



Expert Group Meeting

Raising financing through ocean resources to foster sustainable development of small island developing States

22-23 October 2019

TATTE Convention Centre (22 October) and One UN House (23 October)
Apia, Samoa

Concept Note

Background

The expert group meeting is intended as the contribution to the preparation of the *Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs (CSN) Development Report 2020* entitled “Raising financing through ocean resources to foster sustainable development of small island developing States”. It is being organized in conjunction with the Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development.

The *CSN Development Report* is a report that addresses development challenges of relevance to least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States (SIDS). The 2020 report will focus on development challenges of SIDS, whose predicaments concern remoteness and small size of their economies, thus limited opportunities to engage with the global economy and to develop viable industries, which hampers their progress in achieving SDGs.

Indeed, if the region’s SIDS remain on their current development trajectory, they will not achieve any of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. On the contrary, SIDS have regressed in several goals, including Goal 2 (zero hunger), Goal 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), Goal 14 (life below water) and Goal 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions). These worrying trends need to be reversed; urgent policy actions are required, and greater efforts must be made to reach all goals by 2030.

SIDS must make more effective and efficient use of their vast ocean resources, to which their development is intrinsically linked. With the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) for 12 Pacific SIDS spanning a total area of 16.8 million square kilometres, which is on average 31 times greater than their collective land area, the potential for these economies to benefit from ocean resources within their own jurisdiction is tremendous. The vastness of their marine resources offers them the potential to alleviate one of their defining obstacles to sustainable development, namely that of a narrow resource base and few financial resources. In order to achieve this, SIDS will need to devise mechanisms and policies to enhance their ability to generate financial resources for sustainable development from the ocean resources, predominantly through fisheries and tourism.

Fisheries play an important role for livelihoods in SIDS, with offshore capture fisheries and associated processing activities providing major economic benefits. Moreover, tourism has become one of the most important economic activities in SIDS. It has already become the largest economic sector in Vanuatu, Fiji and the Cook Islands and has the potential to become a key source of employment and income growth, as well as poverty alleviation, in others. However, further developing tourism and fisheries in an environmentally sustainable way poses a challenge given the fragile ecosystems of SIDS.

Given the scale of financial resources required to effectively pursue the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, also greater international, regional and subregional cooperation will be critical for SIDS as they will not be able to raise the required financing on their own. Thus, better cooperation can improve access to external funding mechanisms which could finance development projects in SIDS.

Meeting Objectives:

The main objective of the meeting is to identify the necessary policies and institutional arrangements that are required in the areas of fisheries, tourism and (sub)regional cooperation to enhance the financial resource mobilization for sustainable development and achieving SDGs in the Asia-Pacific small island developing States. The knowledge obtained and expertise shared will be used for the preparations of the *Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2020*.

Intended Participants

Technical experts in the aforementioned areas drawn from academia, regional bodies and associations, the UN system, and the private sector. The expert pool will also be drawn from the participants of the Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development.

Organization

The expert group meeting (on 22nd and 23rd October) will be conducted in English and all documentation will be in English.

Expected outcome

The outcome of the EGM is to generate knowledge and expertise for the purpose of drafting the *Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2020* “Raising financing through ocean resources to foster sustainable development of small island developing States”.

Programme

Day 1: 22 October 2019	
14:00-15:30	<p>Session 1: Leveraging ocean resources for sustainable development in the Pacific [This is Session 5 of the Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development]</p> <p>This session will examine how ocean resources in the Pacific can be better used to raise financial resources for sustainable development.</p> <p>Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Financing the effective implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific (Oliver Paddison, ESCAP) · Enhancing Blue Economy Sectors’ for Financing for Development in SIDS (Jose Antonio Pedrosa Garcia, ESCAP) · Country participants and experts narrow down on particularly relevant sectors. The 2020 Ocean Conference – What’s in it for SIDS (Friedrich Soltau, UN-DESA)
15:30-15:45	Coffee break

15:45-17:45	<p>Session 2: Leveraging ocean resources through tourism [in parallel of Session 6 of the Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development]</p> <p>This session will examine how SIDS can use tourism to raise more financial resources for their sustainable development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Tourism & SDGs: Magnets for Attracting Investment to SIDS? (Scott Wayne, SW Associates LLC) • Development challenges of SIDS to raise financial resources for sustainable development (Neelesh Gounder, University of the South Pacific) • Status and current challenges of sustainable tourism in the Pacific SIDS (Chris Cocker and Christina Gale, South Pacific Tourism Organization) <p>Q&A</p>
Day 2: 23 October 2019	
9:00-10:30	<p>(Cont.) Session 2: Leveraging ocean resources through tourism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism as a driver of growth in the Pacific (Dain Simpson, Dain Simpson Associates) • Opportunities for raising financial resources: sustainable tourism (Stephen Pratt, University of the South Pacific) <p>Session 3: Leveraging ocean resources: fisheries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leveraging ocean resources: fisheries (Jessica Sanders, FAO) • Challenges for raising fisheries revenues (Maria F. Sapatu, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Samoa) <p>Q & A</p>
10:30-10:45	Break
10:45-12:15	<p>Session 4: Leveraging ocean resources: regional cooperation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate finance in the Pacific SIDS (Jale Samuwai Curuki, Oxfam in the Pacific) <p>Q & A</p>
12:15-12:30	Wrap up session