



PACIFIC PLAN ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT 2013

This report provides an annual high-level update on progress to implement the Pacific Plan over the period May 2012 to May 2013. The report features the following sections:

- a. *Highlights of Progress in Implementing the Pacific Plan, 2012-13*—a consolidated précis of reporting highlights from 2012-13 (capturing the narratives in brief); *page 2*
- b. *Reflecting on Progress of the Pacific Plan to date*—a short overview of progress since 2005; *page 5*
- c. *Key Achievements Over 2012 to 2013*—a narrative description of progress under each thematic priority area; *page 8*
- d. *Review of the Pacific Plan*—a summary of work undertaken as part of the independent, comprehensive Pacific Plan Review; *page 22*
- e. *Pacific Plan Performance monitoring*—an update on the performance monitoring framework that was trialled in 2011-12; *page 22*
- f. *Engagement with Non-State Actors*—a summary of key progress in working with civil society and the private sector in relation to the Pacific Plan; *page 23*
- g. *Pacific Plan Desk Officers*—an update on the Desk Officers employed by the Forum Secretariat and based in Forum countries; and *page 23*
- h. *Looking Ahead*—a short concluding section highlighting the potential changes ahead for the Pacific Plan, following the Review. *page 24*

Highlights of Progress in Implementing the Pacific Plan: 2012-13

Overall	
<p>✓ Commencement of a comprehensive review of the Pacific Plan in December 2012, undertaken by an independent Team led by the Right Hon. Sir Mekere Morauta. The Team travelled to every Forum country and to Associate Members (French Polynesia and New Caledonia) and consulted with a wide range of interested parties, including political representatives, government officials, private sector representatives and civil society. The Review should help improve the relevance and strategic value of the Pacific Plan.</p>	
Priority Theme 1: Economic Development	
i. Economic policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Forum Economic Ministers agreed to provide regional oversight and leadership in the implementation of the Waiheke Declaration through a standing agenda item at their annual Meeting, appropriate actions at the national level, and the formation of a Technical Working Group (comprising representatives of relevant regional agencies)
ii. Fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 18 month interim agreement signed between US and Pacific Island Parties; expected to result in an increase in annual revenues from US\$24 million to US\$63 million ✓ Agreement on Strengthening Implementation of Niue Treaty on Cooperation in Fisheries Surveillance and Law Enforcement in the Pacific Region adopted ✓ WCPFC approved proposal giving members access to in-zone Vessel Monitoring System data; FFA and SPC trained hundreds of new observers and trainers ✓ FFA South Pacific Albacore fishery members approved a harvesting management framework that provides limits in each EEZ ✓ SPC improved scientific basis of management of the oceanic fishery through stock assessments, tuna tagging, and sea cucumber fishery assessment
iii. Marine Protected Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Supported by Pacific Oceanscape Framework: Phoenix Island Protected Area and marine park in the southern Cook Islands established; New Caledonia declaration on conservation area linking to Coral sea; Micronesia Challenge further implemented
iv. Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ New regional coordination mechanisms and strategic partnerships established (e.g. between PPA and IRENA and between SPC and the Arizona State University) ✓ Pacific Energy Summit (co-hosted by New Zealand and the European Union) saw commitments of NZ \$255 million in grant funding and \$380 million in concessional loans ✓ Pacific Leaders Energy Summit (Tonga) shared experiences with national energy roadmaps
v. Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ EU/SPTO Pacific Regional Tourism Capacity Building Programme worked on regional research, market intelligence, and statistical systems; enhanced market access through improved internet presence / e-commerce capability; and cruise sector development
vi. Marine mineral resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Regional Legislative and Regulatory Framework for Deep Sea Minerals completed, reflecting commentary from multiple stakeholders, and endorsed by 15 Pacific ACP states
vii. Trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Samoa became first country to ratify the PICTA Trade in Services Protocol ✓ Forum Trade Ministers endorsed a roadmap to progress PACER Plus negotiations ✓ Pacific ACP states worked towards closing negotiations on a comprehensive EPA with the EU as a single region, under Pacific ACP Trade Ministers direction ✓ Forum Secretariat worked with Members in developing comprehensive Trade Policy Frameworks & provided support through “Pacific Islands Trade and Invest” network
viii. Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ <i>no significant highlights – see detailed reports from Members and CROP agencies</i>

Highlights of Progress in Implementing the Pacific Plan: 2012-13

ix. Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ SPC updated Pacific Island Maritime Laws in line with new international developments & provided legal assistance in promulgation of maritime legislation ✓ Established shipping companies indicated interest in extending their network from the north to service the central Pacific region, including MSC licence holders ✓ Central Pacific Shipping Commission further developed; begins operation late 2013 ✓ SPC provided draft legislation to progress implementation of the ‘Maritime Search and Rescue Technical Arrangement for Cooperation among Pacific Island Countries and Territories that Support International Lifesaving in the Pacific Ocean.’ ✓ Five-year Business Plan involving reforms for the Pacific Aviation Safety Office was developed through the World Bank-funded Pacific Aviation Investment Program. ★ Despite ongoing interest in the idea of a sub-regional airline, little progress has been made on this issue; further political commitment and resourcing (to SPC) is required
x. ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ USP Net and broader regional research and educational network improved, setting an ICT quality benchmark and providing a model to promote commercial ICT services ✓ Efforts made to expand submarine cable connectivity for broadband, with expectation that further countries will commission fibre-optic cables in 2013-14
xi. Economic integration	★ <i>no significant highlights – see detailed reports from Members and CROP agencies</i>
xii. Infra-structure	★ <i>no significant highlights – see detailed reports from Members and CROP agencies</i>
Priority Theme 2: Sustainable Development - Improving livelihoods and wellbeing	
i. Food security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ SPC’s Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees distributed over 13,000 food plants across the region and tested “climate-ready” crops in most countries ✓ Study on ‘Indigenous agricultural knowledge in the Pacific’ published
ii. Healthy populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Links between health sector and Pacific Island Forum processes strengthened ✓ Annual Secretaries/Directors of Health meeting established ✓ Overarching Framework for Health Development developed
iii. Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Forum Secretariat, SPC, USP, UNICEF, and UNESCO continued collaboration in implementing the Pacific Education Development Framework ✓ Pacific Regional Council on Early Childhood Education and Care established ✓ New Zealand Ministry of Education hosted literacy conference on indigenous languages ✓ PEDF monitoring and evaluation framework developed, in alignment with national monitoring and evaluation systems
iv. Land resources	★ <i>no significant highlights – see detailed reports from Members and CROP agencies</i>
v. Sexual and gender-based violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 2012 Declaration on Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration implemented (ongoing), including through enactment of national domestic violence legislation ✓ CEDAW partially domesticated through new country legislation
vi. Youth	★ <i>no significant updates – see annex for detailed notes from Members and CROP agencies</i>
vii. Disability inclusivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability successfully implemented (ongoing) ✓ Second Forum Disability Ministers Meeting convened in Papua New Guinea

Highlights of Progress in Implementing the Pacific Plan: 2012-13

Priority Theme 3: Sustainable Development - Addressing Climate Change

<p>i. Implementing Niue Declaration on Climate Change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pacific Climate Change Finance Assessment Framework designed ✓ Key study on climate change financing in Nauru completed and released as a test case ✓ CROP agencies, in collaboration with the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, continued the development of the Regional Technical Support Mechanism for Climate Change, including a rapid response fund to facilitate deployment of technical assistance ✓ SPREP applied for Regional Implementing Entity status under the Adaptation Fund and the Global Environment Facility
<p>ii. Developing Pacific adaptation / mitigation measures and coordinating DRM-CCA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change Project continued work on three critical sectors: water, coastal management and food security ✓ Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project (PIGGAREP), continued in sixth year of operation ✓ CROP agencies supported development of integrated regional strategy for climate change and Disaster Risk Management to succeed current two separate regional frameworks. ✓ Landmark Joint Meeting of the 2013 Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management and Pacific Climate Change Roundtable (the Joint Meeting) held in July 2013.
<p>iii. Implementing Climate Change conference outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In the run up to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change negotiations in Doha, a number of activities were initiated including two pre-event workshops focussed on coordinating Pacific positions and identifying areas of commonality and priority for the region as a whole. ✓ Delegates were also supported by CROP agency teams throughout the negotiations, especially in priority areas such as finance and loss and damage.
<p>iv. Enhancing ecological systems</p>	<p>★ <i>no significant updates – see detailed reports from Members and CROP agencies</i></p>
<p>v. Assessment for UNGA A/Res/63/281</p>	<p>★ <i>no significant updates – see detailed reports from Members and CROP agencies</i></p>
<p>vi. Data collection and analysis</p>	<p>★ <i>no significant updates – see detailed reports from Members and CROP agencies</i></p>
<p>vii. Building scientific capacity</p>	<p>★ <i>no significant updates – see detailed reports from Members and CROP agencies</i></p>
<p>viii. Support for Coral Triangle Initiative (Oceans)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Coral Triangle initiative progressed in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands ✓ Marine Sector Working Group commissioned implementation plan for Pacific Oceanscape framework, and reviewed first draft ✓ Seven concept notes prepared outlining priority projects for the next five years—including establishment of a Pacific Ocean Commissioner’s Support Unit

Highlights of Progress in Implementing the Pacific Plan: 2012-13

Priority Theme 4: Governance	
i. Improving development coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Four peer reviews and two follow-up visits were completed, in line with Forum Compact; evidence of progress in implementing recommendations ★ Monitoring showed minimal changes in MDG indicators since 2011-12. Only a small number of countries are seriously pursuing MDG acceleration strategies.
ii. Sustainable collection and compilation of statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ SPC helped set up country processes and systems for census & household surveys ✓ South-south technical collaboration, supported by PFTAC, helped in development and use of national accounts, trade statistics, and price statistics ✓ PRISM online overviews of country statistics improved ✓ Baseline information for NMDIs for all countries compiled (see www.spc.int/nmdi)
iii. Improving access to official information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ <i>no significant updates – see detailed reports from Members and CROP agencies</i>
iv. Enhancing women’s role in decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 2012 Declaration on Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration implemented (ongoing), including through introduction of specific measures to increase women’s representation in parliament and local government
v. Strengthening accountability and integrity institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pacific Ombudsman Alliance, Commonwealth Pacific Governance Facility and Forum Secretariat helped Niue enhance accountability of members of the Legislative Assembly ✓ Pacific Association of Supreme Audit Institutions completed two cooperative audits, including sustainable fisheries management and climate change adaptation; issued a second accountability and transparency report in the region; and completed the second sub-regional audit project for Kiribati, Tuvalu and Nauru
vi. Encouraging parliamentary involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ SPC provided technical support and training for parliamentarians in several countries ✓ Pacific Parliamentarians issued a joint statement urging Pacific leaders to support measures and legislation to address violence against women
vii. Addressing corruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ UNDP and UNODC established joint UN-Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption Project to support Forum countries to ratify and implement the UN Convention Against Corruption
Priority Theme 5: Security	
i. Improving human security outcomes for members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Forum Secretariat finalised the Forum’s Human Security Framework for Conflict Prevention in the Pacific—which guides Members, Forum Secretariat, and other stakeholders in incorporating human security considerations into regional security policy development—and had it endorsed by Forum Leaders at their 2012 meeting in Rarotonga
ii. Strengthening cooperation in law enforcement and border security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cooperation strengthened through meetings of Forum Regional Security Council, Regional Law Enforcement Secretariats, and Forum Working Group on Counter-Terrorism ✓ Forum Secretariat coordinated and funded in-country inter-agency Border Security Training Programme for immigration, customs, police, quarantine, civil aviation, ports authorities, fisheries and airlines staff
iii. Adherence to Forum values and the Biketawa Declaration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Biketawa Declaration observed through the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) and Ministerial Contact Group on Fiji.

Reflecting on Progress of the Pacific Plan to date

2. Annual Progress Reports for the Pacific Plan have been published since 2007, highlighting areas of the Plan where notable progress had been made over the preceding year, and identifying where further work was required. These reports have been useful not only for monitoring areas where the greatest efforts in implementing the Plan have been applied, but also for recording significant accomplishments. Such accomplishments have been especially important to reflect on this year, as the Plan has been subject to a comprehensive periodic review. A key question raised by the Review Team—and by many commentators—is: “what has the Pacific Plan achieved?”

3. As a whole, it has often been noted that the Pacific Plan has assisted in guiding and improving coordination across priority sectors and across regional agencies in the Pacific. For example, in his 2012 Annual Pacific Islands Forum Leader’s Lecture, the Prime Minister of the Cook Islands and Forum Chair, Hon. Henry Puna, remarked that through the Plan

“inter-agency cooperation among the CROP (Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific) group is strengthening; the Forum Compact [is improving] aid effectiveness; and [there have been] donor partner dialogue successes, [including] fresh engagement with the United States, and newly-developing high level contact with the United Nations Leadership and the UN’s broad system of global programmes...The Pacific Plan, a blueprint of our priorities, guides and adds value to the cooperative approach adopted by our 16 nations.”

4. Although this overall coordination function is undoubtedly important, there have also been specific initiatives linked to the Pacific Plan that have received positive attention. These are worth briefly highlighting here, before moving on to discuss progress over the past year in more detail. The table below / on the following page lists some of the key milestones under each of the Pacific Plan’s four pillars. Many of these involve new agreements, frameworks, or institutions to help strengthen cooperation in service delivery; some also involve the pooling of service provision.

Milestones for Pacific Plan Pillars (2007-13)	
Economic Growth	
✓	Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation established (2006-07)
✓	Ratification of PIASA and commencement of PASO (2007-08)
✓	Parties to the Nauru Agreement entered into 3rd Arrangement to help implement Vava’u Declaration on Fisheries (2007-08)
✓	KSSL commenced a regular sub-regional feeder service for SIS (2008-09)
✓	Framework for Action on ICT for Development in the Pacific adopted (2009-10)
✓	Central Pacific Shipping Commission launched (2010-11)
✓	Pacific region promoted at World Expo in Shanghai (2010-11)
✓	Framework for Energy Security in the Pacific adopted (2010-11)
✓	Leaders issued Waiheke Declaration on Sustainable Economic Development (2011-12)

¹ See the full speech here: <http://www.forumsec.org/pages.cfm/newsroom/speeches/2012-1/forum-chair-hon-henry-punas-speech-2012-forum-leaders-lecture.html>

Milestones for Pacific Plan Pillars (2007-13)
Sustainable Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pacific Regional HIV Strategy implementation plan and the Pacific HIV Response Fund were formally established and made operational (2008-09) ✓ Pacific Education Development Framework endorsed and Pacific Qualifications Register commenced (2008-09) ✓ Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability endorsed (2009-10) ✓ Region wide review of implementation of Beijing Platform for Action highlighted positive impact of UN CEDAW (2010-11) ✓ Pacific successfully advocated for global recognition of the importance of oceans as a key outcome of Rio+20 Conference (2011-12) ✓ Draft Regional Legislative Regulatory Framework for deep sea mineral exploration and exploitation finalised (2011-12) ✓ Framework for Youth Development in the Pacific commenced (2011-12)
Governance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pacific Leadership Programme finalised and became fully operational (2007-08) ✓ Leaders adopted Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific (2009-10) ✓ Pacific Ombudsman Alliance was established (2009-10) ✓ Pacific Association of Supreme Audit Institutions Secretariat (PASAI) established (2009-10) ✓ Completion of Regional Institutional Reforms underway since 2005, including merging of Pacific Islands Applied GeoScience Commission and South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment into Secretariat of the Pacific Community (2010-11) ✓ Pacific included on Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness agenda for the first time; country peer reviews recognised as an innovative approach to improving country-level policy and systems (2011-12)
Security
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) received ongoing support (2006-12) ✓ Forum Regional Security Committee formed the Working Group for Strengthening Information Management (2009-10) ✓ Working Group on Counter Terrorism convened (2009-10) ✓ Best Practice Guidelines developed to assist members in undertaking internal reviews on national law enforcement information sharing practices (2010-11)

5. Alongside these milestones achieved since progress reporting began in 2007, a large number of projects aligned to Pacific Plan priority areas have been initiated, implemented, and completed. While it is not possible to examine all of their outcomes here, in almost all cases they have resulted in positive impacts that can be broadly linked to the Pacific Plan. Thus, the answer to “what has the Pacific Plan achieved?” is complex; in many ways the Plan has operated much like a platform supporting and underlying many areas of success (even if not being the sole source of that success).

6. With this broader picture of progress-to-date in mind, the next section of the report turns to focus in more detail on progress over the past year.

Key Achievements Over 2012 to 2013

7. In this section achievements related to each of the Pacific Plan's five thematic areas are briefly described. Specific priorities from the Plan are listed at the head of each sub-section, but in the interests of brevity only the priorities for which notable progress has been made are reported on.

Fostering economic development and promoting opportunities for broad based growth

Medium-term priorities (2009-2012/13) under this Pacific Plan thematic area:

- i. developing effective **[economic] policy** and practical responses to the global economic crisis
- ii. continuing to support action in the **fisheries** sector, particularly in line with the Vava'u Declaration
- iii. building on existing **marine protected areas** and initiatives
- iv. expediting the implementation of the 2009 Pacific **Energy** Ministers' decisions
- v. providing greater support to **tourism**
- vi. developing frameworks to enable development of the economic potential of **marine mineral resources**
- vii. fostering greater international and intra-regional **trade** opportunities
- viii. strengthening the ability of the **private sector** to participate competitively in an integrated economy
- ix. addressing issues that hinder the movement of goods and services through solutions in the **transport** sector
- x. implementing the directions provided by the region's Ministers for **ICT**
- xi. continuing the implementation of the **economic integration** agenda promoted by Forum Economic Ministers
- xii. increasing support for **infrastructure** development and maintenance across the region.

8. **Work on economic stability and sustainable economic development** has been progressed through the annual Forum Economic Ministers Meeting. In 2012, Ministers agreed to provide regional oversight and leadership in the implementation of the Waiheke Declaration through a standing agenda item at their annual Meeting, appropriate actions at the national level, and the formation of a Technical Working Group (comprising representatives of relevant regional agencies) to progress inter-sessional discussion, coordination, policy advocacy and implementation. This Working Group first met in April, 2013, and reported on their proposed work plan to Economic Ministers at their 2013 Meeting.

9. **In the fisheries sector**, efforts continued to maximise the economic return to Forum island countries of deep water and costal fishing. An interim agreement for the next 18 months was signed between the United States and Pacific Island Parties for access to fishing grounds. This agreement is expected to result in an increase in the annual rate for 8,300 vessel days of fishing from US\$24 million to US\$63 million. It also provides time for parties to the US Multilateral Treaty to address remaining substantive issues for a longer-term Treaty.

10. A key priority over the past year was tackling illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing (IUU fishing). Major initiatives included the adoption and opening for signature in November 2012 of the *Agreement on Strengthening Implementation of the Niue Treaty on Cooperation in Fisheries Surveillance and Law Enforcement in the Pacific Region* (the 'Niue Treaty Subsidiary Agreement'). This Agreement is intended to enhance active participation in cooperative surveillance and enforcement activities by providing a framework for the Parties to share resources and exchange information, including fisheries data and intelligence. It is a direct response to recognition by the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders of the significance of fisheries as a major source of food and income for the Pacific people and the Leaders' call in the 2007 *Vava'u Declaration on Pacific Fisheries: Our Fish, Our Future* of the need to strengthen the current surveillance and enforcement mechanisms to combat IUU fishing to protect the region's fisheries. The Republic of Palau was the first to sign the Agreement. Other work to reduce the incidence of IUU fishing has included collaboration between the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)

and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) to develop national Fisheries Information Management Systems. Supporting this, a December 2012 meeting of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) approved a proposal giving members access to in-zone Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) data, which will improve identification of vessels transiting in members' Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs). FFA and SPC also further strengthened national fisheries observer programmes by training hundreds of new observers and developing national trainers and debriefing capability.

11. In support of sustainable management of tuna fisheries, the FFA South Pacific Albacore fishery members approved a harvesting management framework that provides limits in each EEZ. This is a significant achievement, and will allow for substantive negotiations with WCPFC members on high seas catch limits, with the overall goal of limiting the total harvest of the South Pacific Albacore Tuna to within sustainable limits. The model also provides sufficient flexibility to enable some growth and development of members in the albacore fishery, and will make these fisheries more economical and viable. In addition, the FFA is continuing efforts to develop a conservation and management measure for tropical tuna species—especially Bigeye Tuna, which is being overfished. Alongside this work, SPC has continued to improve the scientific basis of management of the oceanic fishery. Key work undertaken over the past year have included oceanic fisheries stocks assessments, national reports on impacts of the closure of fish aggregating devices, reports on interactions between small-scale and commercial tuna fisheries, and a final tagging cruise under the Pacific Tuna Tagging Programme, followed by verification and cleaning of the tag return data, analysis of growth rates, and the preparation of a series of national and sub-regional reports on the implications of the new information.

12. To promote sustainable development and improved management of coastal fisheries resources, SPC completed a major study on sea cucumber fisheries in five countries. The study indicated that around US\$160 million in potential income for rural communities has been lost over the past 15 years due to poor management, and recommended possible remedies.

13. **Marine protected areas** are being built upon through the Pacific Oceanscape Framework (discussed in more detail later in this paper). Some of the highlights over the past 12 months have included progress with the implementation of the Phoenix Island Protected Area, the establishment of a marine park in the southern Cook Island, a declaration from New Caledonia to implement a conservation area to link up with that of Australia in the Coral sea, further implementation of the Micronesia Challenge, and work on the Coral Triangle initiative in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.

14. **CROP agencies have actively supported a wide range of energy sector initiatives across the Pacific.** New regional coordination mechanisms and strategic partnerships have been established (e.g. through Memorandums of understanding between the Pacific Power Association (PPA) and International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and between SPC and the Arizona State University) and existing ones have been sustained (e.g. the Pacific Energy Oversight Group and the Pacific Energy Advisory Group have held further meetings, successfully bringing together a range of partners to progress the regional Energy Security Framework). Key highlights were the Pacific Energy Summit (co-hosted by New Zealand and the European Union), which saw commitments of \$NZ255 million in grant funding and \$NZ380 million in concessional loans,² and the Pacific Leaders Energy Summit in Tonga, which provided a forum to discuss national energy roadmaps.

² Further to these commitments, over the past year substantial financing to improve access to affordable and efficient energy and transport services has been offered by a number of development partners. For example, the United Arab Emirates has made available USD 45 million in grants for renewable energy projects; a Danish government fund will finance USD 2 million worth of projects under the Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project (PIGGAREP) Plus programme; the Japanese government is

15. Also over the past year, new policies, plans and regulatory frameworks have been developed (e.g. Vanuatu’s Energy Roadmap and Tuvalu’s Master Plan for Renewable Electricity and Energy Efficiency), and existing ones have been supported. Reviews of national energy policies in the Solomon Islands, the Marshall Islands and Fiji have been supported, and preliminary work has been undertaken to develop an energy roadmap for Nauru. SPC assisted five countries to establish an energy data base, and published the energy security profiles for 14 countries. IRENA and PPA’s work on grid stability assessments has continued, but needs further support. Attempts have also been made to strengthen institutions and expertise, through a combination of benchmarking studies, regional training workshops, capacity supplementation and training to operate solar generation systems, studies on private sector involvement, establishment of biodiesel testing labs, and greenhouse gas abatement activities.

16. In recognizing the importance of energy for sustainable development, the United Nations (UN) designated the year 2012 as the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL). The UN also declared 2014-2024 as the Decade of Sustainable Energy for All. The SE4ALL initiative aims to mobilize urgent global action to three complementary objectives to be achieved by 2030: ensuring universal access to modern energy services; doubling the rate of improvement in energy efficiency; and doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix. These SE4ALL objectives are in line with the regional Framework for Action on Energy Security in the Pacific, and the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States to be held in Samoa as well as the Energy and Transport Ministers meeting in 2014 will provide an opportunity for the adoption of regional SE4ALL targets.

17. **To assist Pacific Island Countries to develop their tourism industries**, over the past year the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) has been engaged in development projects and activities to strengthen national capacities—particularly in the private sector, with special emphasis on small-scale operators, where SPTO has worked to improve market access by providing research and intelligence support, niche markets development, training and skills development, as well as product improvements. In addition, SPTO has initiated a number of activities in the area of cruise shipping tourism, a sector that has been growing in recent years and which holds much greater potential for further expansion. This work has been further enhanced by the European Union’s Pacific Regional Tourism Capacity Building Programme (PRTCBP), which has worked with SPTO on regional research, market intelligence and statistical systems; enhancement of market access through improved internet presence and e-commerce capability; capacity improvement through delivery of a tourism and hospitality action plan, cruise sector development; and the institutional strengthening of SPTO.

18. **The Deep Sea Minerals Project** run by SPC made impressive headway in 2012-13, with a highlight being the completion of the Regional Legislative and Regulatory Framework. The Framework has been reviewed and endorsed by all 15 Pacific ACP³ states. In addition, it has been reviewed by non-government organisations, the private sector, other regional and international agencies and academia, and thus reflects commentary from multiple interests and stakeholders. The Framework is the first document of its type in the world and is a first critical step towards assisting the Pacific ACP States to prepare national policy and legal instruments for Deep Sea Mineral regulation.

providing USD 5.4 million for projects in PICs, likely to be allocated to ocean-based energy and sustainable transport initiatives; USD 15.2 million is being provided to Niue, Palau, RMI and Vanuatu for projects to be supported under the PEC Fund that focus on solar power generation systems and solar powered salt water desalination plants; USD 1.3 million has been provided for a low carbon energy project for Nauru, Niue and Tuvalu; and a proposal for a €35 million Climate Change Adaptation and Sustainable Energy project has been put to the EU.

³ The ACP is a grouping of states defined by the European Union, and includes developing nations in Africa (A), the Caribbean (C), and the Pacific (P).

19. **Key regional trade initiatives** have continued to receive support from the Forum Secretariat, in particular the Pacific Islands Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA), Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) Plus, and the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). Regrettably, progress with each of these initiatives has been slow. However, over the past year:

- a. Samoa has become the first country to ratify the PICTA Trade in Services Protocol (TIS), which will come into force once five further countries ratify. To date, nine countries have signed the TIS. To assist these countries in progressing their ratification, the Forum Secretariat prepared a draft model instrument of ratification for their use.
- b. The Fifth Meeting of PACER Plus Officials was held in Samoa on 26-30 November 2012, advancing negotiations in six common Forum Member priority areas: labour mobility, development assistance, sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures, technical barriers to trade, rules of origin and customs procedures. At their meeting in July 2013, Forum Trade Ministers endorsed a roadmap to progress PACER Plus negotiations, agreeing that focus should continue on the six priority areas.
- c. Pacific ACP states continued to negotiate a comprehensive EPA with the European Union as a single regional grouping. After a three-year hiatus, a Pacific ACP and European Union Joint Technical Working Group meeting was eventually held in October 2012, followed by a smaller Technical Working Group meetings. At their meeting in May 2013, Pacific ACP Trade Ministers noted that negotiations had been going on for 10 years already, and directed them to be brought to a close. In line with this decision, final meetings for the Technical Working Group on Fisheries and the Joint Technical Working Group were held from in late June and July 2013. Pacific ACP states were able to negotiate an increase in the number of products granted a derogation from rules of origin, enabling export to the European Union. More favourable outcomes for the Pacific ACP were also negotiated on sanitary, phyto-sanitary, and technical barriers to trade, agriculture, market access offers, and some aspects of trade in goods. However, in fisheries no agreement could be reached on the approach to including a number of conservation and management issues in the EPA. To resolve this issue, Pacific ACP states have requested a final meeting with the European Union at senior officials and Ministerial level in September 2013, following which the Pacific ACP Leaders will make a final decision.

20. Outside the three agreements outlined above, the Forum Secretariat Geneva Office has been working with Forum Island Country World Trade Organisation (WTO) Members to protect and promote their interests. This has been especially important as WTO Members work on the conclusion of the Doha round of negotiations, including the Aid for Trade programme. Vanuatu officially became the 157th Member of the WTO on 24 August 2012. The Forum Secretariat has also been working with Forum island countries in developing comprehensive Trade Policy Frameworks, and has provided support through the services of the “Pacific Islands Trade and Invest” network to help countries develop their export industries and increase investment. Over the coming year, in line with Forum Trade Minister directions, the Forum Secretariat will focus on formulating a strategy for Forum island countries’ negotiations with the USA on the trade and development agreement with a multi-sector approach, and will work with the Forum Fisheries Agency in attempting to secure funding to undertake a comprehensive study on a development-oriented Trade and Investment Arrangement.

21. **To assist Pacific Island countries in meeting maritime transport challenges**, SPC has provided legal, technical and policy assistance, including conducting 24 maritime safety and security compliance audits in nine countries to assist them in meeting international

obligations. SPC has also continued to update Pacific Island Maritime Laws (a set of model legislation and regulations) in line with new developments, and has provided member states with legal assistance in promulgation of maritime legislation at the national level, including support in ratifying the Maritime Labour Convention 2006. In addition, in collaboration with the Pacific Islands Maritime Association, SPC has developed training materials for compliance with international amendments in maritime training and certification requirements, and ran training on hydrographic surveying to help update regional maps (with the International Hydrographic Organization). In January 2013, SPC updated the model International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) regulation and the non-convention passenger vessel regulation while developing three new model regulations on small boat safety, carriage of deck passengers and the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC). To improve maritime safety SPC has undertaken a number of initiatives, with a focus on high-need countries (especially those that have had recent ferry disasters), including a regional domestic ship safety forum in November 2012, which saw the formation of the Pacific Islands' Shipowners' Association. SPC is providing interim secretariat services to the association. In addition, SPC continues to provide assistance in implementing safe ship managements systems.

22. Following a series of committee meetings in late 2012 and early 2013, it is expected that the Central Pacific Shipping Commission (CPSC) will begin operation by late 2013. The CPSC will regulate shipping services in the central Pacific region, with the aim of improving access to reliable, efficient and affordable services. SPC has been providing interim secretariat services to CPSC since its establishment in 2010. Over the past year, established shipping companies have indicated interest in extending their network from the north to service the central Pacific region, including Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) licence holders. This is a positive development and demonstrates that the CPSC is working as a partnership between companies and governments. As the market develops, it is expected that the regulatory function of CPSC will be changed to a monitoring and oversight role with less market intervention.

23. Noting the increasing risk of mass rescue operations with the growing number of cruise ships visits to the region, SPC provided some countries with draft legislation to progress implementation of the 'Maritime Search and Rescue Technical Arrangement for Cooperation among Pacific Island Countries and Territories that Support International Lifesaving in the Pacific Ocean.' This regional technical arrangement for cooperation is expected to be signed by all parties by the end of 2013. To raise levels of understanding of search and rescue response plans and mass rescue operations, in mid-2013 SPC and other regional partners (Fiji, New Zealand, Australia, and the US) organised a regional search and rescue workshop in Fiji.

24. **In aviation**, SPC has worked in line with the Framework for Action on Transport Services (2011–2020) to help develop safe, secure, reliable and affordable regional aviation transport services, especially for Smaller Island States. A focus over the past year has been on updating information repositories for planning and decision-making purposes, and coordinating the Regional Meeting of Directors of Civil Aviation, which identified a need for regulatory capacity support across the region. Despite ongoing interest in the idea of a sub-regional airline (especially among Smaller Island States), little progress has been made on this issue, and further political commitment is required, along with resourcing to enable SPC to credibly progress the proposed solution of calling for competitive tenders for provision of air services on selected intra-regional routes.

25. A key update over the past year was the development of a Business Plan for the Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO) through the World Bank-funded Pacific Aviation Investment Program. The objective of the 5-year Plan is to establish PASO's future development as a Regional Safety Oversight Organisation, with emphasis on improving the business model, scope of services offered, pricing, staffing requirements and financial projections. The reforms

contained in the Business Plan will enhance work already carried out by PASO. A timeline for implementing the Plan has been agreed to and adopted by PASO Council members and the Australian and New Zealand Governments. All inspectorial and management positions will be disestablished to make way for the creation of reclassified and renamed positions under the new structure.

26. **In the field of information and communication technologies (ICT)**, the University of the South Pacific (USP) has taken up the role of Chair of the CROP ICT Working Group, and the Group's membership has been extended to include technical experts from the Pacific ICT Regulatory Resource Centre (PiRRC), Pacific Island Computer Emergency Response Team (PacCERT), Pacific Island Internet Chapter (PICISOC), and the Pacific Islands Telecommunication Association (PITA). Over the coming year, the Group will seek to build stronger working relations with international development partners such as the ADB and the World Bank, and plans to review the Framework for Action on ICT for Development in the Pacific, which currently guides its work.

27. A key focus over the past year has been expanding submarine cable connectivity for broadband, which Leaders emphasised the urgent need for at their 2012 Forum. At present Papua New Guinea, Fiji, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands are the only Forum island countries with international fibre-optic cable connection. Samoa is connected to American Samoa by fibre optic cable but with very limited capacity. Tonga commissioned its fibre-optic cable in July 2013, and Vanuatu and Solomon Islands are likely to commission their fibre-optic cable at the end of 2013 or the beginning of 2014. As a more viable (lower cost) alternative, O3B satellite connectivity is expected to be rolled out in August 2013 in the Cook Islands, with other smaller island countries expected to follow.

28. Other key work undertaken by USP to support regional ICT initiatives has included: improving the regional research and educational network to enhance the quality of education services; hosting USP Net, which sets quality ICT benchmark for Forum island countries and acts as a model to promote similar infrastructure and commercial ICT services; supporting the PiRRC, which provides direct assistance to all ICT Ministries and Regulators and promotes and monitors Forum island countries' performance in trade in telecommunication services; and supporting PacCERT, which is building confidence in the use of internet, e-commerce and e-governance. However, there are emerging financial challenges in continuing much of this work. In particular, PiRRC is dependent on support from the World Bank and other development partners, and PacCERT requires additional financial resources to continue its work

Improving livelihoods and the well-being of Pacific peoples

Medium-term priorities (2009-2012/13) under this Pacific Plan thematic area:

- i. continuing efforts to better ensure **food security** for people across the region
- ii. ensuring **healthy populations**, including through enhanced efforts to better understand health determinants and build the sector's governance and ability to respond pro-actively to current and emerging health needs
- iii. improving access to opportunities afforded through stronger **education** systems at all levels
- iv. urging efforts to pursue the opportunities offered by the appropriate utilisation and development of **land resources**
- v. increasing awareness of and addressing the causes and consequences of **sexual and gender-based violence**
- vi. prioritising national actions to mainstream **youth** issues into the national development agenda
- vii. ensuring access to greater and more equitable opportunities for those with **disabilities**.

29. **Food security** continues to be a cross-cutting issue for the region, and is addressed by work in fisheries (discussed earlier in this report) as well as in agriculture and land resources. SPC has been particularly active in this field: over the past year its Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees has distributed over 13,000 food plants across the region and tested “climate-ready” crops in most countries; in collaboration with FAO, unique and adapted breeds of local chickens and pigs have been mapped through the Animal Genetics Project; a study on ‘Indigenous agricultural knowledge in the Pacific’ has been published; and agricultural training has been provided to several Pacific countries.

30. **Major developments are underway to strengthen the delivery of health services** in the region as a result of increasing concerns about the lack of impact from national and regional investments and the need to respond to the opportunity provided by the review of the Pacific Plan. Key developments over the past year have included:

- a. Closer links between the health sector and the Pacific Island Forum processes, including closer working relationships with Forum Economic Ministers to prevent and control NCDs. The Pacific Ministers of Health meeting is expected to be better linked to the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders in keeping with the planned changes to the Pacific Plan;
- b. Establishment of an annual Secretaries/Directors of Health meeting to discuss matters of mutual concern and strategic important to the health in the region, and to advise Pacific Ministers of Health on policy options to improve population health in the region; and
- a. Development of an overarching Framework for Health Development building on the Healthy Islands vision/framework to guide regional health developments.

31. **Quality and accessible education** is a key driver to improve the livelihoods and well-being of Pacific peoples. Over the past year, implementation of the Pacific Education Development Framework (PEDF) continued in a collaboration between the Forum Secretariat, SPC, USP, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and with funding from the Governments' of Australia and New Zealand. The PEDF provides an overarching strategy to guide investments and initiatives in education across the region and at the country level. In the past year, untrained teachers have received fast-track training and education policy and planning has been provided through the USP. UNICEF led the establishment of a Pacific Regional Council on Early Childhood Education and Care. Research is also being conducted to identify access and equity issues in education systems to guide future policy decisions and reform efforts. In March 2013, the New Zealand Ministry of Education hosted a literacy conference focusing on the use of indigenous languages. This was an important event to identify strategies to improve literacy across the Pacific, with recognising the unique cultures and diversity of the region. In the lead up

to the next Forum Education Ministerial meeting scheduled for April 2014, special focus has been placed on the development of the PEDF monitoring and evaluation framework aligned with national monitoring and evaluation systems. This will provide important data to help countries assess their progress in delivering better education to their people and importantly assist decision makers to make policy and funding choices based on sound evidence. Support is being provided through the PEDF to strengthen education management information systems and their alignment and linkage to the regional monitoring and evaluation framework.

32. **A regional milestone for gender equality** was achieved last September when Forum Leaders endorsed the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration, aiming to improve the economic, political, and social positions of women in the Pacific. Over the past year progress in implementing the five focal areas of the Declaration, which include current Pacific Plan priorities (increasing women's political representation and addressing sexual and gender-based violence), has been mixed:

- a. *Gender responsive government programs and policies:* Although many Forum island countries have ratified and reported on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, limited progress has been made in domesticating it— Cook Islands and Samoa revised their employment laws, Samoa has reformed its sexual offence laws, Kiribati has taken steps towards changing constitutional provisions that permit sex-based discrimination, and national policies on gender equality have been reviewed in Cook Islands, Tonga, and Republic of the Marshall Islands; but other countries still lag.
- b. *Decision making:* Samoa, Vanuatu, and Tuvalu have introduced temporary special quotas for women in government leadership positions, and Papua New Guinea and Federated States of Micronesia have legislation on similar quotas pending. At their meeting in Tonga this year, Forum Economic Ministers voiced support for the introduction of such temporary special measures.
- c. *Economic empowerment:* Nearly all Forum island countries have shown either mixed results or are off track on Millennium Development Goal 3 (Promote Gender equality and Empower Women); only Cook Islands, Niue and Palau are on track, while Tonga and Vanuatu have shown an improvement. In light of slow progress in this area, the Forum Secretariat has been supporting the Republic of the Marshall Islands and Nauru in developing Women's Economic Empowerment Plans.
- d. *Ending violence against women:* Some progress has been made in this area. Specific domestic violence legislation and related protective measures are in place in Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Vanuatu and Fiji. In Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Tuvalu work is in progress for comprehensive and integrated domestic violence legislation.
- e. *Health and education:* Around half of the Forum island countries are on track to improve maternal health (Millennium Development Goal 5), but others are exhibiting mixed progress or are off-track. Sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, remain highly gendered. All Forum island countries are on track to achieve gender parity in education, except for Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Tonga.

33. Pursuant to Leaders' directions on the implementation of the Pacific Leaders' Gender Equality Declaration, progress has also been made by the Forum Secretariat, in collaboration with the SPC, AusAID, and the New Zealand Aid Programme, to develop a Declaration Monitoring and Reporting Framework. The proposed framework incorporates

quantitative outcome indicators and a qualitative process update, which, with countries' input and consent, will be used for reporting to Leaders in the future.

34. **Progress in implementing the Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability** was reviewed at the Second Forum Disability Ministers Meeting held in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea in October 2012. Ministers acknowledged the progress made on implementing the strategy and welcomed the establishment of effective partnerships at the national and regional level. A key challenge identified by the Ministers was the need for enhanced data to improve understanding of disability issues and inform policy decisions and funding choices.

35. The meeting also highlighted the importance of participation by Leaders and Ministers, as well as Pacific persons with disabilities, at the forthcoming UN High Level Meeting on Disability to be held in New York on 23 September 2013. This would be an important opportunity to share the experience and particular challenges faced by people with disability in smaller island states. Ministers also encouraged Forum Island Leaders to promote and ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRDP). A total of four Forum island countries have ratified the CRDP, with the latest being Palau in June of this year. A report to Leaders on the outcomes of the Second Forum Disability Ministers Meeting is attached to this annual report.

36. An independent mid-term review of the Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability will be undertaken in 2013. Consulting with a range of disability partner organisations, the report is expected to make recommendations to improve implementation of the regional strategy and other related activities supporting disability inclusive development in the region.

Addressing the impacts of climate change

Medium-term priorities (2009-2012/13) under this Pacific Plan thematic area:

- i. continuing the implementation of the Niue Declaration on Climate Change
- ii. developing Pacific-tailored responses to support adaptation and mitigation measures and better coordination of Disaster Risk Management-Climate Change Adaptation (DRM-CCA)
- iii. coordinating regional efforts in the early implementation of outcomes of the December 2009 Copenhagen meetings
- iv. enhancing the resilience of ecological systems and associated biodiversity and providing ecosystem services
- v. assisting with the assessment called for by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/Res/63/281
- vi. strengthening data collection and analysis for improved climatic monitoring and preparedness
- vii. building scientific capacity across the region through strategic partnerships
- viii. building support, with the assistance of regional and international partners, for the Coral Triangle Initiative

37. Over the past year, CROP agencies have continued to coordinate through the Working Arm on Climate Change to provide assistance and implement projects in climate change advocacy, financing, mitigation, and adaptation, and in disaster risk reduction.

38. **CROP agencies have continued to provide support in a number of settings in international negotiations**, in particular around the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and associated institutions. In the run up to Convention negotiations in Doha, Qatar, a number of activities were initiated including two pre-event workshops focussed on coordinating Pacific positions and identifying areas of commonality and priority for the region as a whole. Delegates were also supported by CROP agency teams throughout the negotiations, especially in priority areas such as finance and loss and damage.

39. **New tools have been developed to reduce complexity in climate change financing.** To support better understanding of what is available to countries, as an extension to its 2012 booklet describing various financing modalities the Forum Secretariat undertook a country-focused analysis: the Nauru Case Study. This study was designed in collaboration with the Government of Nauru, CROP agencies, and other climate change partners, and aimed to provide a comprehensive assessment of climate change financing and implementation in Nauru. From the results of the case study, a Pacific Climate Change Finance Assessment Framework was designed, assessing a country's ability to access and manage climate change resources against six interrelated dimensions: funding sources, policies and plans, institutions, public financial management and expenditure, human capacity, and development effectiveness. The Framework was recently used for a regional workshop on climate change financing, and will be applied in a second national case study in the second half of 2013.

40. Efforts have also been made to make additional funding available to Forum island countries. CROP agencies, in collaboration with the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, have continued the development of the Regional Technical Support Mechanism for Climate Change, which includes a rapid response fund to facilitate timely deployment of technical assistance. This mechanism is expected to be operational by late 2013 or early 2014, and will assist countries to access a pool of specialist expertise from across the region. In addition, CROP agencies have been assisting with: country access to the World Bank's Climate Investment Fund; the design and development of the Green Climate Fund; and access to the Global Environment Facility, including the Special Climate Change Fund, the Least Developing Countries Fund, and the Adaptation Fund. To facilitate better access to these funds, three countries have applied to have national implementing entities, and the Secretariat of the Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) has applied for Regional Implementing Entity status under the Adaptation Fund and the Global Environment Facility.

41. **Adaptation efforts have been supported by a number of ongoing projects.** For example, the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change Project is focussing on three critical sectors: water, coastal management and food security. Over its four years of operation, the project has contributed significantly to the development of adaptation measures in 14 Pacific island countries, and over the past year has installed substantial water cisterns, demonstrated integrated coastal management programmes, and trialled salt tolerant crop varieties in a number of countries.

42. **Multiple efforts are also being made to enhance mitigation efforts.** A major project in this area has been the Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project (PIGGAREP), which is currently in its sixth year of operation. The project has recently received additional funding from the “SIDS DOCK”, an initiative between SPREP and the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre in partnership with the Alliance of Small Island States, which will support hardware projects on mitigation for six countries. Moving forward, a crucial consideration for the region will be to ensure that projects such as PIGGAREP are scaled-up adequately to take advantage of the lessons learned and to continue to build on the knowledge base which has been developed throughout their implementation.

43. **Disaster risk management and climate change adaptation share the aim of reducing communities’ vulnerability to natural hazards** (whether geophysical or climate related, of sudden or slow onset) and increasing risk resilience. In recognition of the limited country resources and of the significant overlaps in the methods and tools used to monitor, analyse and address disaster and climate risks, the region has shown support for a process of integration of Disaster Risk Management and climate change adaptation activities at both national and regional level. At national level, integration has been through initiatives such as the development of Joint National Action Plans for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management. At regional level, CROP agencies have supported the development of an integrated regional strategy for climate change and Disaster Risk Management to succeed the current two separate regional frameworks. The landmark Joint Meeting of the 2013 Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management and Pacific Climate Change Roundtable (the Joint Meeting), held in July 2013 signalled the beginning of this new, integrated approach. This meeting, which was preceded by parallel meetings of the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable, the 19th Regional Disaster Managers Meeting, Strategic Alliance Meeting of National Disaster Management Offices, Fire & Emergency Services and Police, Regional Water & Sanitation Consultations, and the Pacific Meteorological Council, set out a roadmap that would support countries to develop an integrated regional strategy by 2015.

44. **To further develop the Pacific Oceanscape Framework** document, endorsed by the Leaders at their 41st meeting, the Marine Sector Working Group commissioned the development of an implementation plan that would take into account the current projects and support available to Pacific island countries and identify priority areas of activity to address gaps. The first draft of this plan was recently considered by the Working Group at their meeting in July 2013. In addition, in order to operationalize the Oceanscape Framework, seven concept notes have been prepared outlining priority projects for the next five years—including the establishment of a Pacific Ocean Commissioner’s Support Unit to enable high-level representation and commitment to ensure dedicated advocacy, attention and cohesion on ocean priorities, decisions and processes

Achieving stronger national development through better governance

Medium-term priorities (2009-2012/13) under this Pacific Plan thematic area:

- i. accelerating improvements to **development coordination** in the region
- ii. committing to sustainable collection and compilation of **statistics**, information management, and records-keeping
- iii. implementing efforts to allow for improved access to **official information**
- iv. supporting efforts to allow an enhanced role for **women in national decision making** processes
- v. continuing to strengthen **accountability and integrity institutions**
- vi. encouraging greater **involvement of parliamentarians** in the development agenda
- vii. addressing **corruption** through relevant and existing mechanisms and commitments.

45. **To improve development coordination in the Pacific region**, in the Forum (Cairns) Compact of 2009 Forum Leaders made commitments to strengthen country systems, institutions and policies to improve the effective use of domestic and development resources. The ultimate aim was to accelerate Forum island countries' and the region's progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

46. Over the past year, there has been good progress in implementing reforms aligned with the Forum Compact. Peer reviews of country systems have shown that Forum island countries are paying more attention to setting medium term and costed priorities, establishing frameworks and systems to track progress of national development plans, establishing medium term budget frameworks to better link priorities and budgets, jointly implementing with development partners policy reform matrices for budget support, completing Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) assessments, and finalising public financial management reform programmes and official development assistance (ODA) policies. Four peer reviews and two follow-up visits were completed; the remaining three Forum island countries will complete their peer reviews by the end of 2013.

47. However, despite this good progress there remain significant challenges. Limitations in human resource capacities (numbers, skills and high turnover) threaten to erode recent progress made especially in smaller island states. Overall, fragmentation of ODA delivery is reducing, but not in all Forum island countries, and not quickly enough. Use of country systems is increasing in some but at a slow pace and not equally across the Forum island countries. With a few exceptions, country engagement with the private sector, civil society, and parliamentarians could be more systematic, inclusive, policy based, and mutually accountable.

48. Monitoring over the past year has shown minimal changes in MDG indicators since 2011-12. Only a small number of countries (Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu) are seriously pursuing MDG acceleration strategies. There is a strong need for other countries to take a similar approach if they are to meet goals by late 2014. There is also a need to support gender equality as a complementary measure: this year's review of progress had a special focus on the gender dimensions of MDG achievement, showing that empowering women is central to achieving all MDGs. At the same time, it is important for countries to keep track of and contribute to the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda and development of sustainable development goals. The Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting towards the 2014 SIDS Conference, held in mid 2013, identified 10 key issues for the region to advocate for in this regard.

49. **Collection and compilation of statistics, information management, and records-keeping** across the Pacific over the past year has been supported by the SPC. In multiple countries across the region assistance has been provided in setting up processes and support systems for census and household surveys, and training has been delivered; economic statistics master plans or developments strategies have been established, and the development and use of national accounts, trade statistics, and price statistics has been supported, including

through greater utilisation of south–south technical collaboration, in collaboration with the Pacific Financial Technical Advisory Centre (PFTAC); and special assistance has been provided for the compilation and management of statistics for health, education, gender equality, culture, and MDG tracking. Key regional developments have included improvements to the PRISM online overviews of country statistics, including more regional statistical tables to meet the growing demand for such information by regular users including technical and financial partners and other regional agencies. In addition, baseline information in the National Minimum Development Indicator (NMDI) for all countries has been compiled, and excellent progress has been made in rolling out the online portal at www.spc.int/nmdi, providing users with a one-stop-shop for accessing a broad range of Pacific island development statistics and indicators in a user-friendly format.

50. **Advice and assistance on strengthening accountability and integrity mechanisms** in Pacific island countries has continued to be provided by a range of normative and legal frameworks (such as the Forum Principles of Good Leadership and the Regional Model Leadership Code) and institutional mechanisms (such as offices of auditors-general, ombudsman and leadership commissions). In 2012, the Pacific Ombudsman Alliance, the Commonwealth Pacific Governance Facility and the Forum Secretariat partnered to provide assistance to the Government of Niue in developing a proposal for enhancing the accountability of members of the Legislative Assembly of Niue, following a widely consultative in-country process. The resulting proposals to introduce a code of conduct for members and broaden the scope of the existing Assembly Members’ Interests Act are likely to be adopted over the coming year. Meanwhile, the Pacific Association of Supreme Audit Institutions has completed two cooperative audits for Pacific island countries, including sustainable fisheries management and climate change adaptation; issued a second accountability and transparency report in the region; and completed the second sub-regional audit project for Kiribati, Tuvalu and Nauru.

51. **Parliamentarian involvement in the development agenda** has been encouraged through activities run by the SPC. Technical support and training at the national level has been provided in several countries, ongoing support in health-related topics (including HIV) has been provided through the Pacific Legislatures for Population and Governance programme, and regional engagement with members of parliament resulted in a Pacific Parliamentarian statement urging Pacific leaders to support measures and legislation to address violence against women.

52. **In terms of support for Forum island countries’ efforts to address corruption**, the United Nations’ Development Programme and Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDP and UNODC) have recently established a joint UN–Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption Project to support Forum island countries ratify and implement the UN Convention Against Corruption. This Project is funded for an initial four years, and includes the deployment of dedicated anti-corruption advisers based in the UNDP Pacific Centre in Suva.

Ensuring improved social, political, & legal conditions for stability, safety & security

Medium-term priorities (2009-2012/13) under this Pacific Plan thematic area:

- i. improving **human security** outcomes for members
- ii. strengthening cooperation in the **law enforcement and border security** sectors
- iii. promoting and consolidating regional **stability** through adherence to Forum values and the Biketawa Declaration.

53. **In 2012, the Forum Secretariat finalised the development of the Forum's Human Security Framework for Conflict Prevention in the Pacific.** This Framework was developed at the request of the Forum Regional Security Council in light of increasing recognition of the importance of understanding and addressing 'security' not only in terms of the security of the State, but also in terms of the security and well-being of individuals and communities. The Framework was endorsed by Forum Leaders at their 2012 meeting in Rarotonga, Cook Islands. Its purpose is to guide Members, the Forum Secretariat and other stakeholders in incorporating human security considerations into regional security policy development.

54. Coordination to address broader security concerns has continued to be a focus over the past year, with meetings of not only the Forum Regional Security Council, but also of Regional Law Enforcement Secretariats (which discussed transnational crime trends and collaborated on the production of the annual Pacific Transnational Crime Assessment), and the Forum Working Group on Counter-Terrorism (which includes most Member countries, regional law enforcement bodies, and specialist organisations such as the Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering, the UNSCR 1540 Experts Group, and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. The Forum Secretariat has also coordinated and funded an in-country inter-agency Border Security Training Programme for immigration, customs, police, quarantine, civil aviation, ports authorities, fisheries and airlines staff. Since 2011, eight Forum island countries have received this training (Vanuatu, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Federated States of Micronesia in 2011; Cook Islands, Kiribati and Palau in 2012; Tuvalu and Tonga in 2013). Training in other countries is scheduled to begin soon.

55. **The Biketawa Declaration** (adopted by Forum Leaders in 2000) commits Forum Members to fundamental values including a 'belief in the liberty of the individual under the law, in equal rights for all citizens regardless of gender, race, colour, creed or political belief' and to 'upholding democratic processes and institutions' and 'the peaceful transfer of power'. Ongoing measures under the Biketawa Declaration include the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) and the Ministerial Contact Group on Fiji, which are regularly reviewed by the Forum Regional Security Council.

Review of the Pacific Plan

56. At their meeting in the Cook Islands in August 2012, Pacific Leaders agreed that the time was right for a comprehensive and independent review of the Pacific Plan. They also agreed that the review should be led by an eminent person from the region, and nominated a former Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, the Right Honourable Sir Mekere Morauta, KCMG. A team consisting of two country representatives and two consultants was selected to support Sir Mekere Morauta – Mrs. Peseta Noumea Simi (Samoa), Mr Redley Killion (Federated States of Micronesia), Mr Peter Bazeley (consultant from the United Kingdom), and Dr Nick Poletti (Consultant from New Zealand). In addition, Mr Robert Igara was appointed by the Government of Papua New Guinea as an Advisor to Sir Mekere Morauta.

57. As part of the review process which commenced in December 2012, the Review Team have visited every Forum island country and associate members (New Caledonia and French Polynesia) and held discussions with a wide range of stakeholders. The team has met with senior political representatives, government officials, representatives of non-government organisations, private sector groups, staff at CROP agencies, development partners, and individual citizens. They have also held discussions with UN and Pacific island country representatives in New York and met with EU officials in Brussels. The Team presented to two Pacific Plan Action Committee meetings, and will also attend the Leaders meeting in Majuro in September 2013.

58. The Review Team commissioned a ‘think piece’ on the governance of multilateral organisations and also released seven review notes covering the proposed methodology, country consultations, initial lines of inquiry, and key issues around the Pacific Plan – defining regionalism, the prioritisation process, measuring progress, and alternative development paths.

59. The Review Team also sought public submissions on the future of the Pacific Plan through their website (www.pacificplanreview.org). A total of 73 submissions were received from a wide range of organisations and individuals, contributing to the debate on regionalism and priorities for the Pacific Plan.

60. The final review report will be presented by Sir Mekere Morauta and discussed with Forum Leaders at the Pacific Island Forum to be held in the Republic of the Marshall Islands in September 2013. While the presentation of the report to Leaders marks the completion of the review process, the next stage of implementing the agreed recommendations will be critical to supporting effective approaches to regional integration and cooperation. This will build on the successes of the Pacific Plan over the past eight years, and ensure that it remains relevant and central to the future of Pacific peoples.

Pacific Plan Performance Framework

61. The performance framework for the Pacific Plan that was trialled in 2012 was deferred in 2013. Full implementation of the performance framework for the 37 priorities would have entailed a heavy administrative burden on CROP agencies and the various working groups, with the likelihood that the approach to tracking performance would change the following year as a result of the review of the Pacific Plan.

62. A second factor was that the Pacific Plan Office did not have the resources to fully implement the performance framework and also support the review of the Pacific Plan. The review of the Pacific Plan was the number one priority and resources were allocated accordingly.

63. A key aspect of the terms of reference to review the Pacific Plan is a focus on performance management and reporting for results. Any recommendations from the review on

performance management will need to carefully consider the resource implications of these approaches for the Pacific Plan Office and the wider Forum Secretariat.

Engagement with Non State Actors

64. As mandated under the Pacific Plan, the Forum Secretariat has continued to develop its engagement with non-state actors (NSAs) over the past year. A major activity has been the development, in collaboration with regional NSAs and the European Union, of an NSA policy engagement programme to be funded under the European Development Fund (EDF 10) non focal area component. Following a successful concept submission in 2012, the Forum Secretariat was invited to prepare an Action Fiche (full proposal) for the formulation of a programme. This proposal has been provisionally approved; subject to final sign-off by the European Union, the programme will focus on supporting NSAs to participate and engage effectively with regional policy formulation.

65. As part of the process to improve the Forum Secretariat's engagements with NSAs, an Internal Working Group has been established to coordinate, consolidate and support the mainstreaming of NSA engagement. The establishment of this Group is in line with global recognition of NSA contributions to effective development, and with the commitment to 'a more inclusive development agenda' as reflected in the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation 2011. The Working Group will be strongly supported by the Forum Secretariat's NSA Liaison Officer, who has an ongoing role in sharing information with NSAs, supporting their engagement in key policy dialogues, and providing technical advice.

66. A key area of NSA policy engagement over the past year has been in relation to the Pacific Plan Review. Civil society and private sector NSAs have been actively engaged in Review consultations at both the regional and national levels, ensuring that their perspectives on regional integration and cooperation were shared with the Review Team. NSAs were also the most numerous contributors to the written submissions to the Review, and were supported by Forum Secretariat and SPC activities to encourage engagement and provide training to better understand the Pacific Plan, the Review, and the submission process.

Pacific Plan Desk Officers

67. All Pacific Plan Desk Officers have played a major role in supporting Pacific Plan Review activities over the past year, including preparing and disseminating pre-Review briefing materials and coordinating in-country consultation programmes for the Review Team. This work has been very important in ensuring that the consultations were well-informed, wide-ranging, and well-organised. Desk Officers also attended the Special PPAC meeting in May to hear the Review team's interim findings and provide inputs based on their own experiences working with the Pacific Plan.

68. Although the Desk Officer positions have been primarily in support of Smaller Island States, the position in Vanuatu has proved valuable for strengthening the national Government's connections with regional-level activities and assisting in Pacific Plan monitoring. In recognition of this, the Government of Vanuatu and Forum Secretariat agreed to extend the position for a further three years from August 2013, signing an exchange of letters to set out the support that would be provided by each party.

69. In addition, the Desk Officer position in the Federated States of Micronesia has been re-established, with the appointment in May 2013 of Mr McEnroe Ardos into this role, under a joint agreement between the Forum Secretariat and the Government. Mr Ardos assisted with Review consultations in Pohnpei in May, and has set out an ambitious workplan to further

develop understanding of and connections to the Pacific Plan, and to the work of the Forum Secretariat more widely, across multiple stakeholders in the Federated States of Micronesia.

Looking Ahead

70. The year ahead is likely to be a time of considerable reflection and change for those working closely on the Pacific Plan, as the Review's recommendations are considered and a workplan for implementing them is set out. As decided by the PPAC meeting in 2012, it will be important to establish new priorities under the Plan, seeking to update those set in 2009 and to apply new criteria to identify areas of greatest importance and benefit for regional collaboration.

71. Undoubtedly, work on the initiatives supporting current Pacific Plan priority areas will continue, particularly through the well-established regional frameworks that guide activities in key sectors and assist in inter-agency coordination. As a result, the region should continue to enjoy the benefits of cooperation and integrated service provision in these areas. However, it may be the case that these initiatives are no longer captured in future Pacific Plan progress reports, as the focus turns to new priority areas. Other regional mechanisms may be relied on to monitor and make decisions on activities no longer highlighted under the Pacific Plan.

72. A shift in the Pacific Plan's focus will likely have implications for the work programme of the Forum Secretariat, and for other CROP agencies that align their activities to the Plan. The work of PPAC, too, may be affected, and this will likely be a key topic of consideration at the next meeting. Until then, however, the PPAC will continue to guide the implementation, monitoring, and development under the Pacific Plan, and the Forum Secretariat will provide regular reporting in this regard.

This paper prepared by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

July, 2013



Report to Leaders on the outcomes of Second Forum Disability Ministers Meeting - October 2012

This report responds to Forum Leaders who requested at their meeting in the Cook Islands in August 2012 that Forum Disability Ministers report on the outcomes of their meeting.

The Second Forum Disability Ministers Meeting (FDMM) was held in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea in October 2012. In complying with the decisions of Forum Leaders in 2012, this is a brief report of the outcomes of the Ministerial Meeting.

2. Ministers in their deliberations recognised the unique leadership position of Forum Leaders and are urged to work collaboratively with ministerial colleagues in education, health, law, and justice to ensure an inclusive approach to their process of policy formulation and that the voice of persons with disability have influence on Leaders' actions.

3. A key issue raised by Ministers was the need for increased data collection against relevant rights-related indicators and the need to harmonise various agency databases. They identified a need to increase support for disabled people's organisations, recognising that although some countries already have good levels of engagement, others are lagging. At the same time, Ministers acknowledged the value of community and family-based support and care.

Status of Implementation of the Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability

4. The Secretariat presented to Ministers a status report on the implementation of the Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability (PRSD). The presentation focused on progress made thus far against the six thematic areas, continuing challenges, and the way forward in implementing the strategy.

5. Ministers in their deliberations welcomed the significant progress made and strong partnerships established at the regional and national level in implementing the PRSD. However, there was a strong call for support to countries to collect and analyse relevant disability data to improve understanding of disability issues to better inform policy decisions on disability inclusive development.

6. Ministers agreed to recommend for Leaders to recognise that a long-term approach is required to support the rights of persons with disability in the Pacific and acknowledge the good work that has been implemented under the PRSD.

Mid Term Review of the Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability

7. Ministers further noted that the Secretariat will conduct the mid-term review of the PRSD that will be completed by an independent consultant in 2013. The ministers also emphasised consultation with disabled people's organisations as a key part of the review process.

8. A key outcome of the review is to make recommendations to improve and strengthen the performance of the PRSD and its leveraging of other related activities in disability inclusive development in the Pacific region as well as provide direction for future plans.

Pacific Leaders participation at the UN High Level Meeting on Disability (HLMD)

9. Ministers recommended that Leaders note the importance of the UN High Level Meeting on Disability (HLMD) and the need for their participation to ensure the Pacific voice is heard and recognised. They urged Forum Leaders to participate at the HLMD which happens a day before the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York on 23 September 2013.

10. Ministers further committed to ensuring that Pacific persons with disabilities are well represented and supported to participate in the HLMD consultation and plenary processes.

11. Ministers noted the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on the HLMD, and upon their directive, a letter signed by the Chair of the FDMM was sent to the co-facilitators of the HLMD process conveying the relevant outcomes of the meeting and requesting a comprehensive regional consultation process prior to the HLMD.

12. There is a need for a high level political declaration recognising the special challenges faced by people with disability in small island states with some reference to the impact of climate change on their lives and other emerging issues, including the relationship between disability and non communicable disease, ageing, and women and children with disabilities.

Pacific Disability Forum and Disabled People's Organisations support

13. Ministers applauded and commended the contributions made by the Pacific Disability Forum and national disabled people's organisations in Pacific Island Countries in advancing disability issues at local, national, and regional levels with the support of national governments, international non-governmental organisations and development partners.

14. Ministers also agreed to engage and ensure the full and effective participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations at local, national, and regional decision-making levels in Pacific Island countries for good disability inclusive development practice in our region.

Other Major Decisions by the Forum Disability Ministers Meeting

15. Disability inclusive development targets must be included in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

16. Disabled people's organisations in the Pacific and their regional coordinating body, the Pacific Disability Forum, continue to stress the central role of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations in the implementation of the PRSD. They voiced their hope that Pacific Islands governments would recognise the important role played by disabled people's organisations in disability inclusive development in the region and would support them through the provision of financial, technical, and other resources in order to continue this important role.

17. Ministers urged Forum Island Leaders to promote and support the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and agreed that all Forum island countries should develop and implement national disability policies and legislation premised on the Convention.

18. Ministers agreed that disability inclusive policies and programmes should be developed and implemented to create an enabling environment for women and men with disabilities to secure decent and productive work and that inclusive laws and policies should be designed to encourage employers (public and private), with the support for their representative organisations, to employ persons with disabilities and provide reasonable accommodations to enable them to carry out their positions.

19. Ministers further identified the value of exchanging programme staff, to tap into regional agency expertise, and of facilitating exchanges among persons with disabilities, through "Para Pacific Games" type sporting exchanges and broader cultural exchanges.

20. In addition, Ministers noted that ICT capacity building would be important for increasing connectivity, skills, and access to services among persons with disabilities, and requested assistance from Australia in incorporating ICT development into disability inclusive plans.

21. Assistance is also required to address the linkages between disability and climate change, particularly with respect to assisting disabled people's organisations in disseminating information on disaster risk management, including evacuation of persons with disabilities.

22. Ministers highlighted the need for a mechanism for regional cooperation to be developed in the area of disability inclusive development, to facilitate multi-lateral and bilateral relationships between countries with possible assistance from donors and development partners.