

## **REGIONAL INITIATIVE TEMPLATE**

Please complete each section below.

### **1. Contact Details**

Please provide the following contact details:

<b>Name of individual or group submitting initiative</b>	<i>Parties to the Nauru Agreement Office</i>
<b>Name and position of primary contact</b>	<i>Dr. Transform Aqorau</i>
<b>Email address</b>	<i>transform@pnatuna.com</i>
<b>Alternate email address</b>	<i>Transform.aqorau@gmail.com</i>
<b>Phone number</b>	<i>(692) 625 7626</i>
<b>Fax number</b>	<i>(692) 625 7628</i>
<b>Mailing address</b>	<i>PNA Office, PO Box 3992, Majuro, Marshall Islands 96960</i>

### **2. Name of Initiative**

*Restructuring the Tuna Fisheries Industry in the Pacific Islands through transfer of Rights –*

### **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.**

*The issue being addressed here is to ensure the transfer of the rights in the fishery from the control of foreign fishing companies and fishing States like Japan, United States, European Union, Taiwan, Korea to the Pacific Islands Governments. This will put the control over the regions lucrative US \$3-4 billion industry in the hands of the Pacific Islands. It will ensure Pacific Island Governments control the fishery, enable them to develop innovative mechanisms to add value to the fishery, increase contribution of fisheries to their GDP, enable them to integrate their EEZ into the global trading system, and create scarcity through the application of limits. It will allow for the establishment of a Palau Arrangement type mechanism for the southern albacore fisheries through which hard limits may be applied to the fishery. Supporting the restructuring of the tuna fishing industry by transferring rights that are tradable and valuable to the Pacific Island Governments is in line with the approach being taken through the FAO on rights based fisheries management, the GEF funded projects on Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ), and also supports the long held principle espoused by Pacific Island Leaders that the Pacific Island Governments should not be bystanders in the development, exploitation, exploration and harnessing of their tuna resources. This initiative falls within the purview of Goal 14 of the Sustainable Development Goals one of which seeks to increase economic returns by 2030 to Small Island Developing States.*

#### 4. 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.**

The initiative would involve agreement at two levels. It would seek to set a timetable to transfer all the fishing rights from foreign fishing companies by phasing them out of the fishery. This would entail all the fishing activity to be conducted under arrangements in which the Pacific Island Governments have full control over the management, planning, conduct of all tuna fishing operations in the region. This does not necessarily mean that all fishing will be done by Companies owned by Pacific Island Governments, rather, there will be different packages of arrangements in which individual countries may enter into but for which control is retained by the Pacific Islands Government. The second aspect of the initiative would involve establishing a legally binding arrangement for the southern albacore countries through which they may establish hard limits for that fishery. Tuna is the most important shared resources that Pacific Island Governments have that has huge potential to contribute even more to their GDP and economies and create jobs. The initiative would be implemented by the conglomerate of arrangements that exist such as through the Parties to the Nauru Agreement, by countries taking measures through requiring fishing vessels to change their flags as a condition of licence, by whatever arrangement is agreed to for the southern albacore tuna. The PNA and the southern albacore group can be asked to report to the Sub-Committee on Regionalism on progress on the phase out of foreign fishing vessels. The initiative could entail specific timelines over a period of 15-20 years for such a phase out to be achieved. This can be monitored on an annual basis to view how many foreign fishing vessels have been replaced through other arrangements. The risk to the proposal is that some Pacific Islands Governments have very well established political relations with fishing States that they might not wish to jeopardise.

#### 5. 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**

Pacific Island Leaders have at various stages made commitments about the need to maximise the economic returns from the region's tuna fisheries. This Vision is consistent with the Vava'u Declaration on Fisheries reached by Pacific Leaders and it finds alignment with Goal 14 of the Sustainable Development Goal. It is consistent with the Pacific Islands framework for oceans management and the Forum Leaders endorsed Pacific Oceanscape. The failure of the region has been in operationalizing this Vision. It was not until the PNA Purse Seine Vessel Day Scheme (VDS) was administered by the PNA Office as a commercial interest that enormous gains in revenues were made from US\$60 million in 2010 to US\$350 million in 2015. The success of the VDS, the lessons learnt in the power of rights based management instruments like the VDS, and the prospects of applying similar sorts of limits to the southern albacore fishery should underpin support for this initiative. The VDS is the single most valuable tradable commodity that is shared amongst a grouping of Pacific Islands Governments currently valued at US\$350 million annually.

#### 6. Additional Information

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

**Please limit your response to no more than 5 pages.**

<Enter text here>