



4th SPC Regional Technical Meeting
on Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture
12–15 October 2021 – Virtual meeting



Pacific
Community
Communauté
du Pacifique

Original: English

Paper reference:	Information Paper 5
Title:	The World Bank: Engagements in fisheries and sustainable ocean economy in the Pacific
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Summary/short description/key points:

Description of the engagements of the World Bank in the fisheries sector and related domains in the Pacific Island region.

Recommendations:

Any officials from Fisheries or related ministries or regional agencies interested in learning more about or becoming involved in the Pacific Islands Regional Oceanscape Program (PROP) or the Pacific Ocean Advisory Program (POAP) are requested to contact the World Bank’s Environment, Natural Resources and the Blue Economy team to request assistance.

The World Bank: Engagements in fisheries and sustainable ocean economy in the Pacific

1. Governments have a complex task of ensuring that production and foreign exchange earnings from fisheries do not compromise the viability of coastal communities that are also dependent on marine resources for jobs, livelihoods, food, nutrition and cultural use. The World Bank aims to foster closer collaboration with Pacific Island Countries' (PICs) governments and their partners to mainstream sustainable practices in the development of the ocean economy. Priority areas of interest include:
 - demonstration of socio-economic and environmental impacts of sustainable practices in fisheries and coastal development through analytical works;
 - integration of lessons learned into current and new projects to promote sustainable, productive and safe fisheries and seafood value chains, improve livelihoods, and support resilient coastal and marine ecosystems;
 - promotion of coherence and synergy between management and development activities including through tax reforms, smart subsidies, and use of existing social protection, insurance and financial services; and
 - collaboration beyond sectoral boundaries to maximize impacts.
2. The World Bank delivers on these priorities through the following key programs:

Pacific Islands Regional Oceanscape Program (PROP)

3. PROP aims to strengthen the shared management of selected Pacific Island oceanic and coastal fisheries, and the critical habitats upon which they depend. The Program provides the basis for capturing increased and sustainable economic benefits to the region from these resources. Specifically, the Program aims to strengthen: (i) the national and regional institutions responsible for the management of the oceanic fisheries; (ii) the local and national institutions responsible for the management of the coastal fisheries; and (iii) the institutions responsible for the conservation of the natural habitats that support them.
4. To date, PROP investments are comprised of US\$67.82 million (M) from the International Development Association (IDA) and US\$6.3 M from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The Program has been rolled out to PICs in sequences. PROP 1st sequence of investments is implemented by the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and with the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) together with the Pacific Community (SPC). PROP 1st sequence closed in September 2021 for FSM, RMI, Solomon Islands and FFA and will be closed in August 2022 for Tuvalu. PROP 2nd sequence is in progress with investments in Tonga (2019-2026), Kiribati (2020-2027) and Samoa (fisheries/agriculture blend, 2019-2025).
5. Each PROP investment consists of components that support countries to better manage oceanic and coastal fisheries and habitats to generate export earnings for the country, and/or support livelihoods, food security and dietary health. For oceanic fisheries, activities include establishment of National Competent Authorities to ensure fish entering the markets are safe

and legally caught. Accordingly, support for building human resource capacity and infrastructure for Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) for fisheries and seafood safety are high. For coastal fisheries, activities include empowering stakeholders to manage targeted coastal fisheries; and linking sustainable coastal fish products to regional markets. Assessment and management of risks associated with seafood safety are also supported in some PROP countries.

6. Follow up and extension of PROP projects are currently in progress. Design consultations are occurring and ongoing with concept notes for several countries and a regional organization intended for completion by late 2021. Eligible countries include FSM, RMI, Palau, Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Tonga, Samoa, and Papua New Guinea (PNG).
7. Fisheries and related technical ministries interested in engaging with the Bank on PROP are requested to work through the respective Ministry of Finance to submit a formal letter of request to the Bank seeking assistance.

Pacific Ocean Advisory Program (POAP)

8. The overall objective of the POAP is to inform and enhance the design, financing, implementation, coordination and monitoring of priority policies and investments for a sustainable ocean economy and a healthier and more resilient environment in selected Pacific Island Countries. The Program covers work on both oceanic and coastal fisheries, as well as a range of activities focused on maintaining the resilience of critical coastal and marine ecosystems that support a sustainable ocean economy and livelihoods. Included in the ecosystem resilience work are analytics related to biodiversity and habitat conservation, adaptation to climate change impacts, sustainable tourism, and addressing pollution issues with a focus on reducing marine plastics and development of a circular economy. POAP is supported with a grant from PROBLUE, a multi-donor trust fund housed at the World Bank that supports the sustainable and integrated development of marine and coastal resources in healthy oceans (www.worldbank.org/problue).
9. POAP work to date has included support for the preparation of the National Ocean Policy in Fiji and a cost-benefit analysis to compare and prioritize several development scenarios for Kiritimati's Ocean Economy. In the coming year, POAP will implement work on fisheries which aims to: (i) improve understanding of oceanic fisheries value-chains and the potential for additional domestic value-added; (ii) assess transparency in the fisheries sector and approaches to improving governance; (iii) evaluate the contribution of coastal fisheries to national economies and food security and determine options to sustain and enhance this contribution and (iv) explore use of social protection and financial services for offsetting impacts of fisheries management measures resulting in loss of revenue or food sources for fishing communities and for facilitating livelihood diversification. In a next phase POAP work will aim to: (i) assess and develop strategies for capturing domestic value-added from oceanic fisheries; and (ii) identify pathways for developing domestic small-scale fishing industries. POAP's target countries include FSM, RMI, Palau, Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Tonga, Samoa, and PNG. POAP can also support, upon country request, discrete short-term technical assistance aligned with POAP overall objectives and eligibility criteria.

10. The POAP aims to create opportunities for multi-stakeholder engagement and building partnerships across the region to foster coordination and dialogue on issues related to oceanic and coastal fisheries and the natural habitats on which they depend. These partnerships and dialogue will build on PROP and other existing engagements at national and regional level, and participation in key regional coordination meetings. Any officials from Fisheries or related ministries or regional agencies interested in learning more about or becoming involved in POAP's analytical activities are requested to contact the World Bank's Environment, Natural Resources and the Blue Economy (ENB) team to request assistance (see below).
11. POAP examines topics of special interest for the fisheries sector such as marine plastic pollution and abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gears.
12. **Marine plastics pollution** has become a global development challenge as the growing amount of mismanaged plastic waste pollutes oceans, coastlines and rivers, with negative impacts on the tourism industry, fisheries, and the health and livelihoods of coastal communities. The sudden increase in single-use plastics during the Covid-19 pandemic has created an additional stress on countries working to tackle the challenge.
13. PICs face particular challenges in managing plastic waste and pollution due to limited space and options to safely and effectively dispose of waste, and high transportation costs and lack of economies of scale that reduce the economic viability of private sector investments in recycling or substitution. The World Bank is committed to assisting countries to combat the marine plastic problem.
14. **Abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gears (ALDFG)** is another issue of growing concern across the Pacific and globally. Mismanaged end of life fishing gear and ALDFG pose a particular problem to fisheries. Various United Nations General Assembly resolutions now provide a mandate for, and require, action to reduce ALDFG and other marine debris. The Bank is initiating work at national and regional level to investigate the causes and the impacts of this problem and identify options for reducing the quantity of ALDFG entering the marine environment and for more effectively managing fishing gear waste streams.

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