk management devolved and institutionalised

The need to strengthen approaches to risk management have been identified and actioned at several levels over recent years. Risk has been elevated within the governance structure of the organisation with the establishment of the ARC following the 2012 Independent External Review of SPC. This is seen as a step towards a standardised approach to risk management.

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*ARC assists the CRGA in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities of the financial reporting process, systems of internal control, audit, risk management, effectiveness and efficiency of operations, and compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.<sup>60</sup>*

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The ARC provides assurance to the CRGA that SPC is operating in line with approved policies and procedures and with probity, professionalism and accountability. The ARC has engaged external accounting and audit firms to address priorities within the CRGA-approved risk framework. The ARC's role does not include the management of risk; this function sits within senior leadership.

Strengthening of SPC's in-house internal audit function is an important initiative that will drive further improvement in auditing and risk. The review further found that SPC has strengthened grant management with support from the European Union (EU) Project Management Unit, which was established to mitigate the risk of non-compliance to EU funding requirements and ineligible costs.

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*SPC did the right thing on internal audit function to highlight what we need to do. We have multiple partners auditing us. The real bit is how to prioritise and how to get there.<sup>61</sup>*

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The review identified that SPC's culture of risk ownership and accountability is weak. Stronger ownership of risk is needed across multiple levels of management in project planning, investments, partnerships, and operational processes to ensure risks are identified and mitigated proactively.

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*[Risk management] doesn't really seem to be valued – it is not given the attention or the value – everyone is so busy, has so much to do etc but no ownership.<sup>62</sup>*

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Despite stronger risk processes, operational risk continues to pose problems. The review took place at the outset of the Noumea crisis, which exemplified the operational risk resulting from the existing structure. The crisis reduced staff safety and wellbeing, as well as business continuity; several key functions housed in Noumea suffered from too few staff, an issue the crisis worsened. In addition to more resources in these functions (as identified in Finding 4 above), further decentralisation of authority and greater technical capability at the sub-regional level would help to share this risk (see also Finding 1). Despite this, valuable lessons have been applied to strengthen crisis management (Box 7).

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60 Excerpt from ARC Charter, The Pacific Community Governance Compendium, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., 2024. p.143

61 Interview 32

62 Staff open door consultation participant



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*The crisis that hit the Secretariat in May quickly brought to light the existing and already known gaps in some of the organisation's key supporting functions, and without which SPC's activities would be compromised. Several support functions, in particular the Grants and Procurement teams, Legal and PIRMO, which were already heavily understaffed before the crisis, given the growth of the organisation in the last five years.<sup>63</sup>*

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### **Box 8: Progress in business continuity in the face of uncertainty – from COVID to Noumea<sup>64</sup>**

The 2024 Noumea crisis hampered operations and business continuity. Specific challenges for staff included psychological stress, road blockages, home burglary/damage, car theft/carjacking, disruptions to supply chains, reduced access to essential services, civil unrest, disruption to the schooling system and travel limitations.

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*The crisis in Noumea has moved us to do a lot more around staff and staff wellbeing.<sup>65</sup>*

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Lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic drove effective responses to the Noumea crisis, including:

- Establishment of a crisis management team in the first week of the crisis
- Centralisation of staff wellbeing
- Activation of crisis communications
- Business continuity planning and ongoing programme delivery planning.

Lessons from the Noumea crisis include the need for surge capacity to support sustainable crisis management, including in leadership and corporate service areas, and for specific teams to manage time-sensitive projects. These processes, in addition to further decentralisation across the region, are critical to mitigating risks to SPC's wellbeing and operability in future events.

Inefficiencies in HR processes – including recruitment, onboarding, and career development – can make it difficult for SPC to attract and retain talent, including from the Pacific region. This is considered a significant risk to SPCs' ability to deliver on its mandate and commitments.

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*One of the greatest risks right now is HR and personnel retention given the quickly changing environment and staff retention, not only situation in New Caledonia but things are becoming more risky and I don't believe SPC is keeping up. Where can this sit? this should be done better; in [our Division] we have immense difficulty in recruiting people into technical role can take up to a year sometimes; so if we don't have this primary capability in SPC this is a risk and this should be on the list for executive.<sup>66</sup>*

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Further, when funding is project-based (see also Finding 4 above), staff positions are often tied to specific projects, which can lead to job insecurity and staff turnover when projects end, or new funding is not secured. This is especially true for technical and programme staff whose roles are dependent on specific grants and in an organisation grappling with HR challenges, as explored further in Finding 6.

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63 SPC/CRGA (2024) [Working Paper no. 6](#): Transforming Institutional Effectiveness and Resilience – Business Continuity in the Face of Disruption

64 New Caledonia Civil Unrest 2024: Our People, Our Response. Agenda Item 1, CRGA Subcommittee 24

65 Interview 8

66 Staff open door consultation participant



### Finding 5: Key takeaways

- Recent progress reflects SPC’s investment in strengthening risk identification and management, though some areas still need improvement
- Key ongoing risks include operational risk (as highlighted by the Noumea crisis), HR risk, and risks related to project-based funding
- A stronger culture of risk ownership and accountability is required, including devolving risk management to staff



### Finding 6: Driving progress to strengthen HR approaches



**SPC is enhancing its HR systems and processes, but clear communication about the improvements and ongoing efforts is lacking.**

*No clarity in HR policies that haven’t been upgraded. We ask HR difficult questions, and they say ‘the policy says this’ but sometimes the policy is outdated. Systems and processes need to help us deliver this strategy.<sup>67</sup>*

SPC is strengthening HR processes, systems and capability, in response to identified challenges and risks, including those highlighted in the 2023 HR audit report. The audit found very high risks included limitations in HR information systems, the absence of mandatory HR compliance training for all employees, and the lack of proper organisation-wide orientation for new hires.<sup>68</sup> The audit report provided a strong basis for improvements across HR, including frequent reporting to the ARC to track momentum in achieving key risk priorities.

The following initiatives have taken place or are underway:

- **HR restructuring:** into three capability areas – Operations and Advisory; Remuneration, Systems and Performance Management; and Recruitment and Strategy. The overall objective of this restructuring is to strengthen operational effectiveness
- **Investments in system improvement priorities:** priorities were being reviewed in 2024 with the ICT committee, with a view to implementing them by December 2025<sup>69</sup>
- **Progress on compliance training:** including Anti-Harassment and Discrimination modules, French translation being prioritised, and Domestic Violence and Child Protection modules to be developed in Quarter 1 of 2025
- **SPC-wide orientation:** developing an SPC-wide orientation for new hires, with external resources being sourced to implement the draft orientation framework (September 2024).

67 Staff open door consultation participant

68 HR Audit (Internal Audit report).

69 As identified in a paper from HR to the ARC in September 2024, this timeline is likely to be pushed out

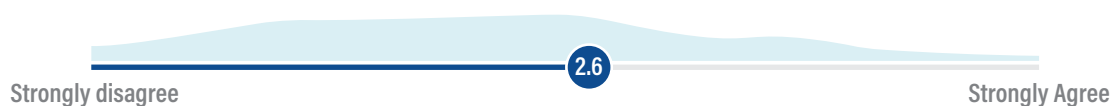
Other initiatives designed to achieve high risk priorities include the roll-out of HR standard operating procedures (SOPs), review of the Manual of Staff Policies, clarity on probation processes and performance management planning, and more consistent updating of the HR risk register, including tracking of mitigation actions. Other recently implemented and planned updates include a performance management review and steps to enhance the performance development system to enable better professional development management, and HR data analytics reporting (SPC Human Capital Analytical Report) as one tool that can enable senior management to make informed decisions about workforce and succession planning. The organisation is also launching the first Learning and Development Adviser role – another example of investment in staff capability and retention. Strong leadership commitment enables progress in strengthening systems and processes.

*Put in place solid data analytics called the SPC human capital analytical report to create a clear picture of what workforce and succession planning is for SPC. ... allows the senior leadership to look at data analytics and see where workforce sits, when to start recruitment process etc. and that data is shared with Executive. The same is done with all divisions where every 6 months we report on workforce so they can manage better.<sup>70</sup>*

The review found that while SPC’s HR systems and processes have improved (as identified above), communication about these improvements across the organisation is poor. Many of SPC’s staff do not feel that SPC’s HR capability (across the organisation, not specific to the HR team) is fit for purpose, as Figure 15 shows.

**Figure 15: Staff reflections on SPC’s HR capability**

**SPC’s HR capability is fit for purpose**



The senior leadership team in HR provide updates to Directors, ARC, CRGA and to staff via a range of internal mechanisms. However, the review identified that large gaps remain in SPC-wide awareness of HR developments, including changes to policies and procedures.

**Right people, right roles? Recruitment and retention**

Views diverge as to whether SPC is succeeding in recruiting and retaining the right mix of skills and capabilities, with some positions – technical and scientific, partnership, and resource mobilisation – proving particularly hard to fill. However, review participants acknowledged the importance of investing in the right people with the right skills in critical centralised functions (such as procurement) to maximise operational efficiency (see also Finding 4). Attracting professionals with strong relevant technical backgrounds and upskilling or reskilling existing staff will enhance effectiveness, efficiency, risk mitigation and resource use, strengthen programme implementation and contribute to the success of development initiatives in the Pacific. Stakeholders also spoke to the limitation of project funding in SPC’s ability to retain quality people in roles, due to project-based contracts and job insecurity.

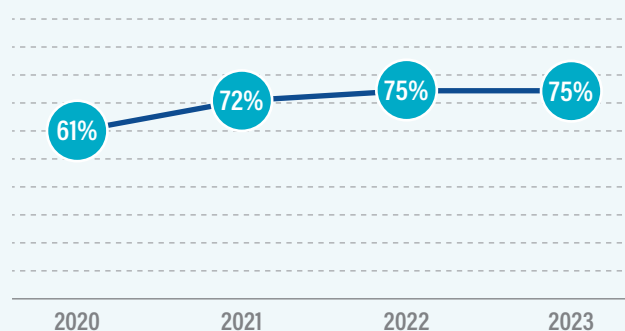
70 Staff open door consultation participant

### Box 9: The centrality of Pacific talent

Internal and external stakeholders recognised the need for SPC to continue to strengthen its focus on Pacific-based talent, in line with several previous reviews.<sup>71</sup> Progress is being made in tracking and enabling Pacific Islander recruitment, with hires from the Pacific increasing from 61% of total hires in 2020 to 75% in 2023, as Figure 16 shows. The numbers of Pacific Islanders are highest between bands<sup>72</sup> 7,8,9 and 10, where numbers are significantly higher than non-Pacific Islanders. At Band 13 there is nearly equal distribution, and more non-Pacific Islanders in roles in Bands 14 and 15.<sup>73</sup>

Figure 16:

Pacific Islanders as a % of new hires



Stakeholders strongly felt that SPC should continue to leverage Pacific talent, rather than relying too heavily on external global experts who may not fully understand the region's unique needs. Within divisions such as the Education Quality and Assessment Program (EQAP) and Fisheries Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems (FAME), Pacific early-career professionals have progressively moved into senior professional roles, increasing ownership of regional projects and initiatives and retaining knowledge and skills within the region. Stories and case studies of Pacific-based leaders will outline a clear pathway for others to follow. If more expertise is required, international experts can be commissioned to train, upskill and mentor local employees, ensuring that knowledge stays within the region. Secondments can also build capabilities at the country and regional levels.

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*Too many people from outside the Pacific on international bands, we have capable and educated people in the Pacific.*<sup>74</sup>

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Efforts to make HR systems and processes more enabling for Pacific Islanders are underway, but further work is required to remove barriers for Pacific talent. Regional experience should be weighted more heavily than (for example) bilingual skills or tertiary education.

71 2018 partnership survey; 2022 Friends of the Chair review

72 A band in SPC's salary structure refers to a job level with a set salary range based on market evaluation. PAI are positions advertised internationally. These positions are required to be advertised in the international market and fall in bands 8 to 18 of SPC's salary scale. PAL are positions advertised locally. These positions are required to be advertised in the local market of the duty station and fall in bands 1 to 7 of SPC's salary scale. SPC Manual of Staff Policies 2020

73 HR data at end September 2024. HR response to the IIR PPNT

74 Staff open door consultation participant



### Finding 6: Key takeaways

- HR processes, systems and capabilities are being strengthened in response to identified risks and challenges
- Despite recent improvements, communication around strengthened HR approaches remains ineffectual
- The right people must be recruited to the right roles, and barriers to recruitment of Pacific-based staff must be addressed



### Finding 7: Implementation progress of the Strategic Plan: Goal 4 and KFA 7



Investments in Goal 4 and KFA 7 are beginning to bear fruit, though progress remains uneven and significant cultural shifts are still required.

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*There are three things that SPC is doing great: 1) Flagships as a vehicle to move the work in a more integrated way, with the people-centred approach as the driver 2) Women in leadership program, while a first for CROP agencies, it is definitely a programme that can be used for behavioural change, promote leadership, create male champions and strengthen gender equality. 3) Promoting a one-SPC and one-CROP way of working. This shows us as an exemplar within the region.<sup>75</sup>*

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The Strategic Plan 2022–2031 outlines SPC’s commitment to improving its institutional effectiveness (Key Focus Area 7 – KFA 7) and delivering integrated programs through streamlined services (Goal 4). SPC has made progress on these ambitions, although progress is still required in key areas to achieve the future state articulated in Goal 7, and to achieve Goal 4 (see Figure 16).

Figure 16: Goal 4 and KFA 7



### Goal 4: Delivering integrated programs

The review highlighted that whilst there has been progress on some fronts towards achieving Goal 4, there is room for more. Whilst most (64%) member and partner survey respondents agreed that SPC was making tangible progress towards Goal 4, a large minority (34%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed. Whilst staff reflections also demonstrate that significant progress is still to be made, positive examples of progress

75 Member survey respondent



include the number of requests that SPC receive for assistance, the positive feedback that is received from members and SPC's reputation as the 'go-to or agency of choice'.<sup>76</sup>

The progress being made by the flagships is the most recognised contribution towards 'long-term programmes that bring together SPC's sectoral capabilities for greater impact in addressing key development opportunities and challenges in the Pacific region'.<sup>77</sup> While progress across the flagships is uneven, the initiatives exemplify SPC's efforts to tackle some of the region's most pressing issues through new ways of working and creating an integrated platform for thematic action.

Visibility of the flagships is strong internally and externally, but stakeholders gave few examples of progress towards integrated approaches elsewhere (a few mentioned the Pacific Data Hub and Digital Earth Pacific). The review also found a disparity between the significant focus on the flagships as an integrated way of working and other efforts to integrate approaches across SPC. Box 9 provides more detail around the flagships and ways to strengthen them.

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*We've focused on the flagships, or narrow aspects of shared services etc. Both these things are important, but they are less than half of it. I've been distressed to see that in workshops, we talk about the flagships – they are important at leading it but they aren't the most important point of collaborating across Divisions.*<sup>78</sup>

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76 Staff survey respondent

77 [SPC Strategic Plan 2022 – 2031 Glossary](#)

78 Interview 1

Photo: Jalan Kopeng on Unsplash



## Box 10: Changing ways of working through the flagships

Flagship programs provide a unified approach to the four priority issues (see below), both across SPC but also in its approaches across the region. They enable SPC capabilities across Divisions to work in transdisciplinary ways at scale and mobilise resources to match ambitions. Some flagship programs have contributed to shifts in member thinking towards system-based approaches, such as moving from food security to food systems. Successes include improved product visibility and collaboration across divisions and resource mobilisation.

The flagship programs' main achievements in 2023 are listed below.<sup>79</sup>

- **The Climate Change Flagship** enhanced capabilities by recruiting specialised staff and linking leadership with expert groups, securing climate finance, and launching regional climate data products.
- **The Food Systems Flagship** established an interdisciplinary working group to foster collaboration with private sector and international stakeholders and build engagement through events like COP28.
- **The Gender Equality Flagship** progressed its design phase by incorporating culture and traditional knowledge, futures foresight, and facilitated discussions with Pacific Island leaders to advance gender equality programming.
- **The Oceans Flagship** utilised a theory of change process, including capability mapping, and integrated scientific knowledge with indigenous wisdom in initiatives like the Ocean Portal and new coordination roles.

Despite the Flagships' progress, opportunities for more focused action exist, including:

- Varied internal update, with some flagships having greater visibility and buy-in than others
- Differences in resources mobilised or available across the flagships
- Discrepancies in how the flagships are understood
- Differences in the degree to which member priorities are centralised
- SPC systems and processes not being designed to support integrated initiatives such as the flagships.

Specific enablers of focused action include ongoing leadership commitment, flexible funding and peer-to-peer learning. There is also scope to learn from the flagships to integrate approaches more widely across SPC to continue to evolve its ways of working, achieve Goal 4, and ensure that integration is seen as generalised good practice rather than requiring a specific programmatic label.

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There is a great need in shared understanding in SPC what a flagship is. I saw it as integrated approach to programming ... the flagship is more than that, it is a way of working.<sup>80</sup>

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79 [2023 Results Report](#)

80 Interview 35

## KFA 7: Transforming Institutional Effectiveness

Key Focus Area 7 is widely recognised as a critical underpinning area of focus for SPC's success, although also understood as complex, with a diverse range of priorities that must be addressed to achieve the Future State 2031. Seventy-five per cent of member and partner survey respondents felt that SPC is making tangible progress towards KFA 7, with 19% disagreeing and 4% strongly disagreeing. Specific reasons for disagreement included prevailing siloes and a lack of streamlined services and disconnects between technical divisions and procurement and administrative functions (see also Finding 4). The importance of KFA 7 is well recognised at the Executive level.

SPC is recognised for its commitment to strengthening integrated governance across the Blue Pacific architecture and shifting towards a One CROP approach. The desire to achieve these goals was highlighted during the review, with members in particular looking to SPC and CROP peers to coordinate and collaborate to improve efficiencies in their engagements with members.

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*[SPC should...] link more with other institutions at a regional level and have a joint message.<sup>81</sup>*

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*In order for SPC to deliver on its aspirations in its strategic plan in relation to Goal 4 and KFA 7 it has to improve cohesion and collaboration within CROP agencies and other regional organisations to integrate and better streamline global and regional commitments.<sup>82</sup>*

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SPC is well regarded for its focus and investment in regional data ecosystems and data governance, with both the Pacific Data Hub and Digital Earth Pacific being recognised not only for being examples of integrated approaches, but for empowering members to use evidence for decision-making.

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*In the scientific and technical capability, we have been able to support members in areas like Digital Earth and making use of space assets which have been free for us to use for the last 30 years but we just did not do it, and other regions in the world are doing it, now we trying to make that work for the Pacific.<sup>83</sup>*

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Examples of well-regarded institutional reforms that are contributing to KFA 7 include SPC's commitment to strengthening MEL processes and systems, contributing to better evidence-informed decision-making and accountability. The leadership of SPC in MEL is respected at the national level as paving the way to stronger MEL practices and serving as a blueprint for others, particularly CROP peers. SPC's MEL workforce expanded from six in 2016 to 30+ in 2023, shifting its focus from evaluation to system strengthening and adopting a regional stance, including contributions to the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and PacMEL.<sup>84</sup> Initiatives that seek to strengthen collective approaches in this space (such as MELnet), as well as concerted efforts to centralise and strengthen results reporting across the organisation and for the Strategic Plan via the Strategic Results Framework, illustrate how investment and intention can lead to significant structural shifts.

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81 Member and partner survey respondent

82 Interview 46

83 Interview 30

84 [2023 Results Report](#)

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*No one else in the Pacific has MEL capability like them ... they are the best in the game.*<sup>85</sup>

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SPC's focus on social and environmental responsibility (SER) has enabled it to deliver inclusive, people-centred and environmentally responsible development programs, as stakeholders recognised. Progress in mainstreaming gender equality is also occurring, demonstrating SPC's capacity to address priority issues that transcend technical siloes. Member and partner survey respondents highlighted the importance of SPC's work on transforming gender approaches within the organisation and across the region. There is an appetite to achieve equal gender participation across all technical and scientific areas. Box 10 provides another example of significant progress towards gender equality in the region.

### **Box 11: Supporting the first sub-regional gender equality framework for the Pacific**

Endorsed by leaders at the 25th MIF,<sup>86</sup> the Micronesia Gender Equality Framework reflects the sub-region's commitment to progress gender equality and represents the first gender equality framework committed to at a sub-regional level.

In 2019 the MIF endorsed the Gender Equality Committee (GEC) as the 14th sectoral committee of the MIF, and in 2023 the 25th MIF Communique directed the GEC to develop an MIF Gender Equality Framework to advance the empowerment of Micronesian women in all sectors of society.<sup>87</sup> The Micronesia Gender Equality Framework aims to provide a clear vision and pathway for Micronesia's leaders to progress gender equality within their respective jurisdictions and the region. The GEC is also responsible for supporting mainstreaming of gender through the other 13 sectoral committees and resource mobilisation for its gender equality efforts.<sup>88</sup>

SPC has supported members in Micronesia, through the MIF and the GEC, to establish the Gender Equality Framework, a first for gender equality efforts at a sub-regional level, as the following quote attests.

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*SPC was requested by the members to be the technical assistance provider for the GEC – we helped with the technical content, supported the GEC to prepare their presentations and it was amazing to see their senior leaders present on gender. We have seen that this sub-committee has moved very fast, and in part because of the involvement of a CROP agency – SPC – through resources and support. We have been asked by the MIF to support the other sub-committees, which is exciting.*<sup>89</sup>

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In response to requests from the GEC, SPC provided funding to engage consultants to develop the Framework<sup>90</sup> and technical and convening support to the GEC. The support, led by SPC's Principal Strategic Lead – Pacific Women and Girls, through the HRSD Division's key gender programs (Women in Leadership and Pacific Women Lead), and in close coordination with SPC's sub-regional office in Pohnpei – demonstrates SPC's commitment to members' gender equality objectives.

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85 Interview 28

86 The MIF is an annual meeting of leaders from Micronesian island nations and territories who convene to discuss key development priorities and strengthen regional coordination and cooperation.

87 SPC (2024). [Gender a priority at the Micronesia Islands Forum](#)

88 Ibid.

89 The other committees include Energy, Micronesian Challenge, Ocean, Transportation, Trade, ICT, Tourism, Education and Health.

90 Consultants commenced in September 2024, with the aim to have the draft Framework finalised in 2025.



## Gender equality as an institutional priority for SPC

The 2022 evaluation of the Australia–SPC Partnership asserted that ‘gender equality has received significant attention [...] with enhancements to SPC’s institutional capacity and capabilities to embed gender equality across the organisation, including the provision of technical support for gender equality work in member countries and other CROP agencies’<sup>91</sup>. As noted earlier, SPC is prioritising inclusive, people-centred and environmentally responsible development programs.

The Micronesia Gender Equality Framework is already generating momentum across the Pacific region. At the 2024 Triennial Conference of Pacific Women, representatives from Melanesia and Polynesia asked SPC to support development of Gender Equality Frameworks in their regions.

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*What enabled us [SPC] – for me I think three key things – relationships built with members in Micronesia, within SPC our technical knowledge and capacity, and the high-level engagement we have...and leadership in the regional office here in the region with our Director.<sup>92</sup>*

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While SPC has made notable progress in gender equality and environmental sustainability, the review found comparatively limited evidence of approaches to strengthen disability inclusion across the organisation. This was consistent with findings from the DFAT SPC partnership evaluation (2022)<sup>93</sup>, which found that disability inclusion was less advanced than gender inclusion, and that stakeholders identified room for improvement. Whilst examples of progress exist (such as in HRSD’s work, the inclusion of people in disabilities in coastal fisheries, and accessibility improvements to SPC Offices), greater disability inclusion is a priority and can be achieved by learning from successes in the gender space.

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*Disability is a gap, but this needs to be a coalition of partners ... they probably need to think about resourcing this, for example with 1-2 people and a strategy.<sup>94</sup>*

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*SPC must be more responsive and remove barriers ... the SPC regional office is not accessible to people living with a disability and they are not walking the talk when it comes to inclusion.<sup>95</sup>*

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SPC’s progress in gender equality offers lessons for other inclusion priorities, namely the value of:

- Significant and flexible funding
- Engagement and support from Senior Leadership
- A strategic and coherent approach to progressing gender through the flagship
- Elevation of gender inclusion to a priority and resourced as such at a senior level

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91 Winterford, K., Gero, A., Low, I., Robinson, L. (2022). Evaluation Report: Australia-SPC Partnership evaluation 2022: prepared for The Pacific Community (SPC), University of Technology Sydney.

92 Interview 7

93 Winterford K, Gero A, Low I, Robinson L (2022) Evaluation Report: Australia-SPC Partnership evaluation 2022. University of Technology Sydney.

94 Interview 3

95 Interview 21



- A diverse range of partnerships
- A member-led approach to delivering support.

These enabling factors align with those identified as enablers for integrated approaches (see Box 11 above), so should be prioritised to produce major shifts across SPC.

### Finding 7: Key takeaways

- Strong examples demonstrate SPC is progressing towards Goal 4 (“*One SPC delivers integrated programmes through streamlined services*”), particularly the visibility and progress of the flagships as an integrated approach
- Learning from the flagships can be applied more consistently to integrate ways of working across SPC
- SPC’s progress towards KFA 7 (“*Transforming Institutional Effectiveness*”) is underpinned by strong examples, particularly investments in monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL), gender equality and social and environmental responsibility. Enablers from these areas can be leveraged to progress other priorities, including disability inclusion

Photo: Tamzid Hasan on Unsplash



# SECTION 4: WHERE TO FROM HERE?

## Recommendations

This section offers realistic, actionable and manageable recommendations designed to help SPC to continue to strengthen its ability to meet member needs and contribute to regional priorities with an eye to both 2031 and 2050 on the horizon. The review team acknowledges that some of these recommendations require significant resourcing. In taking these forwards, SPC should consider the i) resource implications ii) putting in place result measurement. This will ensure that there is visibility on how investments are contributing to outcomes.

### Continue to **decentralise presence, decision making, and member engagement and planning processes**

- Increase autonomy, technical capability and capacity at the sub-regional level to make more region-specific decisions, be closer to members and link with sub-regional mechanisms.
- Prioritise country-level planning processes with members, led by the Regional Offices.
- Consider piloting a Smaller Island State Desk Officer role, including discussing a shared resource model with CROP peers to optimise value for money.

### Intentionally and **strategically pause growth/expansion ambitions at the organizational level for an agreed period.**

- Enable investments in systems and processes to catch up, take hold and produce results.

### **Leverage enablers to scale up integrated approaches and SER priorities.**

- Apply lessons emerging from the flagships to other ways of working that complement and amplify single-sector work
- Consider how lessons from success in gender equality could inform efforts across SPC to progress key areas that are lagging, such as disability inclusion.

### **Scale up investment in strategic communication and engagement** internally and externally, at all levels.

- Develop a strategic framework and protocols for communications to ensure that information is communicated clearly, consistently, effectively, in a timely way and accessible for diverse audiences. Note this does not mean an increase in volume of communications, rather ensuring that messages (e.g on governance, on HR, on country-level results, on change processes) are clear and have cut through.
- Establish processes to measure the effectiveness of communications.



Centralise **and resource convenings** to make them more efficient and streamlined.

- Consider a resource shared by Divisions to support the end-to-end process of key sectoral convenings to improve consistency of service-provision and capture and share lessons on what works and what doesn't.
- Ensure that outcomes from SPC sectoral meetings are systematically connected to PIF processes to ensure alignment and elevation of priorities to Leaders.



Continue to remove **structural barriers in recruitment policies and processes** to make SPC positions more accessible to Pacific candidates.

- Agree on nuanced approaches to screening criteria, for example, valuing Pacific experience more highly than tertiary qualifications.
- Introduce policies to support staff mobility (such as secondments) within the Pacific, enhancing SPC's regional representation and local insights.



Formalise **two-way technical line ministry engagement** in Governance processes.

- Develop a draft protocol and template for members to officially and consistently gather technical line ministry updates and perspectives for feeding into CRGA and reporting back.
- Create a space for learning across members on how to effectively, efficiently and systematically link line ministries with governance processes.



Strengthen the **function and accountability of the SLT** and its connection to the Executive and to the broader organisation.

- Revisit the ToR of the SLT to consider including decision-making authority for this group
- Increase transparency and predictability of communication across SPC about what this group discusses and the resulting actions.



Strengthen the **culture of risk ownership and accountability**.

- Devolve risk management responsibility across SPC.
- Embed accountability for risk in roles and performance management processes.



Scale up understanding of and resourcing in partnerships.

- Build on SPC's existing strong performance in this area through an expanded definition of and focus on partnerships (decouple partnerships and resource mobilisation)
- Develop a strategic approach to a complex partnership landscape.



Continue to **coordinate and collaborate on key technical and operational areas of mutual interest with CROP peers**.

- Keep a strong and consistent line of sight to mandate, existing capabilities and recommendations to pause and reflect over further growth or expansion in the context of post-RRA discussions.



A close-up photograph of several plumeria flowers. The petals are a mix of bright yellow, light orange, and soft pink, with some showing a gradient. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some fully open and others as buds. The background is dark and out of focus.

## Conclusion

This ambitious review has uncovered a range of areas that SPC is leading on and contributing to, both in meeting regional priorities and responding to member needs. SPC is a respected and valued leader and is continuously progressing towards more optimal delivery of services and internal ways of working. This review has however, identified further opportunities for SPC to explore to continue its journey of improvement with members at the center of shaping SPC's direction. We acknowledge that the list of recommendations is long and have structured them to focus on the areas that are likely to generate the greatest impact, first. The recommendations in this section are designed as enabling for members to take forward actionable and manageable steps that will help SPC strengthen its ability to meet member needs and enhance its contributions to regional priorities.

The review team is confident that SPC is well positioned to strengthen its role in the region through to 2030 and beyond. There is a strong awareness at the Leadership level of the key challenges that need to be tackled both externally and internally, and a strong foundation on which to build to address them. Of utmost importance, it was also clear to the review team that there is significant trust in SPC and goodwill to see the organisation continue to thrive and lead as an organisation of the Pacific, for the Pacific.

# ANNEX 1: REVIEW FRAMEWORK

Objective 1: to assess to what extent the organisation is fit for purpose to deliver regional aspirations and priorities			
1	Original Questions	Proposed questions	Rationale
1.a	What has been SPC's regional progress in realising Pacific aspirations (e.g the 2050 strategy and other regional commitments)?	What has been SPC's regional progress in realising Pacific aspirations (e.g the 2050 strategy and other regional commitments)?	No change
1.b	Identify 2050 Strategy priorities that are relevant to SPCs work and mandate. What readiness and resourcing does SPC have to help deliver on these?	What readiness and resourcing does SPC have to deliver on relevant commitments and priorities in the 2050 Strategy?	Slight change to focus on <i>readiness</i> and <i>resourcing</i>
1.c	What is SPCs unique role and contribution relative to other regional partners? (including other CROP agencies, bilateral and multilateral donors, and other regional development actors)	What is SPCs unique role and contribution relative to other regional partners? (including other CROP agencies, bilateral and multilateral donors, and other regional development actors)	No change
1.d	How has SPC contributed to the delivery of regional public goods?		Suggest removing to focus on SPC contributions to 2050 priorities, as above
1.e	To what extent does the organisation's strategy consider the specific needs of PICTs and complement national strategies?	To what extent does the organisation's strategy consider the specific needs of PICTs and complement national strategies?	No change
1.f	What course corrections or changes may be required post-RRA findings?		Suggest remove to focus more broadly on course corrections under objective 5
Objective 2: to assess to what extent the organisation is fit for purpose to deliver the aspirations in its strategic plan in relation to Goal 4 and KFA 7			
2	Original questions	Proposed questions	Rationale
2.a	How effective are SPC's governance arrangements to deliver high quality, timely results, in terms of goal/strategy setting, accountability and oversight of SPC business, and in terms of collective decision-making		Moved to objective 3



2.b	To what extent do members have their views considered in decisions and have influence in relation to institutional effectiveness and direction setting?	To what extent do members have their views considered in decisions and have influence in relation to institutional effectiveness and direction setting?	No change
2.c	To what extent have monitoring, evaluation and reporting frameworks and arrangements aligned with the regional and organisational contexts, and provided evidence for improved programme management and accountability for results?		Suggest removing to retain high level strategic focus
2.d	What can SPC learn from it's existing partnerships? How can it establish stronger partnerships to achieve it's strategic goals and priorities? What partnerships should it consider pursuing?	What can SPC learn from its existing partnerships? How can it establish stronger partnerships to achieve it's strategic goals and priorities? What partnerships should it consider pursuing?	No change
2.e	To what extent and how are the SPC values built into and affect decision making processes?		Suggest removing and covering in three-year horizon review
2.f	What are the organisation's key capability, strengths and gaps in relation to Goal 4 and KFA 7?	What are the organisations capabilities, strengths, and gaps in relation to Goal 4 and KFA 7?	No change

**Objective 3: to assess SPCs operational model, governance and institutional capacities and identify strengths, areas for improvement and opportunities**

3	Original questions	Proposed questions	Rationale
3.a	How effective and efficient are the current SPC services provided to PICTS?		Have moved to objective 4
3.b	Is the operating style, decision-making on operational matters, and service delivery model fit-for-purpose?	Is the current operating style and, decision-making on operational matters fit for purpose?	No change
3.c	To what extent have administrative procedures of allocating funds and managing actions facilitated or impeded progress towards the strategic objectives?		Suggest removing to retain the focus at the strategic governance and operational level

3.d	What are the ideal organisational governance arrangements and structure to support optimum service delivery to PICTs?	What are the ideal organisational governance arrangements and structure to support optimum service delivery to PICTs?	No change
		How effective are SPC's governance arrangements to deliver high quality, timely results? In what way does the governance arrangement support goal/strategy setting, accountability and oversight of SPC business, and collective decision-making?	Have moved from objective 2 as the question is specific to governance.
3.e	What factors are enabling or inhibiting change in relation to SPCs operational model, governance arrangements and institutional capacities?	What factors are enabling or inhibiting change in relation to SPCs operational model, governance arrangements and institutional capacities?	No change
3.f	Are the skills, experience and knowledge of SPC's staff matched to the competencies required to deliver services to members?	To what extent are the existing human resource capabilities, systems and processes appropriate for meeting member needs and service delivery?	Suggest rolling three questions on HR processes and systems into one. This is a big area which could be its own piece of work. This review can address at a high level but suggest that fully addressing this (reviewing JDs, salaries, working conditions, detailed HR processes) requires a stand-alone review.
3.g	Are staff recruitment processes, job descriptions, salaries and working conditions adequate for improving and enabling technical competencies in Pacific staff		
3.h	Is the operating system supporting the capability needs and workforce development, i.e is there appropriate resourcing, policies and processes?		

#### Objective 4: to assess relevance in relation to member needs and service delivery

4	Original questions	Proposed questions	Rationale
4.a	Discuss, explore and assess SPC technical service delivery and relevance of services experienced by each PICT at the technical line ministry/agency level and against wider national development plan achievement	To what extent is SPC's technical service delivery and provision of services relevant for meeting member needs and priorities?	Slightly changed to have a broader focus on relevance rather than detailing each PICT technical line ministry (refer to limitations section on inability to detail for each individual member)

4.b	What priority did the PICTs give to specific programmes and how important was SPC's work to the development programmes of individual members		Suggest remove this question as the ToR stipulates this review is not about specific programmes
4.c	To what extent have the strategies and implementation approaches of the Strategic Plan 2022-2031 positioned SPC a key player in national development agendas?	To what extent have the strategies and implementation approaches of the Strategic Plan 2022-2031 positioned SPC a key player in national development agendas?	No change
4.d	What recommendations are identified for the future focus and strategic direction of SPC's long-term core services, building on the work done under this review, the 2050 Strategy Implementation plan, and the RRA?		Suggest remove to focus more broadly on course corrections under objective 5
		How effective and efficient are the current SPC services provided to PICTs?	Question moved from objective 3 as it relates to delivery to members

**Objective 5: to review the alignment and implementation process at the three-year horizon of SPC's Strategic Plan 2022-2031 within the broader context of this institutional review**

5	Original questions	Proposed questions	Rationale
5.a	What course corrections to the plan would better guide the operations of SPC to support members' development needs?	What course corrections to the plan would better guide the operations of SPC to support members' development needs and in the context of the 2050 Strategy and RRA process?	Have broadened to capture course corrections to meet member needs and considerations for 2050 Strategy and post RRA context
5.b	How has the operationalisation of the strategic plan been taken up, including strategic shifts and components of programme activities being well designed and logically aligned to the achievement of the strategic plan?	How has the operationalisation of the strategic plan been taken up, including strategic shifts and components of programme activities being well designed and logically aligned to the achievement of the strategic plan?	No change

5.c	To what extent has implementation of the strategic plan contributed to prioritisation and integration of appropriate strategies to advance human rights, gender-based approaches, social and environmental responsibility mainstreaming, and consideration of target groups (e.g. gender, age, traditional knowledge holders, persons with disabilities, other relevant target groups)?	To what extent has implementation of the strategic plan contributed to prioritisation and integration of appropriate strategies to advance human rights, gender-based approaches, social and environmental responsibility mainstreaming, and consideration of target groups (e.g. gender, age, traditional knowledge holders, persons with disabilities, other relevant target groups)?	No change
5.d	What have been the main enabling factors and barriers to delivering this strategic plan and what are we learning from them?	What have been the main enabling factors and barriers to delivering this strategic plan and what are we learning from them?	No change
5.e	To what extent and how has SPC implemented the pathways of KFA 7 on it's journey to the 2031 Future State?	To what extent and how has SPC implemented the pathways of KFA 7 on its journey to the 2031 Future State?	No change
5.f	To what extent is the Strategic Plan 2022-2031 aligned with global, regional and national development goals and priorities?		Suggest removing as this has been addressed in the Strategic Plan development process

# ANNEX 2: LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

1. Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (2022) 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent
2. 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan 2023-2030
3. Australia-SPC Partnership Evaluation 2022: Final Evaluation Report
4. Evaluation of SPC's Capacity Building Evaluation Report, 2020
5. Technical Review Report Prepared for The Chair of The Twelfth Conference of The Pacific Community, 2022
6. Synthesis evaluation of SPC's Strategic Plan 2016 2020 Capstone Report, 2022
7. Independent External Review of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 2012
8. MFAT-SPC Mid-term review of the Pacific Community Core Funding (2020-2024), 2022
9. SPC Monitoring, evaluation and learning framework, Improving pacific statistics and data and the pacific data hub, July 2020
10. Pacific Community Strategic Plan 2022 – 2031
11. Business Plan 2022-2026, Public Health Division
12. Review of SPC's Governance Arrangements Final Report to the Working Group, 2014
13. SPC's Status and Governance 2024
14. Strategic plan mid-term review partnership survey executive summary, 2018
15. Additional Resource Request – HAG Summary Outline Presentation for SPC, July 2024
16. HR Response to IIR Presentation for SPC, October 2024
17. The Pacific Community Governance Compendium, Sixth edition, October 2024
18. The Pacific Community Results Report 2023
19. Resource Mobilisation Strategy 2023–2025
20. SPC Financial Statements for 2020
21. SPC Financial Statements for 2023
22. The Pacific Community, Director Generals Report; Annex 1. 2024
23. SPC HR Audit (Internal Audit report)
24. SPC Project Management Framework Internal Audit Advisory Service Report, 2024
25. Working Paper no. 6: Transforming Institutional Effectiveness and Resilience – Business Continuity in the Face of Disruption, SPC/CRGA November 2024
26. New Caledonia Civil Unrest 2024: Our People, Our Response Presentation, Agenda Item 1, CRGA Subcommittee 24
27. Implementing the Strategic Plan Presentation, Agenda Item 2, CRGA Subcommittee 24
28. Flagships Interactive Sessions Presentation, Agenda Item, CRGA Subcommittee 24
29. Explaining the Climate Change Flagship Presentation, Agenda Item 3a, CRGA Subcommittee 24
30. Food Systems and Gender Equality Flagship Presentation, Agenda item 3b, CRGA Subcommittee 24
31. Oceans Flagship Presentation, Agenda Item 3c, CRGA Subcommittee 24
32. Programme/Projects Evaluation Presentation, Agenda Item 4, CRGA Subcommittee 24
33. HAG COLAB IIR Presentation, Agenda Item 5, CRGA Subcommittee 24
34. Pacific Community Draft Results Report Presentation, 2023, Agenda Item 6, CRGA Subcommittee 24

35. MELNet – Strengthening MEL Capacity in the Region Presentation, Agenda Item 6b, CRGA Subcommittee 24
36. Digital Earth Pacific Interactive Session Presentation, Agenda Item 7, CRGA Subcommittee 24
37. Summary of Recommendations Document for Subcommittee of The Committee of Representative of Governments and Administrations, July 2024
38. Provisional Agenda - Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA) Subcommittee for the Strategic Plan
39. Flagships Interactive Sessions, Information paper 1, Agenda Item 3, CRGA Subcommittee 24
40. Pacific Community Draft Results Report 2023 Interactive Sessions, Information Paper 2, Agenda Item 7, CRGA Subcommittee 24
41. Digital Earth Pacific Interactive Session Information Paper 3, Agenda Item 8, CRGA Subcommittee 24
42. Participant List - Meeting of The CRGA Subcommittee for the Strategic Plan, 2-3 July 2024
43. Strategic Evaluation Update, Working Paper 3, Agenda Item 4, CRGA Subcommittee 24
44. Independent Institutional Review, Working Paper 4, Agenda Item 5, CRGA Subcommittee 24
45. 2023 Draft Results Report, Working Paper 5, Agenda Item 6, CRGA Subcommittee 24
46. Implementing the Strategic Plan, Working Paper 2, Agenda Item 2, CRGA Subcommittee 24
47. 2023: Fifty-Third Meeting of The Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (24 – 25 October 2023, Noumea, New Caledonia), Agenda Item No. 5: Report of The CRGA Subcommittee for The Strategic Plan (Paper presented by the CRGA Subcommittee for the Strategic Plan)
48. 2022: Fifty-Second Meeting of The Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (23–24 November 2022, Port Vila, Vanuatu), Agenda Item No. 6: Pacific Community Strategic Plan 2022–2031 and Results Framework (Paper presented by the CRGA Subcommittee for the Strategic Plan and the Secretariat)
49. 2021: Fifty-First Meeting of The Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (30 November – 2 December 2021, virtual meeting), Agenda Item No. 4: Pacific Community Strategic Plan 2021+ (Report from the CRGA Subcommittee for the Strategic Plan and the Secretariat)
50. 2020: Fiftieth Meeting of The Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (17–19 November 2020, Virtual Meeting), Agenda Item No. 4: Pacific Community Strategic Plan 2021+ and results reporting (Paper presented by the Chair of the Subcommittee for the Implementation of the Strategic Plan, and the Secretariat)
51. 2019: Forty-Ninth Meeting of The Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (18–20 June 2019, Noumea, New Caledonia), Agenda Item No. 5: Report from the CRGA Subcommittee on Strategic Plan Implementation (Paper presented by the Secretariat)
52. Scenarios for the Review of the Regional Architecture Presentation, April 2024
53. A Review of the Guidelines and Format of the Pacific Islands Forum Meetings: A report prepared for the Pacific Islands Forum, May 2019
54. PIFS RRAWG, Annex A: Review of The Regional Architecture Proposed Approach
55. PIFS RRAWG, Annex B: Phase 1 Synthesis Report on the Review of the Regional Architecture (RRA)
56. 35th Meeting of the FOC Sub-Committee for the Blue Pacific Continent, April 2024
57. Workplan on the Delivery of Phase 2 Of The RRA, April 2024



# ABBREVIATIONS

ARC	Audit and Risk Committee
CoLAB	Collaborate Consulting Pte Ltd
CRGA	Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations
CROP	Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
EU	European Union
FESRIP	Framework for Energy Security and Resilience in The Pacific
GEC	Gender Equality Committee
HAG	Humanitarian Advisory Group
HR	Human Resources
HRSD	Human Rights and Social Development [Division, SPC]
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IIR	Independent Institutional Review
KFA	Key Focus Area
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (New Zealand)
MIF	Micronesian Islands Forum
MTR	Mid-Term Review
OMD	Operations and Management Directorate
O&I	Operations and Integration
PacREF	Pacific Regional Education Framework
PICT	Pacific Island Countries and Territories
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PYC	Pacific Youth Council
PYDF	Pacific Youth Development Framework
PMYM	Pacific Ministers for Youth Meeting
RMS	Resource Mobilisation Strategy
RRA	Review of Regional Architecture
SER	Social and Environmental Responsibility
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
SOM	Senior Officials Meeting
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
SPC	Pacific Community
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission