



THE PACIFIC ROADMAP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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The Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development guides regional responses for the achievement of the *2030 Agenda* and the Sustainable Development Goals within the context of national plans and priorities, the *SAMOA Pathway* and the *Framework for Pacific Regionalism*. It was prepared by the Pacific SDGs Taskforce through an open, consultative and country-driven process, and is premised on the underlying principle of leaving no one behind. The roadmap builds on the strong leadership demonstrated by the Pacific in shaping the global agenda and reaffirms the need for national ownership backed by regional and international cooperation. The destination is a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion, and prosperity so that all Pacific people can lead free, healthy, and productive lives.

Introduction

Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum have made a commitment to the full implementation of the *2030 Agenda* and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), recognising the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and calling for the support of development partners in delivering the promise of SDGs. They directed that the global agenda be contextualised to national and regional priorities, and reporting be streamlined across the SDGs, *SAMOA Pathway* and *Framework for Pacific Regionalism*.¹

This roadmap responds to these directives and spans the 15 year period of the *2030 Agenda* and the SDGs. It is underpinned by a detailed draft Implementation Strategy, which includes a preliminary action plan and assessment of the global indicator framework. The roadmap outlines how the region will track and report on its progress against regional actions and the means of implementation for sustainable development in the Pacific. Building on past and existing work streams, it provides for the ongoing identification and dissemination of good practice, and progressive strengthening of institutional capacities.

To give effect to these aims, the roadmap is organised across five interlinked elements: i) Leadership and coordination; ii) Advocacy and communications; iii) Regional priorities monitoring and indicators; iv) Integrated reporting; and v) Supporting the means of implementation. The steps outlined under each of these elements will help galvanise the necessary attention, action and resources to promote national and regional ownership, and to deliver the global aspirations for sustainable development that reflects the Pacific context and in a Pacific way.

By necessity, the level of detail is greater for the initial phase of implementation, with the first three years requiring particularly intensive efforts to embed and strengthen national and regional coordination mechanisms to: support member states in tailoring the SDGs to national and regional planning, resourcing, monitoring and reporting processes; contextualise the global indicators in line with national and regional priorities; establish systems to jointly monitor progress on regional priorities and the means of implementation; and streamline regional reporting across the SDGs, *SAMOA Pathway*, and the *Framework for Pacific Regionalism* including the *Pacific Leaders Gender Declaration*. It is intended that this roadmap remains a living document, to be revisited and revised by the Pacific SDG Taskforce over-time based on lessons learned, and being responsive to shifting priorities over the period to 2030.

i) Leadership and coordination

The planning, implementation, monitoring and accountability for sustainable development is first and foremost a country-led endeavour. International and regional cooperation and collaboration will, however, be essential to supplement limited resources and capacities in some Pacific countries, and in response to global and regional public goods and transboundary issues that cannot be addressed by any one country alone.

Most Forum member states have already initiated a process of tailoring the *Agenda 2030* and the SDGs to national context, including updating national development plans, and the formation of inclusive national coordination mechanisms. It is these mechanisms that will lead regional and international support for implementation, follow-up and review. If we are to achieve our global and regional aspirations, every country will first need to deliver tangible improvements to the lives and livelihoods of their people, based on national priorities. The following points outline the steps to sustain the required level of national and regional leadership, strengthen partnerships and engagement with non-state actors, and delineate national, regional and global responsibilities:

- Forum Leaders maintain ultimate oversight of the *Agenda 2030* and the SDGs as reflected in their national plans, the SAMOA Pathway, the Framework for Pacific Regionalism and the Pacific Leaders Gender Declaration through their collective regional and national leadership, and participation in the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meetings, the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development when it meets at the level of Heads of State and Government under the auspices of the General Assembly every four years, commencing in 2019;
- Member states are encouraged to participate in the voluntary national reviews to the UN High-level Political Forum when it convenes under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in other years, which is the basis for tracking global progress against the SDGs;
- Progress against the SDGs, regional sustainable development aspirations and national plans is anchored in governments' ability to implement policy. This will be enhanced through national coordination mechanisms that deepen collaboration across all of government and harness the willingness of the private sector and civil society to contribute to planning, implementation, follow up and review;
- The Pacific SDGs Taskforce and its reference group is the inclusive regional coordination mechanism established to coordinate regional efforts in implementing the directives of leaders on sustainable development and provide oversight for the implementation of the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development;
- The Pacific SDGs Taskforce and CROP SD Working Group will report to the CROP heads of agencies

and the Forum Officials Committee, and establish regular communication with national coordination mechanisms to facilitate inclusive consultation and informed input;

- The National Sustainable Development Strategies Partnerships Group, Heads of Planners and Statisticians, and the Pacific Statistics Steering Committee will support the work of the Pacific SDGs Taskforce in relation to identifying, contextualising and strengthening planning, budgeting, public financial and aid management and statistical systems including identifying relevant data and other information to track progress against regional indicators to inform the regional story; and
- Regional and international multi-stakeholder platforms hosted by UN and other agencies, including the Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development provide opportunities to advocate priorities and promote shared accountability for transboundary issues, leverage support, and inform knowledge sharing and reciprocal learning.

ii) Advocacy and communications

People should not be expected to know or recite a list of goals and targets, but they should know that their leaders are overseeing a development agenda that will improve their lives and living conditions. Politicians and public servants across the whole government, people in business and civil society organizations, and the public at large should not be excluded because they do not possess the intricate technical knowledge held by a small number of practitioners.

Effective communications methods are vital to ensure informed and inclusive participation, help broaden and sustain national and regional ownership, strengthen political oversight, drive regional and national actions, and champion the call for leaving no one behind, gender equality, disaggregated data and sustainably using and protecting our natural resources for current and future Pacific generations.

As a region, we need to continue to demonstrate our strong global leadership in shaping the international development agenda to ensure it continues to respond to our needs and aspirations. It is important to use every opportunity to advocate regional priorities on the world stage to leverage global learning, knowledge, and support that is delivered in a manner and in a way that is conducive and appropriate to Pacific context. The following points provide the foundation for the regional communications and advocacy strategy to promote informed and inclusive participation:

- National and regional communications efforts should focus on raising awareness of priorities being pursued and activities undertaken to achieve them using accessible, simple and clear language to

ensure the concepts that underpin sustainable development are easy to understand;

- National reports and the quadrennial regional report on sustainable development will form the basis for shaping the messages to communicate the Pacific's sustainable development story and journey, and to inform the evolving global narrative; and
- Traditional and social media will play an important role in political, technical and community advocacy, and in generating inclusive public discussions on development priorities and progress in countries and across the region.

iii) Regional monitoring and indicators

Accountability for the implementation of the *2030 Agenda* is the domain of national governments and it is up to each country to establish its own set of indicators to measure progress against the SDGs, in a way that reflects their national priorities. Forum member states are at different stages of tailoring the global indicator framework to their national context. Significant data gaps and differences between countries make it difficult to produce a meaningful compendium of national progress or unified set of detailed indicators. With many national priorities common amongst member states (for example, health and education), there is much to be gained from cross-country learning, but these issues are mostly best addressed in response to national circumstances. Likewise, while monitoring the means of implementation is principally a country-specific exercise, especially as concerns and approaches to development effectiveness at the national level vary greatly across the region, there is much to be gained from shared experiences, learning and understanding.

Against this backdrop, regional monitoring will add value to the national and global narratives by focusing on tracking regional progress against the unfinished business of the MDGs, transboundary issues and the priorities determined by leaders as requiring collective action. It will be prudent to integrate the narrative on results with the means of implementation, which have previously been pursued as separate work streams and resulted in parallel regional reporting on the MDGs and development effectiveness. Consolidating these streams through a high-level narrative on the trends in development results and effectiveness, rather than a goal-by-goal comparison of countries' relative performance, will reduce the burden and increase the value of reporting. This approach prescribes a set of regional indicators that not solely focus on what can be measured through statistics, but reflect the Pacific's priorities for collective action and seeks to tell the overall story of development in the region. The following points outline the basis for establishing the regional monitoring mechanisms and support the evolution of national systems:

- It is imperative that the region's sustainable development story includes the transboundary issues of climate change (and disaster risk management) and oceans (including integrated oceans management), for which the Pacific strongly advocates the need for global action;
- Pacific leaders have further prioritized non-communicable diseases and cervical cancer; improving connectivity; and empowering women, girls and people with disabilities as issues that require collective attention;
- These priorities are aligned to the SDGs and, together with poverty reduction, reducing inequality and improving quality of education, present a solid foundation on which to focus the initial regional set of indicators to frame the first regional report in 2018. Not all regional set of indicators will be measurable by data that accords to internationally tested methodologies and standards, but will provide a useful overview of progress in the regional context;
- Addressing the unfinished business of the MDGs provides a useful starting point for compiling the high-level regional narrative on the trends in development progress across the region, drawing on information already collected and reported on by most member states;
- Additional priorities for collective action directed by Pacific leaders over time will be incorporated into the regional indicator framework, which should help strengthen the tests for regional action and process for selecting issues for consideration by leaders;
- Member states may require support from regional and international agencies to improve the collection and uptake of data to track and report on progress, and such support should be country-led and respond to national priorities and needs assessments;
- A regional assessment of data and other information already collected across countries will support efforts at the national level to strengthen the coverage, quality and disaggregation of data; consolidate data collected across different agencies; and collect data required but not yet available;
- The scope of the high-level regional narrative on the trends in development progress will evolve as national indicators and data assessments are finalised, and countries commence reporting and embed their priorities for tracking progress on the means of implementation; and
- National and regional monitoring and regional overview of development trends will be greatly enhanced through the evolution of cross-country learning and support more country-specific, qualitative and research-oriented understanding of development effectiveness.

iv) Integrated reporting

By design, there is a high degree of coherence across the *2030 Agenda*, *SAMOA Pathway* and *Framework for Pacific Regionalism*. Together with national plans they provide the policy platform to realise our development aspirations as Pacific peoples - to improve the quality of our lives, while ensuring we sustain our land and ocean resources and heritage for future Pacific generations, and for the global community. Collecting and publishing data for the sake of reporting serves a limited purpose, and only tells a partial, rear-view story. This is no longer enough if we are to be accountable for our responses to global, regional and national commitments, and if we are to ensure we deliver where it matters most – at country and community levels. The following points outline the steps to deliver an integrated approach to reporting, to return a meaningful reflection on progress, identify key issues and the necessary responses to them:

- Commencing in 2018, the Pacific will produce a four-yearly report on sustainable development. It will consolidate reporting against the *2030 Agenda* and the SDGs, *SAMOA Pathway* and the *Framework for Pacific Regionalism* including the *Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration*, to be submitted for consideration and endorsement by Forum Leaders;
- The quadrennial reporting interval allows for a meaningful assessment of trends over what are often slow moving indicators, and coincides with the global reporting to the UN High-level Political Forum when it convenes under the auspices of the General Assembly;
- The quadrennial regional report will be informed by and complement national reporting, and bring together lessons from reporting on appurtenant commitments and processes, including: the *Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration*, the *Paris Agreement on Climate Change*, The *Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development*, the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction*, and the *Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation*. It will replace previous parallel reports on the MDGs and development effectiveness;
- The report will clearly communicate the Pacific's evolving story on sustainable development by providing a measure of progress on collective regional actions and the partnerships intended to support them. It will provide an easily digestible, yet comprehensive, understanding of what has happened, and what yet remains to be done. In doing so, the report will guide forward regional planning and resource allocation, and improve responses to existing and emerging priorities;
- The inaugural report in 2018 will focus on the comprehensive process of contextualising the global agenda at national and regional levels, and establish baselines and progress, where available, against regional priorities. It will introduce the Pacific's development story on the global stage, and the breadth of coverage will deepen as data collection and analysis is strengthened at national

and regional levels;

- Country reporting on the SDGs is voluntary. Participation in the voluntary national reviews to the UN High-level Political Forum may be aligned to national reporting timelines, and serve as a complementary rather than additional accountability mechanism. Periodic reviews of national plans, and when the global thematic focus aligns to specific national priorities, may be particularly useful junctures in which to share lessons, priorities and progress on the international stage; and
- Regional and international multi-stakeholder platforms hosted by UN and other agencies will generally follow the global thematic focus and reporting format of the High-level Political Forum. To reduce reporting burdens and achieve the objective of integrated implementation and monitoring, reporting from the Pacific could benefit from alignment with the global and Asia-Pacific regional processes.

v) Supporting the means of implementation

Pacific experience illustrate that effective development requires, strong political leadership, effective institutions and capacities and mutually accountable and inclusive partnerships. To be most effective, the allocation and use of resources for development has to happen in a supportive political environment, and needs to be the business across all of government. Central agencies have key roles, but the implementation and monitoring of national plans and SDGs cannot be their sole domain. We know from experience that in many countries much remain to be done to improve collaboration amongst core planning, development coordination, statistics and financial management agencies, and to strengthen sectoral involvement in resource planning, execution, follow-up and review.

We also know that there is willingness amongst the private sector, civil society and development partners to participate in the pursuit of sustainable development, and we need to deepen their involvement. None of these things work perfectly in any country, so it is essential that member states keep learning from each other and from global practice.

Building institutional capacity requires sustained, long-term approaches and investment. The transformational nature of the new framework for development and regionalism, together with the shifting profile of official development assistance, befits a rethink of how to address capacity constraints in member states and regional organizations. Building on past efforts and key lessons from the MDGs, *Forum (Cairns) Compact*, *Ten-year Pacific Statistics Strategy* and the multitude of capacity building projects, the following steps outline key actions to support the means of implementation,

and strengthen development efforts at both national and regional levels, including through mutually accountable partnerships and collaboration:

- Member states are encouraged, and will be supported on request by regional and UN agencies, to undertake country-led assessments of capacity constraints to deliver national plans and the 2030 Agenda, with the view to identifying long-term strategies for strengthening institutional capacity to deliver, monitor and report on national priorities;
- Capacity assessments will reflect on past work undertaken through the peer reviews of country systems, public expenditure and financial accountability assessments, climate and development financing assessments, and national statistics development strategy assessments to identify what has worked and should be continued, what needs to change, and what remains outstanding;
- Capacity building support initiatives within the region will be enhanced by harnessing Pacific expertise and experience through the engagement of senior public, civil society and private sector experts, both through consultative forums and commercial procurement. Peer review and learning is a valued practice in the region, and there is scope to build on its thus far broad-brush application to support specific aspects of enhancing the means of implementation and development effectiveness, including: review of policy as well as process, and quality assurance for self-assessments and reporting. Further investigation is needed on ways and resources to roll out different approaches, including work place attachments, twinning, and mentoring mechanisms;
- The engagement of non-state actors to fulfil their potential in implementing and monitoring progress against national plans and the SDGs will require deepening relations, and increased opportunities for inclusive dialogue, in addition to the strengthening of representative bodies;
- To further progress country ownership and leadership of development, further efforts will be required to blend domestic and external funding to give effect to the declared priorities of governments through national budgets. The delivery of development funding should explicitly seek to reverse the reliance on parallel systems that perpetuate institutional capacity constraints;
- Careful consideration needs to be given to the curation and custodianship of the knowledge required to populate regional monitoring and reporting and lend support to national monitoring and reporting. The Forum Secretariat has done a commendable job in establishing many of the processes that provide the region with a position of strength to move forward. Under the new frameworks for development and regionalism, the core functions of the Forum Secretariat are on policy development and coordination, with implementation of development activities the responsibility and remit of the region's technical agencies.

- The Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development² may offer additional opportunities for broader regional cooperation, sharing of good practice, and alternative approaches to the means of implementation.

Next steps

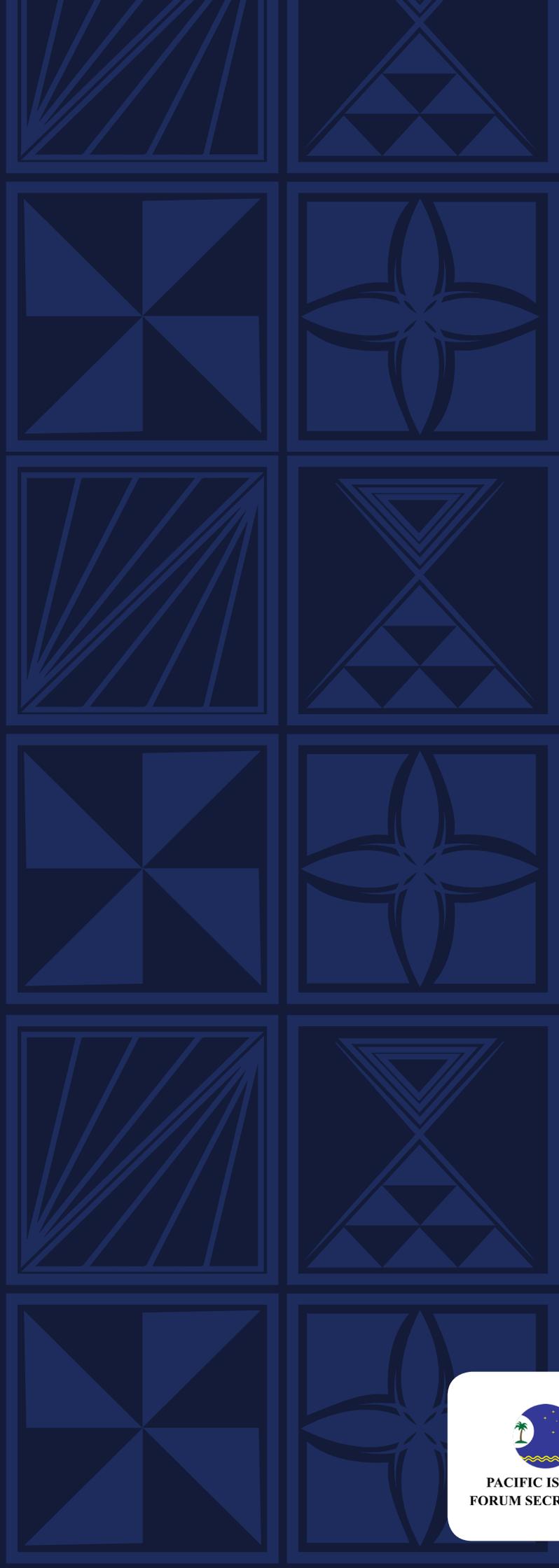
The Pacific SDGs Taskforce Draft Implementation Strategy which informed the preparation of the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development includes a draft action plan that will be finalised once the roadmap is endorsed. This version of the roadmap is geared towards ensuring a regional report for presentation to the inaugural High-level Political Forum to be convened under the auspices of the UN General Assembly in July 2019. On reaching that milestone, it is advised that the roadmap be reviewed and the Draft Implementation Strategy and Action plan updated, to set the focus of the region and member states on the next four-year reporting cycle.

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