

REGIONAL INITIATIVE TEMPLATE

Please complete each section below.

1. Contact Details

Please provide the following contact details:

Name of individual or group submitting initiative	The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)
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2. Name of Initiative

Regional initiative for water security and safe sanitation

3. Background and Rationale

You may consider: What is the issue being addressed by this initiative? What are the causes of this issue? Are there relevant studies that have been carried out to support the issue? Are there links to national, regional or international goals/policies?

Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.

Access to safe and sustainable drinking water and sanitation is a critical development issue for Forum Island Countries (FICs), with profound implications for economic growth, public health, the environment and human rights. The Millennium Development Goal targets for water and sanitation aim at halving the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation and safe drinking water by 2015. However, according to data collected by WHO and UNICEF for the Pacific as a whole, progress towards these targets has been very poor compared to neighbouring regions, other Small Island Developing States, and the world.

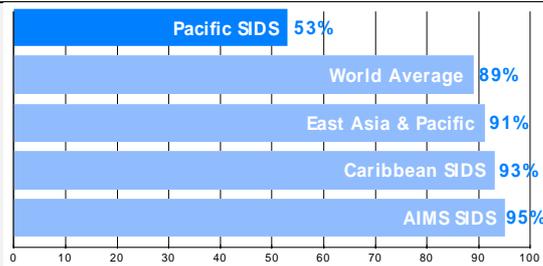


Figure 1: Percentage of population using improved drinking water sources, 2011

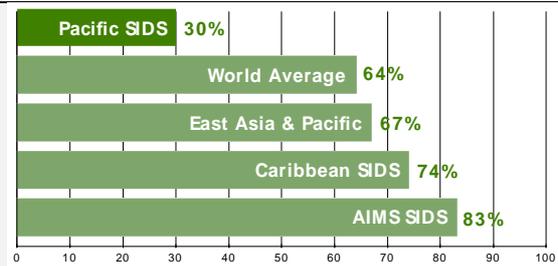


Figure 2: Percentage of population using improved sanitation, 2011

While all FICs have made some progress in water and sanitation, many of these efforts are not keeping up with population growth, meaning that the region as a whole is actually going backwards compared to progress made by the rest of the world. The challenge for FICs becomes even more difficult when considering proposed post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals, which call for universal access to safe water and sanitation by 2030. Meeting the proposed SDGs would require improved facilities to be made available to approximately 7 million additional people (water) and 10 million additional people (sanitation) across the region, with most of these facilities in rural PNG.

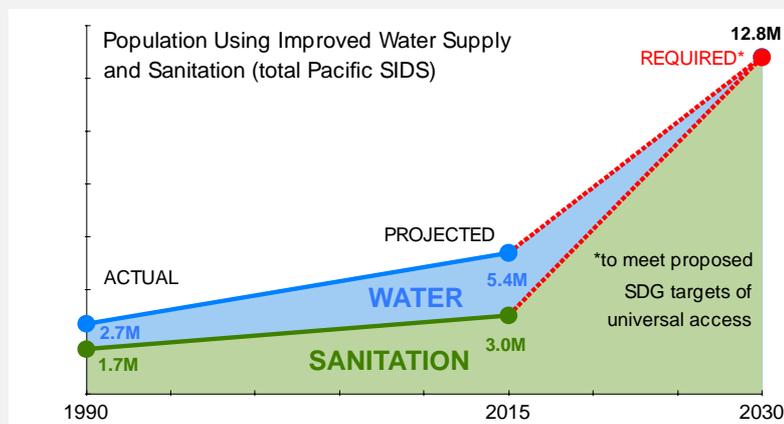


Figure 3: Additional effort required for Pacific SIDS to meet proposed SDGs of universal access by 2030

The challenge of securing safe water and sanitation for all is compounded by a set of issues unique to the Pacific, where responses need to factor in a number of additional challenges if they are to make a meaningful impact. These challenges vary from other countries in a number of important ways, and result in additional logistical and cost burdens unique to the region, requiring significant and sustained external support.

These region-specific challenges are described in more detail in section 6 of this submission, and include: the protection of **limited and fragile water resources**; providing effective support to **small, isolated and informal communities**; dealing with **limited human and financial resources**; and addressing the threats posed by **climate variability, climate change and disasters**. The regional nature of these challenges has been dramatically demonstrated through the sub-regional scale of climate-related disasters such as the droughts and storm surges that regularly impact lives and livelihoods across the Pacific, through the lens of water and sanitation.

While each of these factors presents unique barriers to progress towards safe water and sanitation in the Pacific, an additional critical factor behind the region's poor performance is one of **inadequate recognition of the problem and engagement in water security and safe sanitation as critical development issues**.

While the economic, health and environmental benefits of improved water and sanitation have been demonstrated at a local level across the Pacific, the challenge of achieving universal access is yet to receive the levels of attention and investment proportionate to both the scale of the challenge and its critical role in supporting sustainable development.

The urgent need to strengthen engagement on safe water and sanitation is relevant across multiple levels and sectors, encompassing national and local governments, civil society, international organisations and CROP agencies. Achieving safe water and sanitation for all, *in all conditions*, will not be possible without the support and advocacy of multiple partners to inform, influence and mobilise water and sanitation efforts and investments at the local, national, regional and global levels.

The effective engagement and collaboration of PIF leaders will therefore be instrumental in assisting FICs and partners to implement water and sanitation improvement programmes that adequately address the barriers and issues unique to the region. These issues will need to be taken into full account by PIF Leaders in providing guidance to FICs and development partners in their progress towards post-2015 goals for water and sanitation, which will key in determining the determining the health, wellbeing and livelihoods of millions of Pacific islanders as the region expands in population.

Description

Please provide a brief overview of this initiative. Try to address the following: Does this initiative contribute to a positive change to the region? What makes this initiative of importance to the Pacific region as a whole? Who would implement this initiative? Who are the main beneficiaries? Are regulatory or legislative changes required at the national level to implement this initiative? How would the initiative be funded? Has this initiative been carried out previously? What are the key risks in implementing this initiative? Are there any complementary projects and programmes currently active? What is the proposed timeframe for this initiative? How would the initiative be sustained over the proposed timeframe?

Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.

It is proposed that Forum Leaders support a **regional initiative for water security and safe sanitation**, by providing the high-level oversight and strategic guidance needed to assist FICs and partners to overcome the barriers to the provision of safe water and sanitation for all people of the Pacific, at all times.

The initiative is critically important to the Pacific region as a whole because of the fundamental role that secure drinking water and safe sanitation plays in enabling sustainable development, and the unique challenges shared by FICs in achieving universal access to these basic human rights. Increased efforts to improve access to safe water and sanitation will have profound implications for all FICs and for the region as a whole, creating tangible benefits in economic growth, public health (including life expectancy and infant mortality), the environment (including freshwater and coastal ecosystems) and human rights (including those of women and girls, who are particularly impacted by inadequate drinking water and sanitation facilities).

The engagement and collaboration of Forum Leaders at a regional level will contribute to positive regional change by effectively harnessing and directing the collective efforts of FIC governments, CROP agencies, international organisations and partners to make, and objectively measure, meaningful progress towards the goal of universal access to safe water and sanitation. Specific outcomes to be progressed by the initiative would include:

- Ownership and endorsement at the highest political levels for regional strategies for action on safe and secure water and sanitation, including practical measures to improve the capacity of the region to monitor and evaluate progress against Sustainable Development Goals for water and sanitation;
- Increased country and partner participation in strategic planning and advocacy through the participation of leaders in strategic dialogue, and more effective representation of Pacific issues in relevant regional and global forums;
- Improved awareness and advocacy at the regional and sub-regional levels, including support for leaders and champions through the recognition of local achievements and commitments to action on safe water and sanitation; and
- Capacity strengthening and knowledge sharing in key areas of need, including ability to monitor and evaluate progress against water and sanitation targets, drawing on the collaborative expertise of partner organisations and lessons demonstrated on the ground, and with a particular focus on countries with very low levels of access to safe water and sanitation.

The main beneficiaries of the initiative will be those Pacific people living without access to secure drinking water and safe sanitation, including the many additional millions projected to live in unsafe conditions by 2030 at current trajectories. The initiative would provide an important platform and forum for exchange and experiences in the region on addressing the significant lack of progress towards the water and sanitation targets of the MDGs, as well as looking forward to the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goal framework. Importantly, the initiative would enable improved advocacy across various platforms for FIC-specific issues and solutions.

The initiative would be led by PIF Leaders, with implementation roles for all FICs, CROP agencies (in particular PIFS, SPC, SPREP and USP), and relevant international organisations such as UNICEF and WHO. Action under the initiative would be supported by a range of complementary regional and bilateral programmes that are currently assisting FICs to implement practical and affordable solutions for safe water and sanitation at the community level.

SPC, the regional agency mandated to coordinate water and sanitation in the Pacific, already provides a level of support to its

member countries through the outreach of its Water and Sanitation Programme and through a range of projects implemented at the national, sub-regional and regional levels. While such programmes are already in train, additional efforts will be required by FICs, CROP agencies and partners with the guidance and oversight PIF Leaders in order to: monitor progress at a regional level; provide effective technical support and regional and global advocacy; and ensure effective sharing of knowledge and successful technologies between FICs.

The initiative will not impinge on the sovereignty of national governments in deciding national priorities, but will rather provide much needed support FICs to overcome national capacity constraints and strengthen their individual and collective approaches to an issue that significantly affects the delivery of development goals at the regional level. The engagement of Forum Leaders will directly support FICs to establish common positions on the monitoring of progress against relevant Sustainable Development Goals.

The initiative cannot occur without the engagement and guidance of Forum Leaders, and this will be particularly required over the period from 2015 (the year that MDGs are due) to 2020: the important first 5 years of action towards the Sustainable Development Goal of universal access to safe water and sanitation.

4. Alignment to Regional Vision, Values and Objectives

Briefly describe how your initiative supports the vision, values and objectives set out in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. These can be found in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism document or in the submissions guideline document.

Please limit your response to no more than 500 words

The region's persistent inability to secure access to safe and secure water and sanitation for all Pacific peoples poses a serious barrier to the achievement of the vision, values and objectives of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. Access to safe and sustainable drinking water and sanitation is a critical development issue for FICs, with profound implications for economic growth, public health, the environment and human rights. The United Nations General Assembly resolution of 28 July 2010 (64/292) firmly established access to safe water and sanitation as a fundamental human right. However, for many communities in the Pacific, this achievement of human right is a distant and seemingly unattainable goal. The Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets for water and sanitation aim at halving the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation and safe drinking water by 2015. For the Pacific as a whole, progress towards these targets has been very poor compared to neighbouring regions, other SIDS, and the world (WHO and UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water and Sanitation).

The water and sanitation challenges for the Pacific have been well documented on a country-by-country basis through a regional synthesis undertaken by the WHO and UNICEF in collaboration with SPC. These challenges become even more difficult when considering proposed post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which call for universal access to safe water and sanitation by 2030 (outcome of the United Nations General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, 19 July 2014).

Access to safe water and sanitation in all conditions is an essential element to achieve the vision of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism – including achievement of security, social inclusion and prosperity of the region as a whole, and the health, well being and productivity of all Pacific Peoples.

For the region as a whole, progress in securing safe drinking water and sanitation is not keeping up with population growth and demographic changes, with affected communities affected by contained economic growth, impacts on health, infant mortality and life expectancy, and the exacerbation of significant equity issues between urban, rural and informal communities.

Without the effective engagement of PIF Leaders, this issue will over time become significantly more difficult and more expensive to resolve, with many millions of Pacific lives affected and years of development opportunity lost. The engagement and active participation of Forum Leaders is therefore essential to break down the barriers of progress, and enable the collaborative efforts of FICs and partners required to address this existential development issue for the Pacific.

Forum Leaders' engagement will in the initiative will directly support the values of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, including the integrity of island freshwater resources, good governance, human rights, gender equality, and the security, wellbeing and safety of Pacific communities. Similarly, engagement of leaders and partners in the proposed initiative will directly progress the Framework objectives of sustainable development, improvement of livelihoods and wellbeing, and the achievement of inclusive and equitable economic growth, environmental sustainability and strengthened governance systems.

5. Additional Information

Please provide or attach additional information in support of this initiative.

Please limit your response to no more than 5 pages.

Important Considerations Unique to the Pacific in Meeting Post-2015 Goals for Water and Sanitation

The challenges and needs of FICs vary from other countries in a number of important ways, and these differences need to be taken into full account by PIF Leaders in providing guidance to FICs in their progress towards post-2015 goals for water and sanitation. In particular, the following factors are critical, and will be instrumental in the approach, technologies and costs associated with meeting the proposed SDG targets for water and sanitation.

1. Protecting limited and fragile water resources

For many FIC communities, the availability of freshwater resources is confined to small and fragile groundwater lenses, small streams, and/or rainwater collected from roofs. These scarce resources are vulnerable to overexploitation and contamination, particularly in atoll environments, where limited potable groundwater sources can be threatened by over-pumping, land use activities, and inappropriate sanitation facilities (especially water-based systems such as septic tanks). Efforts to achieve post-2015 goals in the Pacific must therefore consider the water cycle as a whole, and utilise Integrated Water Resources Management approaches from “ridge to reef” in order to protect the long-term sustainability of fresh water resources (including measures such as water demand management, watershed management, and pollution control).

2. Supporting small, isolated and informal communities

Many FICs are home to significant small, isolated and/or informal communities with minimal access to Government and private-sector services, and for these communities drinking water, sanitation and hygiene are primarily managed at the household, village or settlement level. These communities face significant disparities in access to safe water and sanitation compared to their urban counterparts, and are expected to experience relatively high population growth rates compared to both Pacific urban populations and to rural communities globally. To meet post-2015 goals, significant support will be required to better equip small communities and households to establish, operate and maintain appropriate water and sanitation facilities, while also maintaining safe drinking water and hygiene practices in homes and schools.

3. Coping with limited human and financial resources

It is clear that a significant acceleration of efforts is required to meet post-2015 goals. FICs are in general constrained by small economies, relatively high costs of materials and services, and serious challenges in building and retaining human capacity. Meaningful progress towards post-2015 goals will require a programmatic approach to strengthen and maintain capacity at local, national and regional levels. The scale of the challenge for FICs as a whole requires a recalibration of government priorities and investments, along with a quantum shift in the scale of support provided by development partners, particularly in the light of the additional infrastructure, services and planning needed to cater for the projected increases in populations across both rural areas and urban centres.

4. Increasing resilience to climate variability, climate change, and natural hazards

FICs are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate variability and change, and are subject to a relatively high frequency of natural disasters such as cyclones, floods and drought. Achieving water security throughout varying climatic conditions, natural hazards and future climate change requires the utilisation of all available water sources, including rainwater, groundwater, surface water, and in some cases desalinated supply. The resilience of Pacific communities, particularly those residing in drought-prone and atoll environments, therefore relies on maintaining the long-term sustainability of a variety of water sources in the face of significant and on-going climate and disaster challenges.

Each of the above considerations will be important in determining the ways in which FICs approach their efforts to meet the post-2015 goals for water and sanitation and hygiene, and will likely result in additional logistical and cost burdens unique to the region, requiring significant and sustained external support. These issues will need to be taken into full account by PIF Leaders in providing guidance to FICs and development partners in their progress Sustainable Development Goals.

6. Uploading initiatives to the Forum Secretariat website

In line with the process outlined in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, please note that all initiatives will be uploaded to the Forum Secretariat website at the close of the call for initiatives, i.e. 12 June 2015.

7. Contact Details

For further information on completing this template, consult the submissions guideline or contact:
Phone: +679 322 0322 or +679 322 0324

Email: FPR@forumsec.org

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING A REGIONAL INITIATIVE

These guidelines are designed to assist those submitting regional initiatives through the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. For further information or guidance, contact the Forum Secretariat Pacific regionalism office:

Email: FPR@forumsec.org

Phone: +679 322 0322 or +679 322 0324

1. About the Framework for Pacific Regionalism

The Framework for Pacific Regionalism is a strategy for strengthening cooperation and integration between the states and territories of the Pacific region. It articulates the vision, values and objectives of an enhanced Pacific regionalism, and sets out a process for identifying 'game-changing' public policy initiatives that aim to take the region forward. For more information visit:

<http://www.forumsec.org.fj/pages.cfm/strategic-partnerships-coordination/framework-for-pacific-regionalism/>

2. Who coordinates the process for submitting a regional initiative?

The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders.

3. How do I submit a regional initiative?

To submit a regional initiative, complete all sections of the regional initiative template and submit to the Forum Secretariat by no later **5pm, Fiji time, Friday 12 June 2015**. Submissions can be made via one of the following:

Email	FPR@forumsec.org
Post	C/O Pacific Regionalism Office, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat Private Mail Bag, Suva, Fiji
Hand Delivery	C/O Reception, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Ratu Sukuna Road, Suva, Fiji
Fax	+679 322 0215

4. Who can submit an initiative?

Any member of the public from any country or territory in the Pacific can submit a regional initiative. Groups of individuals or organisations, including government, civil society (including church or religious organisations), the private sector, community groups and CROP agencies may also submit initiatives.

5. What kind of information is required?

In addition to background and technical information, initiatives should demonstrate that they require the oversight of Leaders, that they will positively benefit the Pacific and its people, and that they are regional (or sub-regional) in nature (rather than local or national). If the initiative is unable to demonstrate these things, it will not be recommended for Leaders' consideration, or it may be recommended for Ministerial or officials level oversight.

6. What assistance will the Forum Secretariat provide to those submitting initiatives?

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 basis on which initiatives are assessed; and clarification of the overall process. Forum Secretariat staff can also provide background information, such as that on the Pacific Plan Review and on the Framework for Pacific Regionalism.

7. Selection and Assessment Process

Initiatives will be received by the Forum Secretariat. Secretariat staff will collate all initiatives and check them for completeness and viability. Forum Secretariat staff will forward complete and viable initiatives to the specialist sub-committee on regionalism who will apply the tests for regional action, each of which has an indicative weighting attached (see Fig. 1 below). The specialist sub-committee will also assess initiatives against the vision, values and strategic objectives set out in the Framework (see Fig. 2 below). Progress reports on current regional initiatives under the Framework for Pacific Regionalism that are in progress will also be considered by the specialist sub-committee when they assess initiatives.

Following their assessments, the specialist sub-committee will select initiatives to be forwarded to Leaders for their consideration. Those initiatives selected for Leaders consideration will be first sent to the Forum Officials Committee for further consideration and incorporation on the Leaders annual meeting agenda, and then to Leaders at their annual Forum, to take place in 2015 from 7-11 September in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. Those whose initiatives have been selected for Leaders oversight will be alerted of the progress of their initiative within one week of the specialist sub-committee's decision. At this stage, the specialist sub-committee is expected to meet on the week starting 13 July.

In addition to these selections, the specialist sub-committee will determine if initiatives not selected for Leaders consideration should be put forward to Ministerial or officials meetings for their oversight. Those whose initiatives have been selected for Ministerial or officials level oversight will be notified of the progress of their initiative within one week of the specialist sub-committee's decision.

The specialist sub-committee may also recommend some initiatives be further developed and re-submitted at a later date. Those whose initiatives are in this category will be notified within one week of the specialist sub-committee's decision. The specialist sub-committee will also recommend that some initiatives not be taken forward. Those in this category will also be notified of this outcome within one week of the specialist sub-committee's decision.

In all of the above scenarios, the Forum Secretariat, as the coordination point for this overall process, is responsible for maintain contact with all groups and individuals that have submitted initiatives.

8. What if an initiative is selected for implementation by Leaders?

Those who have submitted initiatives that have been selected by Leaders for implementation will be alerted of the progress of their initiative within two weeks of the completion of the annual Forum Leaders meeting. Implementation arrangements, including funding, governance, and monitoring arrangements will be established immediately following the Leaders selections, in consultation with the submitting party, the proposed implementing agencies, funding partners, and any other relevant organisations or stakeholders.

9. Further help and feedback

For further information or guidance or to provide feedback on the process, contact the Forum Secretariat Pacific regionalism office: Email: FPR@forumsec.org or Phone: +679 322 0322 or +679 322 0324.

Frequently Asked Questions will be placed at the Framework for Pacific Regionalism website: <http://forumsec.org/pages.cfm/strategic-partnerships-coordination/framework-for-pacific-regionalism/>

FIG. 1: TESTS FOR REGIONAL ACTION

TEST (<i>Indicative weighting</i> *)	CRITERIA FOR REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION
Market test (5%)	The initiative should not involve a service that markets can provide well.
Sovereignty test (10%)	The initiative should maintain the degree of effective sovereignty held by national governments (countries, not regional bodies, should decide priorities).
Regionalism test (30%)	The initiative should meet one of the following criteria at a sub-regional or regional level, in support of national priorities and objectives: <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 (20%)	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: <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 (20%)	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 (10%)	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 (5%)	The initiative should not be currently under progress by another organisation or process, and there should be no duplication of effort.

* *Weighting applied to each test is for the purpose of guiding submitters. Weights are an indication as to how the tests will be applied by the assessors.*

FIG. 2: REGIONAL VALUES AND OBJECTIVES

<p>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</p>
<p>Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 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. <p>These Pacific regional values will guide all our policy-making and implementation.</p>
<p>Principal Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 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.