



PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT

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FORUM ECONOMIC OFFICIALS MEETING

FORUM ECONOMIC MINISTERS MEETING

10-12 August 2022
Port Vila, Vanuatu

AGENDA ITEM 3C:

REGIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS QUADRENNIAL REPORT

Purpose and Recommendations

Purpose

This paper presents the “Second Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report 2022” for FEMM endorsement.

Summary

The **Second Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report 2022** provides an update on where the Pacific region stands in terms of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and SAMOA Pathway¹. The report also outlines strategic actions taken since the First 2018 Quadrennial Report and the 2020 Biennial Progress Report to strengthen the resilience and wellbeing of Pacific people. This Second 2022 Quadrennial report outlines solutions to the region’s challenges and vulnerabilities through twenty-three recommendations that cover a range of sustainable development issues that require nuanced national-level commitment and approach. It also highlights several areas where strengthened sustainable development action would benefit from complementary regional or sub-regional interventions. As such, the report should be published with the implementation of its recommendations to be monitored and reported on as part of the third Quadrennial Report in 2026.

The report describes Pacific Sustainable Development with the following key messages:

- (i) The assessments by target shown in the report summarises country data reported against the official SDG indicators. It should be noted that these indicators may not fully reflect the activities, programs, investments and achievements within Pacific countries and communities that support progress in these development areas.
- (ii) While all countries have incorporated the SDGs into national policies and strategies none of the 21 targets expected to be achieved by 2020 were achieved and it is also unlikely that the Pacific will achieve even 20% of the SDG targets by 2030.
- (iii) While people centred development remains the epitome of development efforts in the region, it is difficult to maintain sustainable levels of progress due to the ongoing

¹ SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action

impacts of climate change and natural disasters which are further exacerbated by recovery efforts from COVID-19 impacts.

- (iv) As a consequence of COVID-19, there are rising levels of hardship and poverty; increased rural-urban migration which strains public service delivery in urban settings such as access to proper water and sanitation; and an increased number of school dropouts and rising crime, drug and alcohol abuse.
- (v) A positive response to COVID-19 has been an increase in local food supply and micro-business participation. Women's participation in agriculture and marketing has become even more evident and is considered vital to food security across the region.
- (vi) A significant gap between men and women's economic participation remains, with women under-represented in formal employment across the region.
- (vii) Climate change remains the single greatest threat to the survival of Pacific people and their resources. Impacts of climate change and natural disasters continue to add pressure on fisheries.
- (viii) While the Pacific continues to deal with climate-induced disasters with annual economic losses of USD500 million, COVID-19 has worsened the stress on small public administrations.
- (ix) It is acknowledged in the report that the sanctity of the traditional and customary ties that Pacific peoples share with the Ocean as their endowment fund, inherited from their ancestors and for which we must hold in trust for future generations remains a significant aspect of our development.
- (x) The majority of Pacific countries have relatively weak fiscal positions, with high levels of indebtedness.
- (xi) The importance of inclusive, transparent and accountable partnerships is acknowledged at national and regional levels. Despite dedicated financing facilities to help the private sector and civil society contribute to national development, there remains a need to strengthen government engagement with civil society and the private sector.
- (xii) Building back better from the pandemic requires statistical data for measuring impacts on vulnerable communities. COVID-19 has demonstrated the value of having up-to-date data to enable targeted assistance packages that are effective and efficient.
- (xiii) Pacific countries are at different statistical development stages, with a number of data gaps. Due to this, establishing a complete set of Pacific SDGs indicators remains a work in progress.

A. Overview/Summary

The 2022 Second Quadrennial Pacific Regional Sustainable Development Report builds on the findings of the 2018 First Quadrennial Report and the 2020 Biennial Progress Report. It has been produced by the Secretariat under the guidance of a Pacific Steering Committee and with the support of technical advisers from CROP agencies, the UN, private sector and civil society.

2. The Forum Economic Ministers Meeting (FEMM) “*tasked the Pacific Steering Committee for Sustainable Development, in collaboration with officials, to consider and prioritize actions for Economic Ministers emerging from the recommendation in the first quadrennial report, and report back to the FEMM in 2020*”.

3. This 2022 Report recognizes the centrality of the Leaders’ vision for 2050 of “*a resilient Pacific Region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion and prosperity, that ensures all Pacific peoples can lead free, healthy and productive lives*” as supported through the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, the Boe Declaration on Regional Security, the Kainaki II Declaration on Climate Change and the implementation of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent,

B. Discussion

4. The Second Quadrennial report includes discussion of a number of issues that will contribute to the implementation of the 2050 Strategy under a Blue Pacific identity. A Blue Pacific that has at its core the protection and sustainability of people’s wellbeing.

5. Wellbeing lies at the heart of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs which emphasizes improving outcomes for all people. The theme of wellbeing also emerges throughout the 2022 *Second Quadrennial Pacific Regional Sustainable Development Report* which focuses on four main areas:

- a) Impact of COVID-19
- b) Reflecting on the Voluntary National Review (VNR) Process in the Pacific
- c) Addressing sustainable development progress since 2020
- d) Reviewing Progress under the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration (PLGED).

6. The report has been prepared as the region and the global community faces a public health crisis and economic upheaval resulting from COVID 19. As a result, any progress made in 2018 and 2020 in meeting the SDGs, must be tempered by the knowledge that the region, like the rest of the world, faces major challenges as a direct consequence of the pandemic. The report provides COVID-19 information while recognising that the situation across the region changes every day.

7. The 2030 Agenda provides a global roadmap to mitigate the impact of such shocks on overall sustainability and calls for greater investment to strengthen the resilience of national and regional platforms to fight climate change, natural disasters and pandemics such as COVID-19. It is clear that there is a need for significant investments in areas such as health, water, sanitation, combined with measures to reduce poverty, food insecurities and inequality.

8. The report examines the thirteen member countries voluntary national review (VNR) processes and lessons learned between 2016 and 2022. The report notes that overall, the VNRs have shown a strengthening of national ownership of the SDGs, promote transparency, inclusiveness and participation in reporting on the development priorities, and support more effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda. For the island country members many of the challenges include:

- i. Human and institutional capacity constraints;

- ii. Lack of ownership and political will to effectively respond to the cross-sectoral nature of sustainable development;
- iii. Lack of awareness and engagement of stakeholders both within government agencies, civil society and the private sector;
- iv. Lack of alignment at the national level with global and regional commitments, including the importance of localising global goals, targets and indicators;
- v. Insufficient financial resources and capacity for resource mobilisation;
- vi. Paucity of data and limited capacity to collect and analyse data.

Progressing Gender Equality

9. This report also includes an update on the review of the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration (PLGED) that focuses on invigorating collective efforts to lift the status of women in the Pacific and empower Pacific women and girls to actively participate in economic, political and social life.

C. Next Steps

10. The 2022 Second Quadrennial Pacific Regional Sustainable Development Report provides an update on the status of the nine action areas highlighted in 2018 and the nine recommendations from the 2020 Biennial Progress Report as priorities for accelerating progress in the region on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. As such, this 2022 Quadrennial Report is published with the premise that the implementation of the twenty-three recommendations should be monitored and reported in the third Quadrennial report in 2026.

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
25 July 2022