

Pacific Islands

Regional Ocean Policy
and
Framework for Integrated Strategic Action



The Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy is supported by 22 Pacific Island countries and territories and underscores the continuing importance of ocean and coastal resources and environments to the region's nations, communities and individuals.

The Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Framework for Integrated Strategic Action (PIROFISA) serves as a guide for regional coordination, integration and collaboration on ocean issues in keeping with the Regional Ocean Policy's goal of improving ocean governance and ensuring sustainable use of the ocean and its resources.

ORIGIN OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS REGIONAL OCEAN POLICY

At their 1999 meeting, Pacific Islands Forum Leaders endorsed a list of recommendations emerging from the Pacific Regional Follow-up Workshop on the Implementation of the Law of the Sea Convention, convened in Tonga in 1999. Although most of the recommendations could only be implemented by national governments, one of the recommendations – that a regional ocean policy be produced – was adopted as a regional level initiative. The Marine Sector Working Group (MSWG) of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) was tasked with developing a regional ocean policy. The draft policy produced by the MSWG was presented to official meetings and governing councils of the various CROP organisations, and was subsequently endorsed by the 33rd Pacific Islands Forum, in 2002. In doing so, Forum leaders recalled their 1995 decision urging members to become parties to the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea at the earliest opportunity. Leaders called for follow-up action plans, both for the region and for individual countries.

The Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy and the Framework for Integrated Strategic Action were developed through the collaborative efforts of many organizations and individuals, in particular the following members of the Marine Sector Working Group of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific:

Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)
Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).
South Pacific Geoscience Commission (SOPAC)
University of the South Pacific (USP)



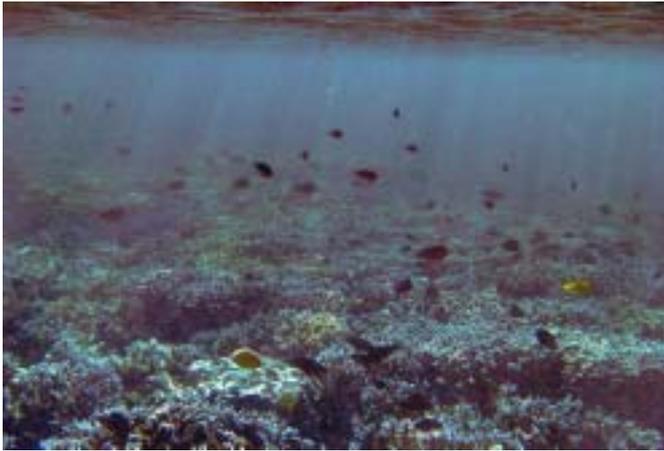
© Copyright Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 2005. Published on behalf of the Marine Sector Working Group of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific. All rights reserved. SPC authorises the partial reproduction or research purposes, provided proper reproduce or translate the document in its entirety not be altered or published separately without



commercial/for profit reproduction or translation of this material for scientific, educational acknowledgement is made. Permission to must be requested in writing. Original artwork may permission.

Photographs courtesy of J. Axford, D. Fisk, K. Friedman, M. Kronen, G. LaPraik, M. Power, S. Samasoni, M. Smaalders and L. Vigliola. Editing and layout by Islands&Oceans.

PACIFIC ISLANDS REGIONAL OCEAN POLICY



THIS IS *OUR* OCEAN

The care of the ocean is the responsibility of all people. The oceans are inter-connected and interdependent, covering some 70% of the world's surface. They are the last great frontier and their conservation and sustainable use is vital to the well being and survival of the human race.

Pacific Island communities inhabit the islands scattered throughout an ocean across which some of the most inspiring migrations in human history have taken place, over many thousands of years. The ocean unites Pacific Island communities more than anything else. It has supported generations of Pacific Island communities – not only as a medium for transport but also as a source of food, tradition and culture.

Our ocean, coastal and island ecosystems contain high biological diversity that has sustained the lives of Pacific Island communities since first settlement. It contains the most extensive coral reefs in the world, globally important fisheries, significant seabed mineral resources and high number of threatened species. These ecosystems may contain many undiscovered resources of potential use to humankind.

Many thousands of islands and atolls are entirely coastal in nature. The ocean is not only a lifeline, it is also a source of hazard. These hazards can be increased by the impact of human activities both within and external to the Pacific Islands region.

Our ocean provides the greatest opportunities for economic development. Responsibly managed, it has the potential to support Pacific Island communities in perpetuity.

As Pacific Island communities we are acutely aware that over ninety eight per cent of the 38.5

million square kilometres of the Earth's surface over which we have direct influence is ocean. But concerns for the long-term health of the ocean are not confined to the areas covered by sovereign rights, they extend equally to adjacent areas of high seas.

Our commitment to the development of a common Policy for this ocean stems from our collective awareness of an increasing number and severity of threats to its long-term integrity. This Policy presents a framework for the sustainable development, management and conservation of the resources and habitats within the region. It provides guiding principles for individual and collaborative action that will promote responsible stewardship of this large ocean for regional and global benefit.

This policy is intended to promote the Pacific region as an ocean environment in support of sustainable development. It is not a legal document, however its guiding principles are founded on international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and other international and regional agreements.

These guiding principles are: improving our understanding of the ocean; sustainably developing and managing use of ocean resources; maintaining the health of the ocean; promoting the peaceful use of the ocean; and creating partnerships and promoting co-operation.

We invite others to recognise our commitment to these guiding principles and support our strategies to implement this Policy to help ensure our ocean, coasts and islands remain healthy and sustain the livelihoods and aspirations of Pacific Island communities.

WHY A REGIONAL OCEAN POLICY?

The need for a policy is based on our collective awareness of the transboundary and dynamic nature of our ocean, the increasing number and severity of threats to its long-term integrity, and the reality that sustainable economic and social development will be dependent on wise use of the ocean and its resources. It is also based on our awareness of the potential for fragmentation of programmes and for conflicting commitments in different sectors as ocean-related activities increase. This requires increased regional collaborative arrangements among Pacific Island communities.

THE PACIFIC ISLANDS REGION

For the purpose of this Policy, the “region” includes that part of the Pacific Ocean in which the island countries and territories (Pacific Communities), that are members of the organisations comprising the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) are found. As such, the extent of the region includes not only the area within the 200 nautical miles Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) boundaries circumscribing these island countries, but also the ocean and coastal areas that encompass the extent of the marine ecosystems that support the region.

The “ocean” is defined to include the waters of the ocean, the living and non-living elements within, the seabed beneath and the ocean-atmosphere and ocean-island interfaces.

Pacific Islands are often referred to as Small Island Developing States. They may also be thought of as Large Ocean Developing States.

Capacity Building

In order to replenish and sustain our knowledge base, it is necessary to generate new knowledge about the oceans upon which our way of life depends. Fundamental to the sustained generation of new knowledge is the continuing education of a cadre of scientists and policy makers. Educating and training people within the region is the best strategy for ensuring the continuity of marine understanding and replenishment of knowledge.

Vulnerability

Pacific Island communities are particularly vulnerable to certain environmental, economic

and social circumstances.

Environmental factors include: climate variability, climate change and sea-level rise; immediate natural hazards such as earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic events, fragile ecosystems and natural resource bases, and geographic isolation.

Economic factors include: limited land area and freshwater resources; limited local markets; high import dependencies; fluctuating world prices for commodities; and isolation, including large distances to world markets.

Social factors include: population growth & distribution; human and food security; external influences, cultural dilution and loss of traditional knowledge and practices.

Rights and responsibilities

The ocean has been the major influence in the history of Pacific Island communities. Throughout the region, customary association with the sea forms the basis of present day social structures, livelihoods and tenure systems and traditional systems of stewardship governing its use.

International law and instruments confer rights on Pacific Island communities relating to the use of the ocean and its resources. With these rights come responsibilities, especially for sustainable development, management and conservation of the ocean's living resources and for the protection of the ocean environment and its biodiversity.

Pacific Island communities have established national laws, based on international principles and customary practices, which provide for responsible management and use of the ocean



and its resources within their areas of jurisdiction.

The Pacific communities will work with other partners to promote the application of compatible policies by those partners in areas subject to their jurisdiction and surrounding waters, and with all other countries having interests in the region.

Island communities respect the rights and interests of others to participate in legitimate activities. With this sharing comes the expectation that they will meet their obligations and responsibilities to our ocean.

This Policy promotes good stewardship which refers to active engagement by communities in caring for the oceans. It draws upon ideas, policies, institutions and enforcement procedures needed to protect the oceans and coasts from abuse including the effects of land-based activities.

PRINCIPLE 1- IMPROVING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE OCEAN

Contemporary and traditional understanding of the ocean provides the basis for sustainable use of the ocean and its resources, for the



amelioration of pollution and harmful practices and for the prediction of weather, climate and ocean variability.

Resource management approaches based purely on scientific information have had limited success in the region over the last 50 years. The cost of obtaining scientific information, in all but a few highly commercialised systems, is beyond the capacity of many islands. As a result resource managers in the Region advocate precautionary

management approaches that are more robust where comprehensive scientific understanding and intensive monitoring are difficult. This includes an enhanced role for communities and customary resource owners in the development and application of local management arrangements for local resources..

Whilst community approaches are essential for implementing effective resource management in many cases, the long-term maintenance of exploited ecosystems, particularly transboundary systems, still requires better science. Increased understanding of ocean and coastal processes and ecosystems is critically dependent on shared access to global and regional developments in science and technology, to enable research, exploration and development of both living and non-living marine resources, and on economic systems that can pay for long-term monitoring and observation. The result will be improved ability to effectively conserve marine biological diversity and predict the impact of climate variation and human use patterns on the health of the ocean.

Strategic Actions

- To identify and prioritise information needs and the co-operative mechanisms for acquiring, accessing and disseminating information;
- To strengthen national and regional capacity, encourage partnerships between regional and international organisations, and the public and private sectors, to improve our understanding of the ocean;
- To facilitate access to this information, encourage its wide application in the implementation of this Policy and any compatible national ocean policies that may be developed in

Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy

VISION

A healthy ocean that sustains the livelihoods and aspirations of Pacific Island communities.

GOAL

The goal of this Policy is to ensure the future sustainable use of our ocean and its resources by Pacific Islands communities and external partners.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Guiding Principles to achieve this goal are:

- Improving our Understanding of the Ocean
- Sustainably Developing and Managing the use of Ocean Resources
- Maintaining the Health Of the Ocean
- Promoting the Peaceful Use of the Ocean
- Creating Partnerships and Promoting Cooperation

association with it;

- To have regard for traditional knowledge and its potential to contribute to better understanding the ocean and to the effective management of resources; and
- To promote further formal education and training of local people in marine science and marine affairs disciplines.

PRINCIPLE 2 – SUSTAINABLY DEVELOPING AND MANAGING THE USE OF OCEAN RESOURCES

Pacific Island communities are heavily reliant on the wide range of resources and services that the ocean provides for their social, cultural and economic security. This includes not only the existing extractive uses of its living and non-living resources but also the non-extractive uses such as transport and communication, waste disposal, recreation and tourism, and cultural activities. New research, technologies and markets are creating opportunities for accessing and using the ocean and its resources.

To safeguard Pacific Island communities and maintain the health of our ocean in perpetuity, it is imperative that we adopt a precautionary management approach to ensure the use of the ocean and its resources are sustainable.

Strategic Actions

- To identify, prioritise and implement resource development and management actions and regimes, in accordance with the precautionary approach;
- To encourage equitable sharing of resource access and benefits at local, national and regional levels;
- To engage, as appropriate, local communities and other stakeholders in resource management decision making;
- To build capacity of Pacific Island communities for sustainable resource development and management;
- To establish and protect traditional knowledge rights; and
- To establish and protect intellectual property rights.



PRINCIPLE 3 - MAINTAINING THE HEALTH OF THE OCEAN

The health and productivity of our ocean is driven by regional-scale ecosystem processes. It is dependent upon preserving ecosystem integrity and minimising the harmful impact of human activity.

Threats to ocean and coastal health and productivity, reflected in a degradation in water quality and resource depletion include accidental and deliberate dumping of fuels, chemicals and ballast water from ships, aircraft and satellite launches, and non sustainable resource use.

Pollution from the land contributes up to eighty per cent of all ocean pollution and is a major threat to the long-term health of nearshore systems affecting ecological processes, public health and social and commercial use of ocean resources.

Strategic Actions

- To adopt an integrated transboundary approach, through harmonised institutional arrangements, including existing international and regional agreements, to managing marine ecosystems for long-term sustainable benefit;
- To incorporate sound environmental and social practices into economic development activities;
- To protect and conserve biological diversity of the ocean ecosystem at local, national and regional scales; and
- To reduce the impact of all sources of pollution on our ocean environment.

PRINCIPLE 4 – PROMOTING THE PEACEFUL USE OF THE OCEAN

Peaceful uses of the ocean have environmental, political, social economic, and security dimensions. Promoting peaceful use means discouraging and reducing unacceptable, illicit, criminal, or other activities contrary to regional and international agreements. Such activities threaten the major source of livelihood for Pacific Island communities.

Strategic Actions

- To ensure that all activities

carried out in our ocean meet all relevant international and regional standards, and do not cause environmental damage, social or economic hardship in the region;

- To seek remedial action in the event of an incident resulting from non-peaceful use of the ocean;
- To ensure that the ocean is not used for criminal activities nor for other activities that breach local, national or international laws; and
- To encourage co-operation amongst law enforcement agencies.

PRINCIPLE 5 – CREATING PARTNERSHIPS AND PROMOTING CO-OPERATION

Partnerships and cooperation provide an enabling environment and are essential for the sustainable management of our ocean. As a group Pacific Island communities achieve economies of scale, a united voice for international advocacy, a regional power bloc with increased international influence and a forum for developing coordinated action on ocean issues of mutual interest or with transboundary implications.

In pursuit of creating partnerships and promoting cooperation, Pacific Island communities will seek to maintain sovereign rights and responsibilities in managing, protecting and developing the ocean.

Strategic Actions

- To foster partnerships and cooperation in the areas of security, monitoring, enforcement and the sustainable use of resources;
- To make fullest possible use of regional and international partnerships and collaboration, such as regional organisations, ocean-related treaties, and bilateral arrangements as appropriate;
- To have regard for the ocean policies of ocean jurisdictions adjoining our own, and advocate that their policies have regard for this Policy; and
- To encourage Pacific Island communities to develop national ocean policies that complement and are consistent with this Policy.



THE FUTURE

This Policy is the result of a regional effort to achieve responsible ocean governance. It is based on existing international and regional agreements that establish a broad framework for regional cooperation and coordination to sustainably manage and conserve the ocean ecosystem in the region. It provides the basis for the harmonisation of national and regional actions, for the next five years. The implementation process will require a commitment by all stakeholders.

This Policy articulates guiding principles and strategic actions that will define a regional Pacific Ocean Initiative. The Initiative will include a Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Summit to define the status of current knowledge and activities, and a review process to define progress, and will provide an integrated framework to include existing programmes, and identify and prioritise future Action Plans.



PACIFIC ISLANDS REGIONAL OCEAN FRAMEWORK for INTEGRATED STRATEGIC ACTION

INTRODUCTION

The Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Framework for Integrated Strategic Action (PIROFISA) is a framework for implementation of the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy. The Regional Ocean Policy was approved by Pacific Island leaders in 2002. It underscores the importance of the ocean to Pacific Island nations and communities and serves to unify a number of existing regional initiatives that address issues relevant to management and development of ocean and coastal resources and environments.

The Regional Ocean Policy embodies five guiding principles that are central to the goal of sustainable use of ocean resources. These guiding principles are defined in the context of the over-arching principle of sound management, i.e. the need to improve ocean governance

Together these five guiding principles, and the over-arching sentiment of sound ocean governance provide the thematic directions and objectives for this framework, and thus guide the implementation of the Policy.

STRUCTURE OF THE PIROFISA

Each of the six themes identified in the Policy is further developed in this framework through a series of priority initiatives and actions. The theme of improving ocean governance is overarching, and contains specific governance initiatives and actions designed to create an enabling environment for implementation of the Policy. The theme of creating partnerships and

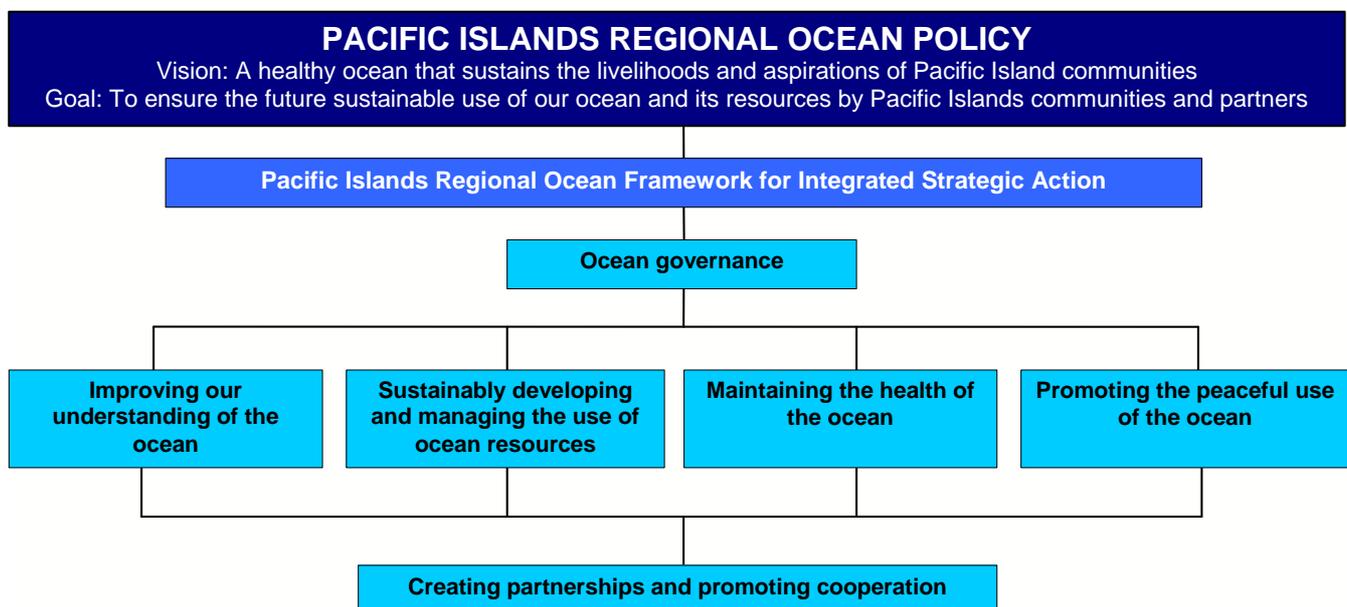
cooperation underpins all of the other themes, as implementation must be collaborative. The four central themes – relating to understanding of the ocean, sustainable development and management of ocean resources, health of the ocean, and peaceful use of the ocean – address issues at the heart of sustainable ocean governance. The relationship between the six themes is shown graphically below.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Framework is designed to serve as a guide for implementation rather than a prescriptive work plan, and is intended to be inclusive, allowing for participation by governments, non-governmental organisations, non-state actors, the private sector, and civil society. It provides:

- A regional consensus on priorities for actions to ensure improved ocean governance and sustainable use of the ocean and its resources
- A framework for regional coordination of action
- A framework for regional and international institutions to use in integrating their work
- Guidance to development partners on regional priority areas requiring their support

Both the Policy and this Framework are focussed at the regional level but implementation will necessarily involve actions at all levels (local, national, regional and international). The Framework will specifically contribute to the development of workplans of regional organisations and help direct the work they



conduct on behalf of their members. It will also provide guidance to national governments in implementing sustainable development and management of ocean, coastal and island resources, in partnership with local communities.

Implementation will involve new initiatives as well as existing, ongoing processes and activities; a summary of the latter will be provided in an appendix in the final version of this document. Among necessary new initiatives a number of First Steps are recommended as priorities, as these will set the stage for further implementation of the PIROFISA. They will also assist partners in coordinating and strengthening ongoing processes and activities. An important first step will be establishment of an effective multisectoral coordination mechanism, within existing organisational structures, to progress the implementation of the PIROFISA.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

It is vital that all stakeholders be able to monitor how effectively the Policy is being implemented. The Framework includes annual reporting by Secretariats to CROP governing councils and national focal points (beginning in 2005, and using an agreed format), and a formal evaluation of progress at regional and national levels, to be undertaken after five years (in 2010).

CONSULTATION

The PIROF-ISA has been developed through a consultative process involving a wide range of stakeholders and organisations, which began with the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Forum, held in Fiji Islands in February 2004. During the Forum a process was agreed upon by which Forum participants, PICTs and Pacific Island development partners would comment on and assist in refining the PIROFISA; the comment and refinement process was facilitated by a coordinator, on behalf of the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific. These consultations confirmed the importance of themes identified in the Policy, and determined the priority initiatives and actions needed for implementation of the Policy.



FIRST STEPS

Implementation of the PIROFISA will be carried out through both new initiatives and by means of existing, ongoing processes and activities. Among necessary new initiatives the following are recommended as priorities, as these will set the stage for further implementation of the PIROFISA. They will also assist implementation partners in coordinating and strengthening ongoing processes and activities.

At the national level

Promote high-level leadership on ocean issues and commitment to effective management of ocean resources.

At the regional level

Establish a Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy office or secretariat, preferably within an existing regional organisation, staffed by at least one full-time professional. The office would be tasked

with coordinating implementation of the PIROFISA. A primary role would be to provide assistance to Pacific Island countries and territories in developing and building support for national ocean policies. The office would also assist the region's specialised regional agencies that are members of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) to increase their collaboration on ocean-related issues, in part by serving as a secretariat to the CROP Marine Sector Working Group.

Identify a focal point within each regional organisation to coordinate PIROP implementation.

Establish a network or registry of relevant NGOs, non-state

actors, and private sector interests.

Develop a regional task force to assist PICTs on request in the development and implementation of National Ocean Policies and Action Plans.

Globally

Develop partnerships and financing arrangements.

Seek recognition and cooperation from neighbouring jurisdictions in the implementation of the Regional Ocean policy.

THEME1: IMPROVE GOVERNANCE OF THE COASTS AND OCEAN

The Regional Ocean Policy stems from “a regional effort to achieve responsible ocean governance.” Governance is an overarching theme that is an essential part of the PIROFISA. The objective of the initiatives relating to governance is to engage both stakeholders and leaders and to establish, strengthen, and implement governance mechanisms that contribute to the implementation of the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy.

Initiative 1.1 Establish high-level leadership on ocean issues with a commitment to effective management of ocean resources.

The Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy reflects a commitment to good ocean governance by the leaders of the Pacific Island countries. For ocean and coastal issues to gain the attention and support of officials, policy makers and politicians, it is vital that advocates be developed at all levels.

Actions – Initiative 1.1

1.1.1 Develop a proposal, including funding, to establish a regional Ombudsman whose office would generally investigate ocean-related developments affecting more than one nation, or of transboundary scope, reporting to Forum countries on the conformity of that development with PIROP principles.

1.1.2 Promote high-level leadership on ocean issues and commitment to effective management of ocean resources.

1.1.3 Incorporate ocean issues into national and regional agendas.

1.1.4 Actively promote the PIROP and PIROFISA to national governments via regional organisations, and maintain a focal point within regional organisations to coordinate PIROP implementation.

1.1.5 Establish professional development programmes for leaders, senior decision and policy makers on cross-sectoral and governance issues.



Initiative 1.2 Review, strengthen and/or establish policy, legal and regulatory mechanisms in accordance with national and regional needs and capacities.

Many existing governance instruments and associated mechanisms are inadequate or are not implemented, and in some cases may not support the integrated approach to governance that is required to realise the objectives of PIROP. It is important to put in place appropriate national legislation and policies that will result in an integrated approach to ocean management.

Actions – Initiative 1.2

1.2.1 Assist PICTs to effectively negotiate, accede to and implement all relevant international and regional instruments.

1.2.2 Develop and enact necessary national level policies and/or legislation and harmonise conflicting legislation and agency regulations.

1.2.3 Effectively participate in relevant global initiatives (such as the United Nations Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and Law of the Sea, or UNICPOLOS) to further develop international legal frameworks for protecting ocean resources.

Actions – Initiative 1.2 (continued)

1.2.4 Explore mechanisms for strengthening compliance with relevant multi-lateral agreements.

1.2.5 Develop methods by which traditional knowledge and marine-related intellectual property belonging to Pacific Islanders can be protected from unauthorised exploitation.

1.2.6 Provide technical support to Pacific Island States to enable them to establish zones of national sovereignty (e.g. territorial seas) and maritime jurisdiction (e.g. contiguous zone, exclusive economic zone, and continental shelf).

1.2.7 Assist Pacific island States establish maritime boundaries in areas where claimed national maritime zones overlap maritime claims of neighbouring States.

Initiative 1.3 Engage stakeholders, including local communities, civil society organisations and national government agencies, in resource management decision-making and strengthen consultative, coordination and implementation arrangements.

Effective implementation of PIROP requires engagement with all stakeholders, as well as more effective coordination between agencies, organisations and communities involved in ocean and coastal issues. It also requires recognition of the importance of the many different uses of the ocean and coastal environment (including tourism, harvesting of living and non-living resources, transport, military, etc.). The active participation of local level stakeholders is critically important, and efforts should be made to support and empower communities to assume resource management and monitoring responsibilities.

Actions – Initiative 1.3

1.3.1 Develop mechanisms to identify and engage all stakeholders, especially local communities and the private sector, on ocean resource management.

1.3.2 Provide support and empower communities to take on resource management and monitoring responsibilities.

1.3.3 Enhance interagency coordination at the national level and develop a strategic approach to information sharing and decision-making.

1.3.4 Establish an effective multisectoral coordination mechanism, based on existing arrangements, to progress implementation of the PIROFISA.

Initiative 1.4 National Ocean Policies and Action Plans

Consistently and adequately addressing ocean and coastal issues in an integrated manner is a significant challenge. National Ocean Policies and Action Plans allow for national-level implementation of the PIROFISA and provide a mechanism for the engagement of stakeholders. These also allow for the integration of sectoral plans and processes, and promote intra-governmental coordination.

Actions – Initiative 1.4

1.4.1 Develop a regional task force to assist PICTs on request in the development and implementation of National Ocean Policies and Action Plans that complement the Regional Ocean Policy and PIROFISA.

1.4.2 Develop mechanisms to assist countries in implementing ocean policies and plans, including toolkits, guidelines, processes and case studies.

1.4.3 Promote country-to-country exchanges.



THEME 2: IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING OF THE OCEAN

Sustainable development and management of marine resources and the broader marine and coastal environment relies on a thorough understanding of the relevant issues and processes, including traditional knowledge. Such understanding can be developed only if information is both available and can be readily understood by all stakeholders. Building the capacity to collect, process, disseminate and understand information – at the local, national and regional level – is a critical component in the implementation of PIROP. Ensuring shared access to global and regional developments in science and technology is an important aspect of this challenge. The objective of the initiatives relating to understanding is to improve the availability, management, use and dissemination of information in ways that leads to better-informed decision-making and increased public support for sound ocean management.

Initiative 2.1 Identify and prioritise information needs and expand information gathering efforts.

As utilisation of the ocean intensifies the need for an expanded information and knowledge base increases. Significant needs include inventorying and gaining access to the results of research activities, identifying and addressing gaps in the knowledge base, and coordinating future research.

Actions – Initiative 2.1

2.1.1 Document the existing information and knowledge base, in part through an inventory of past and current marine research activities.

2.1.2 Prioritise information and knowledge requirements and identify significant gaps.

2.1.3 Develop mechanisms for coordinating relevant observing and monitoring activities, including initiatives from within the region and access to data and products generated by external partners.

2.1.4 Develop regional and national guidelines to monitor and coordinate research, in accordance with UNCLOS provisions.

2.1.5 Build capacity to conduct and strengthen the requirements for socio-economic valuation and assessment of resources, of biological processes, and of pollution.

2.1.6 Undertake an assessment of the value of the Pacific Ocean (including considerations of subsistence use, ecological services, recreational value and similar factors).



Initiative 2.2 Improve access to information and ensure protection for sensitive information, enhance knowledge management and improve the use of information in decision-making.

Regional coordination of access to and sharing of information (including scientific, social, and economic information) will help to make information more broadly accessible and useable. It is critical that management of information within the region be enhanced, and that information be formatted in a way that can support decision-making.

Actions – Initiative 2.2

2.2.1 Establish a regional network, with agreed-to procedures, formats and protocols for ocean-related information management and sharing.

2.2.2 Ensure PICTs have access to data from global and regional observation systems.

2.2.3 Promote development of adequate communications systems for PICTs to access and exchange information.

2.2.4 Establish clearinghouses for various types of ocean-related information and establish convenient means to broadly share and distribute information (via websites, PIMRIS, etc.).

2.2.5 Enhance knowledge management within the region, including through the enhancement and/or establishment of tertiary and other training opportunities to improve knowledge and information management capacity.

Actions – Initiative 2.2 (continued)

2.2.6 Provide technical assistance to PICTs to facilitate the incorporation of scientific and technical information in decision-making.

2.2.7 Ensure agencies (e.g. research institutions, CROP agencies and NGOs) report scientific information in a form that is readable and understandable by the public and decision makers.

2.2.8 Develop regional protocols and more general processes for the sharing and return of ocean research results to local communities, and the broader region.



Initiative 2.3 – Promote formal and informal education, training and capacity building of local people in marine science, marine affairs and related disciplines.

Ensuring residents of PICTs receive education and training relevant to ocean and coastal management is a crucial aspect of capacity building. The need to strengthen the knowledge base of local people and develop an ongoing public interest in ocean issues should be addressed through the establishment and strengthening of relevant national education programmes at all levels. It is important that teaching and training meets country needs and addresses priority issues. Training courses need to be relevant and effective and should be designed to generate lasting benefits and appropriate skills transfer; education and training initiatives need support from communities, governments and regional organisations.

Actions – Initiative 2.3

2.3.1 Identify and address gaps in formal and informal education programmes in the areas of ocean science and governance.

2.3.2 Enhance opportunities for technical training in ocean related areas through both formal and informal means.

2.3.3 Develop and implement in-country training programmes in priority areas.

2.3.4 Enhance teacher training and curriculum in ocean-related subjects.

2.3.5 Consider and develop informal training mechanisms for transfer of skills in marine science and ocean governance.

2.3.6 Seek opportunities for coordinating and combining education, training and capacity building initiatives with other regional initiatives.

Initiative 2.4 – Communicate ocean issues effectively to build strong public support for sound ocean management

Information relating to ocean and coastal issues is technical and may not be readily understood by the public. To raise awareness of ocean issues and the consequences of human activities the media should be engaged as partners in the effort to implement PIROP.



Actions – Initiative 2.4

2.4.1 Collaborate, engage with and sensitise the media regarding ocean, coastal and island issues.

2.4.2 Develop communications strategies, including national and regional awareness campaigns, for making technical information available to the public in an understandable form, which take into account different stakeholder interests and characteristics.

2.4.3 Raise the profile of the need for responsible governance of the ocean and coasts, including through a regional and national launch of the PI-ROFISA.

THEME 3: SUSTAINABLY DEVELOPING AND MANAGING THE USE OF OCEAN RESOURCES

The concept of sustainable development is central to PIROP. The marine environment represents both a primary development asset and a source of basic food security that remains crucial to many Pacific Islanders. Integrated approaches — that consider environmental, social, economic and cultural implications of development and resource use — are critical if development and management are to be sustainable. The objective of the initiatives relating to sustainable development and management is to increase adoption of practices, approaches and processes that promote sustainable ocean resource use, development and management.

Initiative 3.1 Adopt an integrated approach to development and management of the ocean.

Mechanisms for implementing precautionary and ecosystems-based management are still under development, but the inclusion of these principles in the PIROP affirms that maintaining the health of the ocean is of primary importance for Pacific Island peoples. Adoption of the principle of precautionary management clearly acknowledges that there remains much that we do not know about the marine environment. The call for an integrated, ecosystem-based management approach — in place of species or resource-specific management — reflects the fact that the ocean is a very complex environment, one where a multitude of factors must be considered when determining how intensively a resource can be targeted, or whether a development should proceed. There is a need, throughout the region, to integrate and strengthen existing management arrangements, to require and build capacity to undertake impact assessments of significant policy and development initiatives, and to ensure an integrated approach is incorporated in the development of management regimes for specific resources and their environments.



Actions — Initiative 3.1

3.1.1 Promote the adoption of a precautionary approach to management of ocean resources.

3.1.2 Strengthen processes that support integrated or ecosystems-based management, and assist PICTs in developing capacity to undertake integrated management that is responsive to local conditions.

3.1.3 Identify and enhance mechanisms that promote the use of traditional knowledge in management, policy and decision making.

3.1.4 Build capacity to undertake environmental and socio-economic assessment and monitoring of the impacts of policy and development initiatives.

3.1.5 Incorporate impact assessment into decision making (through Environmental and Socio-economic Impact Assessments or similar mechanisms).

3.1.6 Adopt and implement Codes of Best Practices for activities (e.g. tourism, shipping, fishing) impacting on marine resources resource management.

3.1.7 Promote community-initiated resource management activities and empower local communities and stakeholders to undertake resource management.

3.1.8 Sustainably develop and manage inshore marine resources within an integrated coastal management framework.

3.1.9 Assist PICTs to develop integrated management plans and strategies for inshore areas.

3.1.10 Develop an integrated regional management plan and strategy for offshore and high seas

Initiative 3.2 Address social, economic and cultural issues associated with resource development and management.

In the Pacific Islands region, decisions concerning resource use (whether at the community or national scale) are inevitably related to social and economic factors.

Action – Initiative 3.2

3.2.1 Ensure socio-economic and cultural issues are considered and addressed in the course of marine resource development and management.



Initiative 3.3 Encourage equitable sharing of resource access and benefits at local, national and regional levels.

Achieving fair and equal access to and sharing of benefits from resources is a significant challenge, and one that is of growing importance as resources are increasingly viewed in economic terms. There is a need to develop and implement measures to facilitate the negotiation of equitable resource sharing, both within the region and between PICTs and other nations. There is also a need to determine means by which PICT's sustainable return on the use of living and non-living resources can be maximised.

Action – Initiative 3.3

3.3.1 Establish frameworks and mechanisms that facilitate negotiation of equitable resource sharing.



THEME 4: MAINTAINING THE HEALTH OF THE OCEAN

The ocean's health and productivity are determined by regional-scale ecosystem processes, and are dependent upon the integrity of the ocean ecosystem, and on minimization of the harmful impact of human activities. Threats to the health of the ocean stem from both marine-based activities and land-based activities. The objective of the initiatives relating to health of the ocean is to reduce the negative impacts of human activities and implement measures that protect and conserve biodiversity.

Initiative 4.1: Assess and address all sources of pollution and contamination impacting on the ocean and coasts.

Legal and institutional mechanisms that relate to shipping and fishing-related pollution need to be strengthened, and national and regional capacity to address monitoring, enforcement and cleanup of marine-source pollution should be established and enhanced.



Actions – Initiative 4.1

4.1.1 Establish and increase national and regional capacity to address monitoring, enforcement and cleanup of marine-source pollution.

4.1.2 Support the transfer and/or adoption of appropriate technologies that minimise pollution.

4.1.3 Develop and implement Environmental Management Plan(s) for all major ports in the region.

4.1.4 Undertake a regional risk assessment /sensitivity mapping for areas adjacent to major shipping routes.

4.1.5 Assess the options for dealing with ship borne waste, including national capacity to dispose of ship borne waste without adverse impacts on island systems and communities.



4.1.6 Strengthen capability for real time monitoring of ocean and coastal ecosystems to provide input into management decisions.

4.1.7 Establish and increase national and regional capacity to address monitoring, enforcement and cleanup of land-based pollution. 4.1.8 Strengthen the control of transboundary movement of hazardous waste, especially through the enhancement of activities under relevant agreements.

4.1.9 Develop and transfer methodologies to rehabilitate coastal and ocean ecosystems degraded as a result of pollution or other impacts.

4.1.10 Encourage governments to incorporate "user-pays" principles in permitting and regulatory processes.

Initiative 4.2 Address threats from introduced and invasive species.

Invasive alien species pose a significant threat to the marine environment, as well as to livelihoods dependent on ocean and coastal resources; invasive species may be extremely difficult and costly to contain should they become established within the region. There is a need to develop a coordinated approach to invasive marine organisms at both regional and national levels.

Actions – Initiative 4.2

- 4.2.1 Implement existing regional commitments on control of introduced and invasive species.
- 4.2.2 Develop and implement regional and national plans to address introduced and invasive species.
- 4.2.3 Develop policies and best practices addressing priority issues, including:
 - Freshwater species
 - Marine organisms in ballast water
 - Aquaculture and mariculture species
 - Genetically modified materials
 - Inter-island and intra-country transfer
- 4.2.4 Improve understanding and raise awareness of the threats posed by invasive organisms, and management options.

Initiative 4.3 Protect and conserve biological diversity, including ecosystems, species and genotypes, at local, national and regional scales.

Conservation of biodiversity is crucial to the long-term health of both coastal and oceanic ecosystems. It is important that biodiversity protection be pursued in a way that is compatible with community control of resources, and not unduly restrictive of social and economic development, particularly at the community level.

Actions – Initiative 4.3

- 4.3.1 Establish a representative regional network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Locally Managed Marine Areas that includes oceanic MPAs.
- 4.3.2 Support existing coordinating mechanisms that address biodiversity management.
- 4.3.3 Ratify and implement relevant regional and international biodiversity related protocols.
- 4.3.4 Develop and implement regional plans of action, recovery plans and protection for specific species of concern, including rare, threatened and endangered species.



THEME 5: PROMOTING THE PEACEFUL USE OF THE OCEAN

Agreements, laws, policies and regulations will be effective only if they are complied with by individuals, companies, organisations, and governments from within and outside the region. Monitoring, compliance, and enforcement (MCE) initiatives, including local, national and regional coordination mechanisms, need to be strengthened. Capacity building, education and information dissemination at both the community level and for industry and law enforcement agencies are elements of strengthening MCE. The objective of the initiatives relating to peaceful use is to ensure that the ocean is not used for criminal or other activities that breach local, national or international laws



Initiative 5.1 Enhance monitoring, compliance and enforcement initiatives

Actions – Initiative 5.1

- 5.1.1 Assist countries in fully implementing surveillance and monitoring systems.
- 5.1.2 Strengthen compliance, monitoring and enforcement initiatives at the local, national and regional level.
- 5.1.3 Broaden and enhance partnership networks that monitor and report on compliance locally, nationally and regionally.
- 5.1.4 Support capacity building initiatives to strengthen monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS).
- 5.1.5 Establish appropriate mechanisms for conflict resolution.

Initiative 5.2 Ensure all activities meet relevant international, regional and national standards.

Actions – Initiative 5.2

- 5.2.1 Develop national focal points or other highly placed advocates who can help build political will and accountability and generate community support for prosecution.
- 5.2.2 Promote awareness activities pertaining to local ocean and coastal laws and regulations.
- 5.2.3 Educate, inform and involve industry, law enforcement agencies, armed forces, judiciaries and others in regarding enforcement for ocean management.

Initiative 5.3 Monitor progress in implementing PIROP.

It is vital that all stakeholders be able to monitor how effectively the Policy is being implemented.

Actions – Initiative 5.3

- 5.3.1 Institute annual reporting to governing councils regarding progress against PIROP/FISA initiatives.
- 5.3.2 Formally evaluate implementation progress, as well as the impact of the Ocean Policy (at both regional and national levels) after five years (in 2010).



THEME 6: CREATING PARTNERSHIPS AND PROMOTING COOPERATION

Partnerships and cooperation provide an enabling environment and are an essential part of achieving sustainable ocean management. The ocean environment that links PICTs also serves to connect activities that occur on land with ocean processes. In addition, some of the ocean's most valuable resources are migratory and /or transboundary and subject to exploitation by both PICTs and other nations; this serves to heighten the need for collaboration in management of the ocean environment. The objective of the initiatives relating to partnerships and cooperation is to develop partnerships and foster cooperation, both within and outside the region, which will further implementation of the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy and this ISA and make optimal use of available resources.

Initiative 6.1 Develop international partnerships that promote the interests and special concerns of Pacific Island states.

The Pacific region is small in terms of population and remote from key centres, but the decisions made by distant nations can impact directly on PICTs. It is important that other nations recognise the challenges faced by PICTs, which can best be accomplished by improving communication of island issues and views to global audiences.



Actions – Initiative 6.1

- 6.1.1 Support existing and emerging international partnerships that are contributing benefits and enhanced capacity to the Pacific Islands region.
- 6.1.2 Raise awareness in international arenas of the development challenges faced by the Pacific Islands.
- 6.1.3 Improve communication of island issues and views to global audiences, including regional reporting to international fora.
- 6.1.4 Promote south-south relationships, partnerships with the private sector, civil society and NGOs.
- 6.1.5 Seek recognition and cooperation from neighbouring jurisdictions in the implementation of the PIROP and the PIROP-ISA.

Initiative 6.2 Utilise partnerships and collaboration to the fullest extent possible in the implementation of PIROP.

Facilitating and fostering cooperation on ocean issues and maximising the effectiveness of existing organisations and partnerships can be achieved by increasing awareness of partnership possibilities, and building effective partnerships to strengthen capacity for integrated ocean and coastal management; through enhanced cooperation and collaboration within and beyond CROP.



Actions – Initiative 6.2

- 6.2.1 Establish intra-governmental ocean committees to strengthen linkages both within country and at the regional level.
- 6.2.2 Enhance collaboration among regional bodies in areas of shared responsibility through the establishment of integrated consultative arrangements.
- 6.2.3 Develop partnerships and financing arrangements.
- 6.2.4 Establish a network or registry of relevant NGOs, non-state actors, and private sector interests.

REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS, ASSOCIATIONS AND CONSULTATIVE BODIES

CROP: The Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific

CROP is composed of the heads of the region's ten major regional organisations (including those listed below). CROP promotes joint initiatives, identifies areas of mutual interest and formulates strategies for addressing priorities and issues. In addition to informal cooperation, several CROP agencies maintain formal MOUs.

Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) Established in 1979 and based in Honiara, Solomon Islands, FFA provides oceanic fisheries management and policy advice to its Pacific Island members. [www.ffa.int].

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) Based in Suva, Fiji Islands PIFS concentrates on political affairs and regional coordination. Membership includes Australia, New Zealand and the 14 independent Pacific Island states. [www.forumsec.org.fj/].

Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Headquartered in Noumea, New Caledonia SPC is a non-political, technical assistance and research organisation. Marine programmes focus on coastal fisheries management, oceanic fisheries assessment and research, and maritime transport and shipping issues. [www.spc.int].

Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) Based in Apia, Samoa, SPREP has responsibility for regional coordination on environmental and conservation-related issues. [www.sprep.org.ws]

South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) Based in Suva, Fiji Islands, SOPAC's work focuses on providing members with assistance in three areas i) resource development, ii) environmental science and iii) national capacity development. Its focus includes minerals, water and energy resource identification, promotion and development; environmental geoscience; human resource development; and disaster management. [www.sopac.org.fj]

South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) Fosters regional cooperation in the development and promotion of tourism to and within the island nations of the South Pacific. [<http://www.tcsp.com>]

The University of the South Pacific (USP) Based in Suva, Fiji with three major campuses (in Fiji, Vanuatu and Samoa) and distance learning centres in each of its 12 member countries. [www.usp.ac.fj].



CROP Consultative Mechanisms

CROP organisations support three consultative mechanisms dedicated to Pacific Island natural systems research and resource management: The **Heads of Fisheries** meeting and the **Standing Committee on Tuna and Billfish (SCTB)** are dedicated to fisheries and supported by SPC. SOPAC's **Science Technology and Resources Network (STAR)** supports discussion on geoscience issues.

Regional Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs)

World Wide Fund for Nature's South Pacific Programme (WWF SPP)

Conservation International (CI)

The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

International Conservation Union (IUCN)

Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI)

Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation The Roundtable has responsibility for the *Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the Pacific Islands Region*, which is formally endorsed by many regional and international multinational and non-government organisations.

Locally Managed Marine Area Network

(LMMA) A group of projects and practitioners that are collaborating to share learning experiences and improve the potential for success of their individual and collective coastal conservation efforts; coordinated through USP.



Associations and Consultative Bodies

The Association of Pacific Ports (APP) A trade and information association founded in 1913 as the Association of Pacific and Far East Ports, for the purpose of promoting increased efficiency and effectiveness of the ports of the Pacific. The name, but not the objectives, was changed in 1934 [www.associationofpacificports.com/].

Pacific Islands Maritime Association (PacMA) The principal interactive forum and key advisory body for national government agencies responsible for maritime affairs and the maritime sector within the region. Officially incorporated under the Charitable Trust Act of Fiji in 1996 and formerly known as the Association of Pacific Islands Maritime Training Institutions and Maritime Authorities (APIMTIMA), the association achieved most of its aims so broadened its mandate and membership to play a more dominant role in managing maritime affairs and utilising regional resources to assist Pacific island countries and territories.



Pacific Association of Technical Vocational Education and Training (PATVET)

An association of regional vocational education and technical training providers established in 2001 to promote relevant issues, provide an interactive forum for members and develop regional recognition of qualifications from member States. PATVET also provides an avenue to liaise and interact with technical training and vocational education providers from outside the region.

Pacific Women in Maritime Association (WIMA) A regional body of women in the maritime sector to be officially established as an Association in 2005. The association is intended to be the principal interactive forum for women employed in the maritime sector to discuss and debate issues of concern to the region's maritime industry as well as to promote solutions and opportunities that overcome the challenges faced by women in the wider maritime sector.

Marine Resources Pacific Consortium (MAREPAC) Coordinated through the University of Guam. The objective of MAREPAC is to provide a framework through which local groups, villages, institutions, agencies, NGO's private enterprises, and individuals can identify concerns and set priorities in addressing ocean-related issues.

Fisheries Councils and Commissions

Western Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Council The policy-making organization for the management of fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and US Pacific island possessions. It is one of eight regional councils in the United States established under the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976. The main task of the Council is to protect fishery resources while maintaining opportunities for domestic fishing at sustainable levels of effort and yield. The Council encourages cooperative fishery management among the island and distant-water fishing nations throughout the Pacific. [www.wpcouncil.org]

Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission The Commission was established to implement the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. The Contracting Parties to the Convention are members of the Commission. Functions of the Commission include the adoption of conservation and management measures to ensure the long-term sustainability of stocks; the promotion of cooperation and coordination between members of the Commission to ensure that conservation and management measures for highly migratory fish stocks in areas under national jurisdiction and on the high seas are compatible; and the establishment of mechanisms to monitor and control fishing on the high seas. [www.wcpfc.org/]

Members of the Commission (as of March 2005): Australia, China, Cook Islands, European Community, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Chinese Taipei, Tokelau (Participating Territory), Tonga and Tuvalu.

Observers: States and regional economic integration organizations: Canada, European Community, France, French Polynesia, Indonesia, Japan, New Caledonia, Palau, Philippines, Russian Federation, United States of America, Vanuatu and Wallis and Futuna. **Intergovernmental organizations:** FFA, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), PIFS, the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Organization (IATTC), SPC, SPREP, and USP. **Non-governmental organizations:** Greenpeace, International Game Fishing Association (IGFA).



EXISTING REGIONAL AGREEMENTS, PLANS and POLICIES

1982 Nauru Agreement Concerning Cooperation in the Management of Fisheries of Common Interest: A sub-regional agreement among the eight Pacific States whose waters account for the majority of the region's tuna catch. [www.oceanlaw.net/texts/nauru.htm]

1986 Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the Pacific Islands Region and Associated Protocols (Nouméa Convention): At the time of its adoption, the Convention and its two protocols provided a comprehensive umbrella agreement for the protection, management and development of the marine and coastal environment of the Pacific Islands region.

1986 Action Plan for Managing the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region: SPREP was established in 1982 as a programme of SPC. It was accorded formal legal status as an autonomous regional organisation in 1993 under the Agreement Establishing SPREP. The Action Plan entered into force in 1995. [www.sprep.org.ws]

1989 Wellington Convention for the Prohibition of Fishing with Long Driftnets in the South Pacific: This Convention was negotiated as part of the global response to concerns over the rapid expansion of fishing for albacore tuna in the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans by Japanese, Korean and Taiwanese driftnet fleets in the 1980s. All Pacific Island countries except Papua New Guinea and Tonga have signed or ratified the Convention. [www.oceanlaw.net/texts/wellington.htm]

1990 Apia Convention on Conservation of Nature in the South Pacific: The Apia Convention was negotiated in the mid-1970s to support national and regional action for the conservation, utilisation and development of the natural resources of the South Pacific region through careful planning and management for the benefit of present and future generations. The Convention prescribes the establishment and maintenance of national parks, protected areas and reserves to protect indigenous flora and fauna. [<http://www.spc.org.nc/coastfish/Asides/conventions/apia.htm>]

1992 Palau Arrangement for the Management of the Western Pacific Purse Seine Fishery: The Parties to the Nauru Agreement negotiated the Palau Arrangement in the early 1990s in response to a rapid expansion of purse seine fishing effort in the region and concerns over the impact of purse seine fishing on juvenile yellowfin and bigeye tuna. [www.spc.int/oceanfish/html/sctb/sctb14/FT5_Opnai_Clark.pdf]

1992 Niue Treaty on Cooperation in Fisheries Surveillance and Law Enforcement in the South Pacific Region: The Niue Treaty, based on Article 73 of UNCLOS, was negotiated to promote the optimum utilisation of limited fisheries surveillance and fisheries law enforcement resources in the Pacific Islands region. [www.oceanlaw.net/texts/niue.htm]

1995 Convention to Ban the Importation into Forum Island Countries of Hazardous and Radioactive Wastes and the Control of the Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within the South Pacific Region (The Waigani Convention). The main purpose of the Waigani Convention is to ban the importation of hazardous and radioactive wastes from outside the Pacific Islands region. The Convention also ensures that any transboundary movements of hazardous wastes within the Convention Area are undertaken in a controlled and environmentally sound manner. SPREP is the Secretariat for the Convention.

1997 Strategic Action Programme for the International Waters of Pacific Small Island Developing States: During formulation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) in 1997, environmental threats and their root causes were examined from the perspective of critical species, their habitats, and living and non-living marine resources. The SAP was designed to support actions to address the root causes of environmental threats. [www.sprep.org.ws/iwp]

Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change, Climate Variability and Sea Level Rise: In 1997 SPREP commenced the implementation of the Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Programme (PICCAP) that sought to build on work undertaken during the preparation of National Environment Management Strategies (NEMS) in 1992-93 in relation to adaptation and mitigation measures associated with climate change and variability and rising sea levels. [www.sprep.org.ws/climate_change]

2001 Pacific Wastewater Strategic Action Plan: The Plan's objective is to support the efforts of Pacific Island countries to address the serious public health problems and the degradation of coastal ecosystems that result from the disposal in coastal areas of inadequately treated municipal wastewater.

2002 Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy: The CROP Marine Sector Working Group, at the direction of the Pacific Islands Forum, worked for over two years to develop a Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy. The Thirty-Third Pacific Islands Forum (held in Suva, Fiji, in August 2002), adopted the Policy. A Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Forum (PIROF) was held in Suva in February 2004 to develop an implementation framework for the Ocean Policy. [www.piocean.org]

Draft Master Plan For Solid Waste Management In Pacific Island Countries: In 2003, the Government of Japan provided assistance to Pacific Island countries to produce draft Master Plan for managing solid waste in the Pacific Islands at national and regional levels. The Plan is to be implemented over a period of ten years.

Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific: The objective of the Western Pacific Fisheries Convention, which entered into force in 2004, is to promote the conservation and sustainable use of highly migratory fish stocks in the western and central Pacific Ocean, in accordance with the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement. [<http://www.wcpfc.org/>]

IMPLEMENTING THE REGIONAL OCEAN POLICY

What does the Regional Ocean Policy offer?

A mandate for action: The Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy has been endorsed by all 22 Pacific Island countries and territories. It is a very clear and direct call by national leaders for action to ensure the long-term integrity of their ocean environment.

A focus for collaboration: The Policy and the PIROFISA serve to link the Pacific's many ocean-related organisations, programmes, and initiatives, and provide an opportunity for coordination, collaboration and cooperation that extends across borders and disciplines.

An opportunity: Implementation of the Ocean Policy represents the chance to transcend business as usual, and to forge links between governments, civil society, international and intergovernmental organisations and private enterprise.

What does successful implementation of the Ocean Policy require?

Commitment: Realising the potential of the Ocean Policy requires a commitment – by individuals, communities, nations and organisations – to the principles embodied within the Ocean Policy, and to the initiatives and actions detailed in the PIROFISA.

Leadership: It is critical that the regional organisations, international agencies and programmes, and donor partners already actively working on ocean-related issues assume a leading role in supporting and enabling implementation of the Ocean Policy.



For more information about the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy:

Visit the website: www.spc.int/piocean

Write or call: CROP Marine Sector Working Group
C/O The Secretariat of the Pacific Community
BPD5, 98848 Noumea-Cedex, New Caledonia
+687-26-2000

Email: Dr Tim Adams (Director of Marine Resources): tima@spc.int
Mary Power (Coordinator, Reef Fisheries Observatory): maryp@spc.int

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) is the region's largest and oldest regional organisation. It provides technical assistance to its 22 Pacific Island members on social, land and marine resource-related issues. SPC chairs the CROP Marine Sector Working Group, and has taken a leading role in coordinating development of the PIROFISA.



"We stand as the guardians of the Oceanic heritage. But we do this not just for ourselves – for the benefit of our sovereign nations. We act for the entire planet, knowing that the Pacific is a treasure for all humanity, a resource for the world."

The Hon. Laisenia Qarase, Prime Minister, Fiji Islands.