



LISTENING TO THE PACIFIC

FRAMEWORK FOR PACIFIC REGIONALISM REGIONAL INITIATIVE SUBMISSION TEMPLATE 2016

The Framework for Pacific Regionalism

The Framework for Pacific Regionalism represents a high-level commitment to pursuing deeper regionalism and establishes a process for developing and prioritising regional public policy. It articulates the vision, values and objectives of an enhanced Pacific regionalism. It also sets out an inclusive process by which anyone can propose ideas for regional initiatives to address key challenges facing the Pacific. For more information, [click here](#).

Regional Issues and Guidance

When preparing your submission, think carefully about why this is an issue of regional significance and why it should be placed before the Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum. For further information on the process and types of submissions being sought, please refer to the guideline below.

To Submit a Regional Initiative

1. Complete the below regional initiative template below.
2. Submit initiative to the Forum Secretariat by deadline: **5pm, Fiji time, Sunday 10 April 2016**.
3. Initiatives should be submitted to the Forum Secretariat, through one of the following ways:



Email

FPR@forumsec.org



Post

C/O Pacific Regionalism Adviser
Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
Private Mail Bag
Suva, Fiji



Hand Delivery

Reception
Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
Ratu Sukuna Road
Suva, Fiji



Fax

+679 322 0215 Attention: Pacific Regionalism Adviser

Please note that all submissions must be made using this template.

For more information contact Pacific Regionalism Adviser Joel Nilon at the Forum Secretariat:
Email: FPR@forumsec.org | Phone: +679 322 0327

Feedback

Any feedback on this template or process: Email FPR@forumsec.org



FRAMEWORK FOR PACIFIC REGIONALISM – REGIONAL INITIATIVE TEMPLATE

Please complete each section below.

1. Contact Details

Please provide the following contact details:

Name of individual or group submitting initiative

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Name and position of primary contact

Individual

Email address

Phone number

Fax number

Mailing address

2. Name of Initiative

Does sovereignty matters in regional integration in the Pacific?



3. What is the common regional issue or challenge that this regional initiative aims to address?

You may also want to address the following: What are the causes of this issue? Are there links to national, regional or international goals/policies?

Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.

The common regional issue or challenge that this regional initiative aims to address relates to the notion of 'sovereignty'. Regional cooperation involves commitment from member countries thus central to the degree of commitment comes the prize of giving up some attributes of sovereignty. Regionalism as a whole embraces the 'give and take' idea or in simple terms in order for a country to enjoy benefits in an organisation has to do some sacrifice. This means voluntary sharing of resources for the benefit of other member countries.

Regionalism is now on the world's agenda. This is because of the intricacy of globalisation at the turn of the twenty-first century. Globalisation has increasingly affected the world system through the global mobility of people and the revolution of information. The challenge of climate change and business and employment opportunities within the region and at the global stage, the way revolution of information technologies has transformed the lives of the people are pushing the borders of nation-states to become porous. These changes have contributed to the transition from 'old geo-politics of Westphalia to the 'geo-politics of interregional relationships.

The transition implies that the world is descending into a more pluralist system. The growing intimacy of the world is gradually undermining the Westphalia notion of 'sovereignty' and replacing it with increased cooperation among states. States are becoming more cooperative at the regional and international levels through organisational activities. This has caused the boundaries of sovereign states shrink further and further back.

Regionalism gained prominence and stature in the 1950s and 1960s through the role of regional organisations. This was made possible when countries began to organise themselves into groupings. Factors like geographical proximity and common cultural and historical backgrounds propelled countries to organise themselves into groupings. Other reasons and more contemporary include (according to Maurice & Winters, 2003)

- Governments wish to bind themselves to better trade and investment policies based on democracy in order to attract domestic and foreign investors.
- A desire to establish more secure to major markets.
- The pressure of globalisation, forcing firms and countries to seek efficiency through larger markets, increased competition, and access to foreign technologies and investment.
- Government's desire to maintain sovereignty by pooling it with others in areas of economic management where most nation states are too small to act alone.
- A desire to jog the multilateral system into faster and deeper accommodation in selected areas by showing that the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was not the only game in town and by creating powerful blocs that would operate within the GATT system.
- A desire to help neighbouring countries stabilize and prosper both for altruistic reasons and to avoid spillovers of unrest and population.
- The fear of being left out while the rest of the world swept into regionalism, either because this would be actually harmful to exclude countries or just because of the 'Bandwagon Appeal'.

What does this mean for Pacific Regionalism? Pacific regionalism has improved greatly following the establishment of the Pacific Plan. The plan through its four key principles has transformed the understanding of regionalism from mere togetherness to the integration of all island countries within the region. Regionalism in the past has only been evolved around the role of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), formerly known as the South Pacific Forum (SPF).

Sovereignty will matter a lot when all member countries of PIF are committed towards implementing the four key principles of the Pacific Plan.



4. Briefly describe this regional initiative

You may also want to address the following in this section:

How would this initiative contribute to a positive change to the region?

Who are the main beneficiaries?

How would the initiative contribute to the vision, values and objectives of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism?

Has the initiative been carried out previously?

What are the key risks in implementing this initiative?

Are there any complementary projects and programmes that are currently active?

Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.

For a start, all member countries of PIF, excluding Australia and New Zealand, are developing countries which means that they are less likely to maintain their sovereign status as far as development is concern. Common developmental challenges of education, health, unemployment, infrastructure and more to that is corruption have socio economically reduced their development aspirations. In the era of regionalism, development cannot be pursued in isolation by countries but can be internationally oriented so as to meet the demands of the new world order, brought about by globalisation.

Globalisation is contributing to the decline of sovereignty through both threats and challenges. It is more a steadfast attempt by developed countries and the multinational companies to develop their economies as much as exploiting the resources of the developing countries. This relates to Richard Falk's criticisms of 'predatory globalisation'.

How far the developing countries of PIF maintain their sovereignty. It is important to note their sovereignty have already been affected and will continue to be case in the years to come. The only way to maintain their sovereignty will be to enhance their integration into regional cooperation. Integration does not mean the total loss of sovereignty but it does mean the breaking down of barriers such as customs requirements, tariff requirements, visa requirements and so forth – these are issues that are obstacle to growth and prosperity.

It is worth noting that most of the developing island countries have contracts or partnerships with both international and non-government organisations. When they sign an agreement or treaty with these organisations they transfer some of their sovereignty to these organisations. It is about opening national borders to enhance the development aspirations of peace and order, and good governance.

On the other hand, sovereignty is declining in international politics. This is because of the growing intimacy of the world where the global movement of people around the world with the revolution in information technologies are causing the polarization of state's



sovereignty. Even international law is giving up the ‘right to intervene’ whilst pursuing the ‘right to protect’. That is where states see in their interests to help and support each other – friends and foes as to reform the world order.

The question most of the island countries may ask is, how the national interests of the island countries can be pursued against the regional interests. Throughout the short history of regionalism in the Pacific, regional cooperation was a cover up for the island countries to work in isolation to build public confidence and pursue their national interests. This is when bilateral interests tend to be valued more important than the regional interests.

One of the yardsticks to exemplify this initiative is the approach taken by MSG member countries to have visa free status for travellers. This has worked out well and must be applied to all PIF member countries.

5. Why does this initiative require the attention of the Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum?

Please consider whether this initiative requires the attention and consideration of the Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum in order to be implemented and outline why this is the case. Could it not be overseen or implemented at the level of Ministers, officials or by a regional agency?

Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.

Does sovereignty matters in regional integration in the Pacific, is an initiative that require the attention of Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum. This initiative require the attention of the Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum is because since the establishment of the Pacific Plan in 2004 not all member countries have been committed to the four key principles of the Pacific Plan, which is solely based on idea of strengthening regional cooperation and integration;

1. Increasing level of sustainable returns to the Pacific
2. Ensuring the successful implementation of the regional cooperation at the national level.
3. Meeting common responsibilities and providing services cost-effectively
4. Developing partnerships with neighbours and beyond.

The progressive reports on the implementation of these key principles of the plan are merely paper achievements than tangible outcomes. The way forward is firstly, the Pacific Plan must involve political commitment from the member countries from PIF. It would through such commitments that the members can ensure successful implementation of regional cooperation. Secondly, to bring about debate on integration to the member countries and their people. Integration has relevance to the region and regional integration would be seen as a vehicle for reaping the sustainable returns, where common responsibilities are met and where important and essential services will be provided cost-effectively.



PACIFIC ISLANDS
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6. Attachments

Please attach additional information in support of this initiative.

Please attach no more than 3 pages.

7. Uploading initiatives to the Forum Secretariat website

In line with the process outlined in the [Framework for Pacific Regionalism](#), all submitted initiatives, inclusive of all attachments, will be publicly available via the Forum Secretariat website.

8. Guidelines and Contact Details

For further information on completing this template, consult the submissions guideline below or contact Pacific Regionalism Adviser Joel Nilon at the Forum Secretariat: Email: FPR@forumsec.org | Phone: +679 322 0327



Submission Guidelines

These guidelines are designed to assist those submitting regional initiatives through the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. For more information contact Pacific Regionalism Adviser Joel Nilon at the Forum Secretariat:

Email: FPR@forumsec.org | Phone: +679 322 0327

1. About the Framework for Pacific Regionalism

The Framework for Pacific Regionalism represents a high-level commitment to pursuing deeper regionalism and establishes a process for developing and prioritising regional public policy. It articulates the vision, values and objectives of an enhanced Pacific regionalism. It also sets out an inclusive process by which anyone can propose ideas for regional initiatives to address key challenges facing the Pacific. For more information, [click here](#).

2. How do I submit a regional initiative?

To submit a regional initiative, complete all sections of the submission template and submit to the Forum Secretariat by no later **5pm, Fiji time, Sunday 10 April 2016**.

Submissions must be made on this template. Submissions made directly via email, letter or other format will not be considered.

Delivery of submissions can be made via one of the following



Email

FPR@forumsec.org



Post

Pacific Regionalism Adviser
Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
Private Mail Bag
Suva, Fiji



Hand Delivery

Reception
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Fax

+679 322 0215 Attn: Pacific Regionalism Adviser



3. Who can submit an initiative?

Any interested stakeholder can submit a regional initiative. This may include individuals, or groups of individuals or organisations, including government, civil society (including church or religious organisations), the private sector, community groups, multilateral agencies and CROP agencies.

4. What information is required?

In completing the regional initiative template, you should:

- a. Identify and seek to respond to issues and challenges that are common to the Pacific region and that could be best addressed through a regional response.
- b. Demonstrate that a high level political decision needs to be made.

This is not a process for seeking endorsement of existing projects or activities. No standing fund exists in which to allocate funds to initiatives that are endorsed. Submissions that consist of projects or initiatives that may be ordinarily carried out under the governance arrangements or work-plan of the submitting organisation are unlikely to be successful.

- c. Demonstrate how the initiative would contribute to one or more of the objectives of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism.

5. What assistance will the Forum Secretariat provide through this process

The Forum Secretariat will provide general advice and suggestions to those making submissions. This advice will include clarifying the information set out in this guideline, such as how initiatives can be completed and submitted; the type and level of information sought; the assessment process; and clarification of the overall process.

6. Assessment process

- Step 1** The Forum Secretariat will collate all submitted initiatives and check them for completeness.
- Step 2** The Forum Secretariat will, in collaboration with CROP agency officials and other experts as required, conduct a first round of assessment of all submitted initiatives using the tests for regional action (see Table 1 below).
- Step 3** The Forum Secretariat will provide all assessed initiatives to the Specialist Sub-Committee on Regionalism (SSCR), which will assess initiatives against the vision, values and objectives set out in the Framework (see Table 2 below). Reports on current regional initiatives under the Framework for Pacific Regionalism that are in progress will also be considered by the SSCR when they assess initiatives.
- Step 4** Based on its assessment of all submissions, the SSCR may recommend a limited number of initiatives to Forum Leaders. Those initiatives recommended to Leaders will be first sent to the Forum Officials



Committee for commentary and incorporation on the Leaders' annual meeting agenda. Forum Leaders will then receive the final recommendations of the SSCR and make decisions on these at the annual Forum Leaders Meeting. In 2016 this meeting will take place in the Federated States of Micronesia

Proponents whose initiatives have been selected for Leaders' consideration will be informed of this selection within two weeks of the SSCR's decision. All proponents will be informed in due course of the outcome of their submissions.

7. Leaders' decisions on initiatives

Forum Leaders' decisions on initiatives will be publicly announced through the Forum Leaders' Communique that is issued at the conclusion of the Leaders' meeting. As directed by Leaders, the Forum Secretariat will initiate implementation of the decisions in consultation with the proponent, the proposed implementing agencies, funding partners, and other relevant organisations or stakeholders.

8. Further help and feedback

For further information or guidance or to provide feedback on the process, contact Pacific Regionalism Adviser Joel Nilon at the Forum Secretariat: Email: FPR@forumsec.org | Phone: +679 322 0327



Table 1 – Tests for Regionalism

TEST	CRITERIA FOR REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION
Market test	The initiative should not involve a service that markets can provide well.
Sovereignty test	The initiative should maintain the degree of effective sovereignty held by national governments (countries, not regional bodies, should decide priorities).
Regionalism test	<p>The initiative should meet one of the following criteria at a sub-regional or regional level, in support of national priorities and objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ establish a shared norm or standard▪ establish a common position on an issue▪ deliver a public or quasi-public good which is regional (or sub-regional) in its scope realise economies of scale▪ overcome national capacity constraints▪ complement national governments where they lack capacity to provide national public goods like security or the rule of law▪ facilitate economic or political integration▪ Where benefits accrue sub-regionally, the contribution to broader regionalism should be clear.
Benefit test	<p>The initiative should bring substantial net benefits, as demonstrated by a cost-benefit analysis. The distribution of benefits across countries and across stakeholders within the region should also be considered—particularly with respect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The relative costs and benefits for smaller island states (an “SIS test”)▪ How inclusive the proposal is of all stakeholders who might benefit from regionalism.
Political oversight test	The initiative should require the Leaders’ attention and input (as opposed to being within the mandate of Ministers or other governing bodies).
Risk and sustainability test	The initiative should demonstrate a robust risk and sustainability evaluation, be based on a sound implementation plan, be supported by some identified funding, and demonstrate available capacity and experience for successful implementation.
Duplication test	The initiative should not be currently under progress by another organisation or process, and there should be no duplication of effort.



Table 2 – Vision, Values and Objectives of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism

Vision:

Our Pacific Vision is for a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion, and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead free, healthy, and productive lives

Values:

- We value and depend upon the integrity of our vast ocean and our island resources.
- We treasure the diversity and heritage of the Pacific and seek an inclusive future in which cultures, traditions and religious beliefs are valued, honoured and developed.
- We embrace good governance, the full observance of democratic values, the rule of law, the defence and promotion of all human rights, gender equality, and commitment to just societies.
- We seek peaceful, safe, and stable communities and countries, ensuring full security and wellbeing for the peoples of the Pacific.
- We support full inclusivity, equity and equality for all people of the Pacific.
- We strive for effective, open and honest relationships and inclusive and enduring partnerships—based on mutual accountability and respect—with each other, within our sub-regions, within our region, and beyond.

These Pacific regional values will guide all our policy-making and implementation.

Principal Objectives:

- Sustainable development that combines economic social, and cultural development in ways that improve livelihoods and well-being and use the environment sustainably;
- Economic growth that is inclusive and equitable;
- Strengthened governance, legal, financial, and administrative systems; and
- Security that ensures stable and safe human, environmental and political conditions for all.