PACIFIC PERSPECTIVES 2023
ADVOCATING THE ASPIRATIONS OF SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES
The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is the most inclusive intergovernmental platform in the Asia-Pacific region. The Commission promotes cooperation among its 53 member States and 9 associate members in pursuit of solutions to sustainable development challenges. ESCAP is one of the five regional commissions of the United Nations.

The ESCAP secretariat supports inclusive, resilient and sustainable development in the region by generating action-oriented knowledge, and by providing technical assistance and capacity-building services in support of national development objectives, regional agreements and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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PACIFIC PERSPECTIVES 2023

ADVOCATING THE ASPIRATIONS OF SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

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Pacific Small Island Developing States are experiencing a unique socio-economic transformation. Due to their respective geographical locations and climate-induced vulnerabilities, development indicators such as income per capita disguise their true status. The Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Accelerated Modalities of Action, or SAMOA Pathway, which is the current overarching UN framework for guiding global, regional and national development efforts to achieve the SIDS’ development aspirations, will conclude in 2024. Therefore, Pacific members and associate members of ESCAP are coming together to amplify the Pacific voice in the Fourth International SIDS conference in Antigua and Barbuda in May 2024.

The Pacific regional preparatory meeting for the 10-year review of the SAMOA Pathway, held in Nuku’alofa, Tonga from 16 to 18 August 2023, reaffirmed Pacific SIDS as a special case for sustainable development due to their unique, inherent and particular vulnerabilities, and also identified new opportunities.

In view of this, Pacific Perspectives 2023: Advocating the aspirations of Small Island Developing States provides another opportunity to highlight some of the Pacific’s key socio-economic and climate change features, while highlighting several regional and national initiatives that could be scaled up across the region. The publication’s chapters comprise the themes of Advance Pacific Priorities (Chapter 1); Synergize Strategic Regional and National Approaches (Chapter 2); Harness Cooperation Potential (Chapter 3); and The Way Forward (Chapter 4).

It is our hope that the findings, analyses, regional and national experiences, and policy ideas contained in the publication will help Pacific member States and other stakeholders to effectively enhance the aspirations of Pacific communities.

I am pleased to acknowledge the strong collaboration between ESCAP and the various members of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP), as well as the valuable contributions of Pacific and international experts, development agencies and the UN development system, especially UNDESA, to this year’s Pacific Perspectives.

Andie Fong Toy
Head
Subregional Office for the Pacific of ESCAP

FOREWORD
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
The Pacific Perspectives 2023: Advocating the aspirations of Small Island Developing States is a publication of the Subregional Office for the Pacific of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). The publication was produced under the overall guidance of Andie Fong Toy, Head of the Subregional Office for the Pacific of ESCAP. Sudip Ranjan Basu, Deputy Head and Senior Economic Affairs Officer, provided overall substantive direction and management of this publication. The publication received contributions from Roy Trivedy, Lise Kalavi, Taulapapa Brenda Heather-Latu, Selim Raihan, Neelesh Gounder, Mark Borg and Nikhil Lal.

The publication further benefited from technical contributions of ESCAP’s substantive divisions, namely, Vatcharin Sirimaneetham, Katinka Weinberger, Sanjay Srivastava, Madhurima Sarkar-Swaisgood, Aneta Nikolova, Michael Williamson, Sergey Tulinov, Oliver Paddison, Nyingtob Norbu, Arman Bidarbakht Nia, Dayyan Shayani, Xian Ji, Ingrid Dispert and Edgar Dante. ESCAP Subregional Office for the Pacific staff who provided valuable inputs and feedback include Nobuko Kajura, Sanjesh Naidu, Jasmine Wai Mun Hong and Christopher Ryan. Ranhee Kim provided research assistance in the preparation of the publication.

The publication benefited from the extensive discussions and suggestions from an Expert Group Meeting held in July 2023, which served as a platform to set the direction of the publication. The publication was also enriched by the comments and inputs received from experts: Henry Cocker, Denton Rarawa and Portia Dugu, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS); Alison Culpin, Litea Biikoto and Florence Ventura, the Pacific Community (SPC); Anastacia Amoa-Stowers and Peter Davies, the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP); Nacanieli Rika, Baljeet Singh and Atul Raturi, the University of the South Pacific (USP); Tekau Frere, Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner; Roy Lagolago, PACER Plus Implementation Unit; Salamat Ali, the Commonwealth Secretariat; Arieta Gonelevu Rakai and Peceli Nakavuleve, the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA); Tamojit Chatterjee, Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL); Joel Varo, Fiji National University; Darryn McEvoy, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) University; Gabrielle Emery, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR); Travis Klaus Mitchell, the UN Resident Coordinator Office, Samoa; Constance Vigilance, the UN Resident Coordinator Office, Papua New Guinea; Gerson Joel De Assis Alves, the UN Resident Coordinator Office, Timor Leste; Miliana Carpenter Iga and Josia Tokoni, Pacific Youth Council and Siosiua Utoikamanu.

The publication also benefitted greatly from feedback received during the following consultations: SAMOA Pathway Consultation: Strengthening Partnership with Universities and Research Networks, 13 June 2023 at USP; Pacific Regional Consultation Meeting on the SAMOA Pathway Regional Report 2023 on 13 July 2023 at PIFS; and Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Pacific Region: 4th International Conference on Small Island Developing States, 16-18 August in Nuku’alofa, Tonga.

The publication benefited from suggestions and technical assistance from Sai Navoti and Anya Thomas of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). UNDESA also provided some financial assistance for the publication. Inputs were also provided by Tishka Hope Francis and Eva Marie Vestergaard from the SIDS Unit of the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS). Patricia Momoivalu, Leba Petersen, Orisi Sameco and Khanh Ha Tran provided administrative assistance and valuable logistical support for the publication’s launch.
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INTRODUCTION
The Small Island Developing States are a special case for sustainable development due to their unique, inherent and particular vulnerabilities. These countries are characterized by their relatively small landmass, remoteness, small and often dispersed populations, small economies, narrow resource and export base, and exposure to exogenous economic, social and environmental shocks.

Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) have unique cultures and traditions. They face a shared set of geographical, environmental, economic and social challenges, and have unique development needs that make them extremely vulnerable. Their geographical locations and remoteness from economic markets result in specific challenges that affect their ability to benefit from global supply chains, while also increasing import, production and trading costs for energy and other material resources. This limits the Pacific SIDS’ competitiveness in tourism and other sectors and affects their ability to attract inward investment. Due to their limited state capacity and production base, their ability to expand the scope of additional revenue generation remains constrained. Development indicators such as income per capita disguise the unique challenges faced by the Pacific SIDS.

The SIDS classification began gaining currency at the United Nations Rio Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, when it was used to identify and draw attention to the environmental and developmental commonalities and challenges faced by Small Island Developing States. The Barbados Programme of Action was developed in 1994 to assist the SIDS in their sustainable development efforts. This was further developed in 2005 with the Mauritius Strategy, followed by the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway (SAMOA Pathway) in 2014 as a Framework for Action on Sustainable Development for Small Island Developing States. The SAMOA Pathway was adopted by all United Nations Member States at the Third International Conference on SIDS in Samoa in 2014.

The UN General Assembly (resolution 77/245) agreed to convene the fourth International Conference on SIDS in 2024, to assess the ability of SIDS to achieve sustainable development, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals.
The fourth International Conference on SIDS will bring together world leaders to agree on a new programme of action for SIDS. The conference seeks to deliver specific initiatives and concrete deliverables to address SIDS-specific challenges, including the climate crisis, loss of biodiversity and spiraling debt.\(^1\)

Against this backdrop, the Subregional Office for the Pacific of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) aims to bring together the latest policy thinking, regional strategies and new opportunities to highlight the profound paradigm shifts and related uncertainty characterising the Pacific sub-region’s socio-economic and climate change conditions.

The major themes of *Pacific Perspectives 2023: Advocating the aspirations of Small Island Developing States* relate to the disproportionate impact of multiple crises on Pacific SIDS due to their structural vulnerabilities and the need to prioritize building resilience. The publication focuses on possible policy options in charting the course towards prosperity for the people of the Pacific and taking ownership of their own destiny and the pursuit of sustainable development.

*Pacific Perspectives 2023 is structured as follows:*

**Chapter 1. Advance Pacific Priorities** aims to focus on ways to transform the socio-economic landscape and climate action. In addition to small land size, remoteness and isolation from markets, vulnerability to shocks and climate change have been transforming SIDS’ development strategies. In this regard, the chapter identifies three key areas for consideration: promote inclusive and equitable economic growth and social development; mitigate and adapt to climate change and other external shocks; and forge cooperation and partnership.

**Chapter 2, Synergize Strategic Regional and National Approaches** recalls the regional and national achievements to address some of the Pacific SIDS’ challenges. This includes the ongoing development of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, led by the Pacific Islands Forum. The chapter focuses on the policy options to (a) prepare for unknown shocks, (b) explore new socio-economic opportunities, (c) synergise sectoral strategies, and (d) scale up blue-green economy strategies.

**Chapter 3, Harness Cooperation Potential** explores policy scenarios that Pacific SIDS could potentially engage in the region and beyond. Analysis shows that by harnessing cooperation and partnerships, regional and national policy initiatives can boost economic growth and improve development across sectors, especially by investing in six key areas of transition.

**Chapter 4, The Way Forward** looks at ways that ESCAP could continue to partner with the Pacific SIDS as they explore new opportunities, using national, regional and international agendas and frameworks. The three-pronged approach ensures that ESCAP focuses on economic growth and recovery, supports climate resilience, and forges cooperation and partnerships.

Pacific SIDS have been aligning their development strategies with the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. These frameworks provide Pacific SIDS the opportunity to advance sustainable development.

Since the adoption of the SAMOA Pathway, understanding of the common challenges faced by all SIDS and the need to increase international support has increased. (Box 1.1). For example, Pacific SIDS share many characteristics such as small land size, remoteness and isolation from markets, high transportation costs, vulnerability to shocks and climate change and dependence on a narrow range of exports. Climate change is regarded as the Pacific SIDS’ defining challenge. The vulnerability of the Pacific region arises from its unique geography and environment, the fragility of its economic structure, its distinctive demographics, and the interactions between these different factors.

1.1 Context and relevance

**ESCAP, Advancing Pacific Priorities 2023, Available at: [https://www.unescap.org/subregional-office/pacific](https://www.unescap.org/subregional-office/pacific)**
With the continued shifts in the development landscape and related uncertainty characterising global and regional economies this decade, Pacific SIDS have generally mobilized revenues from ocean-based activities such as fisheries and tourism. Based on national production and economic structure, agriculture, forestry and manufacturing have been other important sectors for a number of the larger Pacific SIDS. While many Pacific SIDS share numerous commonalities, they are also a diverse group of countries. In relation to resources, Pacific SIDS hold economic resources of significant value, which are underutilized or have not been fully explored.

Governments are emphasizing the urgency of developing national sustainable development instruments and sector-specific strategies, which could aim to mobilize new and additional resources from partners to support these efforts, especially in areas related to poverty, human capital development, employment and inclusive growth.

Box 1.1
Key elements of the SAMOA Pathway (2014–2024)

The SAMOA Pathway was adopted at the 3rd International Conference for SIDS that took place in Apia, Samoa from 1 to 4 September 2014. It aims to address the unique challenges faced by SIDS and to support their development via the following objectives:

• Support the coordinated follow-up of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS.
• Undertake advocacy work in favour of the Small Island Developing States in partnership with the relevant parts of the United Nations as well as with civil society, media, academia and foundations.
• Assist in mobilising international support and resources for the implementation of the Programme of Action.
• Provide support to group consultations of SIDS.
• Ensure the mainstreaming of the SAMOA Pathway and SIDS-related issues in the work of the UN system and to enhance the coherence of SIDS issues in UN processes.

Source: SIDS ACCELERATED MODALITIES OF ACTION [S.A.M.O.A.] Pathway, Available at: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/samoapathway.html
In this regard, gross national income (GNI) per capita is the most frequently used indicator to identify international support frameworks. However, GNI does not capture the structural vulnerability of countries, especially in the special case of SIDS. To address this, the United Nations has been working with SIDS on the development of a Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI), which could be used to recognize and define inequality among the Pacific SIDS. Structural Vulnerability, within the context of the MVI, is defined as “the risk of a country’s sustainable development being hindered by recurrent adverse exogenous shocks and stressors”. (Box 1.2).

Box 1.2
The Multidimensional Vulnerability Index

The Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) is a composite index that assesses the vulnerability of small island states and other countries to shocks, and is expected to serve as a criterion for access to and allocation of concessional resources. The MVI is being developed by the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) in collaboration with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Pacific SIDS leaders have spoken in favour of developing the MVI. At the inter-regional preparatory meeting for the SIDS International Conference in Cabo Verde, SIDS called for the UN General Assembly’s early adoption of the MVI, and the establishment of an interim secretariat that will support its operationalisation and implementation by all stakeholders. They also called on the international community to provide greater support for better data collection to allow for the MVI’s continuous improvement in future iterations.

Given the uneven economic and social development outcomes within Pacific SIDS over time, it has been questioned whether they can be collectively considered a homogenous set of countries for an integrated regional strategy or regional policymaking approach.

An approach that differentiates the Pacific SIDS could provide them with the policy flexibility required to align regional strategies with their own development priorities (such as those based on national strategic plans), including resource utilization, economic diversification, poverty reduction, job creation and food security. A differentiated approach would also provide flexibility for each country to develop their specific factor endowments such as human resources (availability and skills), physical resources (endowment, accessibility and cost) and infrastructure (quality of transportation systems and ICT connectivity).

Against this backdrop, there has been increasing focus on understanding three broad areas:

- Promote inclusive and equitable economic growth and social development;
- Mitigate and adapt to climate change and other external shocks; and
- Forge cooperation and partnership.

### 1.2 Current perspectives

#### 1.2.1. Promote inclusive and equitable economic growth and social development.

GDP growth rates for Pacific SIDS have fluctuated over the past decade. In general, economic growth has been low, with an average annual growth rate of 2.2 per cent. However, there have been significant variations. In 2014, the growth rate for Pacific SIDS was 3.1 per cent (above the world average), though this was followed by a period of slower growth. In 2018 the growth rate picked up again, reaching 2.5 per cent, but was followed by a decline to 1.9 per cent in 2019. The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on all Pacific SIDS’ economies in 2020 and led to growth rates falling by -2.5 per cent. The rapid global tightening of monetary policy and increased borrowing costs has also weighed on economic activities. (Table 1.1)
Table 1.1: GDP Growth Rates for the Pacific SIDS (%) 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cook Islands</th>
<th>Fiji</th>
<th>French Polynesia</th>
<th>Kiribati</th>
<th>Marshall Islands</th>
<th>Micronesia (F.S.)</th>
<th>Nauru</th>
<th>Palau</th>
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Source: ESCAP (2023)
The latest global growth is forecast to slow from 3.5 per cent in 2022 to 3.0 per cent in 2023 and 2.9 per cent in 2024. Emerging markets and developing economies are projected to experience a modest decline in growth, from 4.1 per cent in 2022 to 4.0 per cent in both 2023 and 2024, with a downward revision of 0.1 percentage point in 2024. This will negatively impact many of the Pacific SIDS’ economies, which are heavily reliant on tourism, exports of primary commodities and relatively smaller private sectors.

On the social development front, many of the Pacific SIDS struggle to create employment opportunities for their citizens. Most of the Pacific SIDS have high levels of emigration with some of the most productive citizens seeking ‘better work opportunities’ overseas and sending remittances back to their families. One result of the high level of ‘out migration’ is that the proportion of elderly people, people with disabilities, specific vulnerabilities or long-term illnesses, and women and children are often a significantly higher proportion of the total population of the SIDS.

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**Box 1.3**

**Forum Economic Ministers Meeting, FEMM 2023 Outcomes**

The 2023 Forum Economic Ministers Meeting (FEMM) was convened from 9 to 10 August 2023 at the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Headquarters in Suva, Fiji. It included a dialogue with private sector and civil society organization (CSO) representatives.

Forum Economic Ministers considered an update on the economic state of play and outlook, particularly the key economic indicators of real GDP, inflation, and debt distress levels. Ministers acknowledged the importance of linking economic updates on key issues to the formulation of policy and informing decision making at the national level.

Reflecting on the economic outlook, Ministers noted that the Pacific region is in recovery mode and that most Pacific countries are on track to regaining pre-COVID-19 levels of growth in the next 12–24 months. In this regard, Ministers emphasized the importance of maintaining momentum through prudent fiscal policies and targeted development cooperation.

Ministers reaffirmed the importance of strengthened regional economic integration to address development challenges and inflationary pressures, and in overcoming related banking challenges and debt distress. Ministers noted with concern that elevated inflation will continue to linger and emphasized the importance of developing and discussing regional solutions going forward.

**Source:** REPORTS: Forum Economic Ministers Meeting, FEMM 2023 Outcomes – Pacific Islands Forum (forumsec.org)

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In 2010, remittances to Pacific SIDS totalled $2.7 billion. By 2020, this figure had more than doubled to $5.7 billion. The level of remittances to Pacific SIDS varies from country to country, and in some they account for more than 10 per cent of GDP. In 2020, Tonga received the most remittances, which were valued at $1.8 billion, or 38 per cent of GDP. Other countries with high levels of remittances include Samoa (29 per cent), Vanuatu (22 per cent), and Kiribati (17 per cent). Remittances are a significant source of foreign exchange for Pacific SIDS and are used to support families, businesses, and government budgets. As they help reduce poverty and inequality, policymakers can explore ways to make remittance flows, including from diaspora, more structured and predictable, and how to incentivise and harness these resources for productive investments.

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### Pacific SIDS Remittances (US$ Billions at current price)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Remittances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Pacific SIDS Remittances 2020 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tonga</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samoa</td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanuatu</td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiribati</td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The tourism sector has been a key source of revenue for the Pacific SIDS. However, travel restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic and increases in the price of fuel and other goods caused by the war in Ukraine are adversely impacting tourism arrivals. To overcome these challenges, Pacific SIDS, through the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, are making considerable efforts to boost sustainable eco-tourism as part of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and disruptions to international travel and country lockdowns, a revised policy on tourism in the Pacific has been created: the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework (2021–2030)\(^9\) (Box 1.5).

### Box 1.5
**The Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework (PSTPF)**

The PSTPF was developed by the Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) on behalf of its members. The PSTPF reflects the aspirations of the SPTO and its members, as well as the tourism industry, civil society organizations, regional organizations and global development partners. With a shared vision of “By 2030 we are empowered by, and benefitting from tourism that is resilient, prosperous and inclusive”, the Framework improves the wellbeing of Pacific communities and protects, restores and promotes Pacific cultures, islands and ocean ecosystems. To ensure that tourism in the Pacific continues to be a driver of economic and community well-being, all partners are required to implement the PSTPF’s policies and actions to build a resilient tourism industry, fit for the challenges and opportunities the Pacific faces leading up to 2030.


It is important to note that Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) are the leading cause of death in the Pacific region, accounting for around 75 per cent of all deaths. The WHO notes that the 10 countries with the highest obesity rates globally are all SIDS in the Pacific, where over 45 per cent of adults live with obesity. These islands also have some of the highest prevalence of type 2 diabetes and NCD-related premature mortality.\(^{10}\)

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\(^{10}\) Health in the Pacific: 12 Things to Know, Available at: [https://www.adb.org/features/facts-and-data-about-health-pacific](https://www.adb.org/features/facts-and-data-about-health-pacific)
As for educational outcomes, Pacific SIDS have strengthened their commitments to education for sustainable development and increased support for distance learning and ICT in education platforms. For example, as evidenced in the 2022 Transforming Education Summit national statements:

- Nine Pacific SIDS have collaborated on education for sustainable development teaching, including boosting learning resources and teacher training from early childhood to tertiary levels, which were made available to 15 countries;
- Eleven Pacific SIDS committed to increasing the use of technology in learning and teaching through various strategies, including digital transformation policies, enhanced connectivity, and infrastructure in all schools, along with provision of open education resources and strengthening teachers’ digital skills; and
- Eleven Pacific SIDS have developed national SDG 4 benchmarking indicators to monitor progress in education through seven global and regional measures covering access and quality of education, with support from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics and SPC.

1.2.2. Mitigate and adapt to climate change and other external shocks.

Pacific SIDS remain at the forefront of addressing climate change, which is their greatest existential threat. They have been collectively impacted by its adverse effects, including increased and more severe cyclones, typhoons and droughts, an increase in sea water temperature and sea level rise, as well as ocean acidification that threatens coral reefs. Furthermore, changes in regional rainfall patterns related to climate change are impacting water supply.\(^{11}\)

As highlighted in ESCAP’s *Pacific Perspectives 2022*, the Pacific region contributes just 0.03 per cent of global emissions. Similarly, ESCAP’s *Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2022: Pathways to Adaptation and Resilience in the Pacific* states that the total annual adaptation cost for Pacific SIDS is estimated at $487 million ($480 million for climate-related hazards and $7 million for biological hazards).\(^{12}\)

The Pacific SIDS are generally known to be some of the world’s most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change and related disasters. Several factors contribute to the Pacific SIDS’ vulnerability to external and environmental shocks, such as natural disasters, climate change, sea level rise, coastal erosion, saltwater intrusion, and loss of biodiversity, with significant implications for fiscal costs and development outcomes.

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For instance, the Pacific is most exposed to climate-induced natural hazards that could damage production and livelihoods and quickly erode development gains made over time. Evidence shows that in Asia and the Pacific, Pacific SIDS suffer the highest share of economic losses caused by disasters as a percentage of GDP (Figure 1.1).

Apart from these GDP losses, additional shocks are unexpected exogenous disturbances (external or domestic) that have a major impact on economic activity via production, distribution and consumption. Furthermore, the COVID-19 crisis emphasized how crises could impact the region and its social and economic structures. Importantly, Pacific SIDS have differing capacities to prepare, plan and respond to the climate challenges they face, which further emphasizes the need to build more inclusive societies and economies. It is now well established that Pacific SIDS are subject to a number of socio-economic vulnerabilities and shocks that could hamper their long-term growth and sustainable development outcomes.

**Figure 1.1 Average economic loss as a percentage of GDP**

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As a policy solution, over the years Pacific leaders have shown their commitment to the Paris Agreement by agreeing to ambitious Nationally Determined Commitments (NDCs). With the establishment of the Regional Pacific NDC Hub in 2017 to support the implementation and ambition of decarbonisation, NDCs have the potential to galvanise national actions to pursue higher emissions targets and ensure both regional and national compliance, including in high emitting sectors such as energy, transportation and land use, and in urban areas. The implementation of NDCs is also supported by the work of the Pacific Meteorological Council.\textsuperscript{15}

To further enhance resilience, Pacific SIDS have made substantive progress to support the development of national early warning systems for tsunamis and other coastal hazards, which has been made within the context of reinforcing human and institutional capacities for the Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme. All Pacific SIDS now have disaster risk management and response plans, while 16 now have Tsunami Warning Focal Points who have benefited from capacity-building support.\textsuperscript{16}

The Pacific’s less diversified economies remain vulnerable to shocks. Strengthening social protection systems and economic structures can defend against domestic and external shocks, improve the ability to recover from them, reduce future disruptions, and strengthen economic activity across the supply chain (production, distribution and consumption). (Box 1.4)

\textbf{Box 1.4
Regional actions to support the implementation of the Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific}

Social protection is a core national strategy to prevent poverty and vulnerability. By ensuring an adequate standard of living, it is also a powerful tool for reducing inequalities and building the resilience of all people, throughout their lifetimes, against shocks and crises. By fostering shared prosperity, social protection can also increase social cohesion and boost economic growth. Despite the significant potential of social protection to transform societies, less than half of the population of Asia and the Pacific is covered by any form of social protection. Many States in the region spend less than 2 per cent of their gross domestic product (GDP) on social protection. This stands in sharp contrast to the global average of 12.9 per cent of GDP.

Recognizing the importance of social protection as both a fundamental right and an effective mechanism for promoting sustainable development, the ESCAP Committee on Social Development endorsed the Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific at its sixth session, held on 20 and 21 October 2020. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) affirmed the importance of the Action Plan in its resolutions 77/1 and 78/1.

\textbf{Source:} ESCAP (2022), Regional actions to support the implementation of the Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific, Available at: \url{https://spot.unescap.org/node/82}

\textsuperscript{15} Pacific Meteorological Council, Available at: \url{https://www.pacificmet.net/pmc}.

\textsuperscript{16} See: \url{https://rrp.unescap.org}. UNESCAP notes that there is an estimated 10-fold return on investment on early warning systems. In most cases the costs of adaptation are equivalent to 1.5% of GDP which is three times less than average projected losses. There is a strong case for investing in effective early warning systems.
1.2.3. Forge cooperation and partnership.

Partnerships remain a key tool to harness cooperation among countries in the region in the pursuit of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. In the Pacific, there is increasing recognition of the need to work collaboratively with partners (including civil society organisations and other stakeholders) to enhance diverse voices to benefit all people across communities and groups.\(^\text{17}\)

Generally, indicators on partnerships focus on the provision of official development assistance (aid) to SIDS and public-private partnerships for infrastructure in SIDS. ESCAP data shows that aid flows to Pacific SIDS have been declining in recent years. In 2014, the total amount of aid received by PSIDS was US$2.6 billion. By 2023, this figure has fallen to US$1.9 billion. The data also shows that the decline in aid flows has been most pronounced for the smallest and most remote Pacific SIDS.\(^\text{18}\)

The decline in aid flows has had several negative consequences for Pacific SIDS. It has made it more difficult for these countries to invest in essential infrastructure, such as roads, schools and hospitals. It has also made it more difficult for them to address pressing challenges, such as climate change, disaster risk reduction, social protection and economic diversification. The largest donors to the Pacific SIDS in 2023 were Australia, New Zealand, the European Union and the United States. The largest sectors receiving aid in 2023 were social infrastructure and services, economic infrastructure and services, and production.\(^\text{19}\)

Emerging developing countries development assistance is not reflected in the OECD data. In terms of public-private partnerships for infrastructure, Pacific SIDS show significant levels of stagnation. An area that could be explored in more detail is the possibility of strengthening partnerships for aid, trade, know-how and technology transfers. Some initiatives are underway to promote climate smart trade and investment within Pacific SIDS.

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\(^\text{17}\) ESCAP(2023), Promoting SIDs Priorities: A selected list of ESCAP Expert Opinion Blogs: 2018-2023, Available at: unescap.org/sites/default/files/event-documents/ESCAP_PACIFIC_BLOGS_LAYOUT_V2.pdf

\(^\text{18}\) See SDG Gateway Dat Explorer. Available at https://data.unescap.org/home

\(^\text{19}\) ESCAP (2022), Debt for Climate Swaps in the Pacific SIDS, Available at: https://repository.unescap.org. Pathways to Adaptation and Resilience in Pacific SIDS Subregional Report 2022.
Forging partnerships will continue to play an important role during the current era of polycrises. In the context of the upcoming fourth International Conference on SIDS, Governments need to revitalize regional cooperation which is consistent with the needs of the Pacific members. Through robust and genuine partnership arrangements, there are opportunities to mobilize resources in the pursuit of the 2030 Agenda.

Box 1.6
South-South and Triangular Cooperation

South-South and Triangular Cooperation has been a core modality of ESCAP’s work since its inception and is one of the important drivers of regional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific, resulting in increased volumes of South-South trade, foreign direct investment flows and technology transfer. Some concrete examples of this collaboration include harnessing space technology services to provide early warning systems for natural disasters through the ESCAP Multi-donor Trust Fund for Tsunami (3 Pacific SIDS, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Fiji, participated in the program), Disasters and Climate Preparedness; broadening the regional trade and investment research and knowledge base through the Asia Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade (ARTNeT); as well as other platforms for ideas and knowledge transfer.

Source: South-South and Triangular Cooperation, Available at: https://www.unescap.org/south-south-cooperation

UNESC | Sustainable Finance: Bridging the Gap in Asia and the Pacific. October 2023
2.1 Context and relevance

Pacific SIDS are committed to shaping and leading their own sustainable development path, including through ongoing regional engagements. Countries have ascribed high priority to the pursuit of strategies that stimulate sustained and inclusive growth for everyone. Governments have also recognized the need for new and additional financial resources and investments in productive sectors for generating decent jobs and creating new growth opportunities.

The COVID-19 pandemic was an unprecedented shock in recent history and another wake-up call for policymakers to invest in building resilience against uncertainties in an interdependent world. Considering that the Pacific is vulnerable to socio-economic and climate change shocks, there are several regional and subregional approaches to advance and implement strategies to support these growing growth and development opportunities. Policy choices matter for improving cooperative policies to build resilience against shocks, such as putting in place mechanisms for swift and strong responses, health and social investments, quality of infrastructure, and economic diversification. All these mechanisms require scaling up at the regional level.
As an integrated approach, the four strategies are linked to a broad scope of economic, social and environmental outcomes for the Pacific. This approach can support Pacific members in line with the SDGs and further complement the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent (Box 2.1).

To build a more inclusive, green, and resilient future, the Pacific needs a policy package focused on enhancing access to healthcare and social protection, improving access to digital technologies, and strengthening climate and clean energy actions. This would not only have economic benefits but would also provide significant social and environmental gains for all communities and groups across the Pacific.

A key requirement for this type of future is a long-term perspective to achieve sustainable development and not just GDP growth. Implementing this policy package would have implications for national financing and other resources amid regional uncertainties.

To create Pacific-wide socio-economic opportunities and leverage climate action, key strategies that focus on four dimensions are required, namely: (a) prepare against unknown shocks, (b) explore new socio-economic opportunities, (c) synergize sectoral strategies, and (d) scale up blue-green economy strategies. A regional approach can provide the benefits of collective regional action in supporting strategic interventions at the regional and national levels.

Box 2.1
2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent

At their 2019 meeting in Tuvalu, Forum Leaders endorsed the development of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. Leaders highlighted their concerns for the region’s enduring challenges, such as climate change-related impacts coupled with the intensification of geostrategic competition, which is exacerbating the region’s existing vulnerabilities. The 2050 Strategy, endorsed by Pacific Leaders in 2022, sets out the region’s approach to work together collectively to achieve the long-term vision and aspirations of the 2050 Strategy, through seven key thematic areas: Political Leadership and Regionalism; People Centered Development; Peace and Security; Resource and Economic Development; Climate Change and Disasters; Ocean and Natural Environment; and Technology and Connectivity. Each thematic area is guided by its own ‘2050 ambition’, which serves as an agreed long-term objective for each thematic area in support of the vision. At the same time, the Strategy encompasses 10 Leaders’ Commitments and numerous strategic pathways to guide the region’s broad trajectory over the short, medium, and long term.

Source: PIFS, 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, Available at: https://www.forumsec.org/2050strategy/
These strategies should be able to provide clear policy solutions to promote inclusive economic growth, reduce poverty, and improve people's lives and well-being. Realizing these regional aspirations depends on a great number of concrete policy actions to be taken in all sectors of the economy.

### 2.1 Current perspectives

Pacific SIDS are now in a stronger position to articulate the region’s long-term vision, values and thematic priorities. At the global level, these countries remain a special case for sustainable development due to their unique, inherent and particular vulnerabilities. Regional cooperation-induced solutions are pivotal in addressing their small size, remoteness, narrow resource and export base, and exposure to global economic, social, climate and political shocks.

To address many of these priorities, the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) represents the most important instrument for planning and implementation of the UN development activities for the Pacific. It outlines the UN development system’s contributions to reach the SDGs in an integrated manner, with a commitment to Leave No One Behind (LNOB). (Box 2.2).
At the policy level, development of human capacity remains an essential component in addressing the adverse impacts of socio-economic and climate change shocks. To explore solutions through informed and strategic policies, Pacific SIDS are working to upskill technical expertise and take concrete regional actions around risk assessment and modelling expertise.

### 2.2.1. Prepare against unknown shocks

Pacific SIDS are continuously facing external shocks that impact their economies and supply chains, including natural disasters, pandemics, regional and global economic crises, and political instability. Three key characteristics will be necessary to prepare against unknown shocks: (i) strengthening fiscal and economic management towards macroeconomic stability, (ii) a more diversified economy, and (iii) a resilient supply chain.

Pacific SIDS are working to strengthen the institutional, regulatory and domestic policy environment to prepare against future shocks. In view of this, key policies have been developed to enable business environments to receive private sector investment and harness entrepreneurship and enterprise development, especially for women and youth. Key policies have also been developed to promote climate-smart and digital trade. (Box 2.3).

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**Box 2.2**

**The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework in the Pacific**

The UN system, together with the Pacific countries, developed an overarching Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UN SDCF) in line with regional strategies, particularly the 2050 Strategy. This Framework captures high-level results to which the UN is contributing during the period 2023–2027 for 14 Pacific members, alongside the UN SDCF for Papua New Guinea during 2024–2028. Such results will be further contextualized at the country level through Country Implementation Plans (CIPs), which will define UN actions and deliverables on the ground to advance progress towards these outcomes.

Box 2.3
ESCAP Resolution “Building back better from crises through regional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific” (adopted on 29 April 2021)

The Resolution stresses the need for cooperation and encourages States to work regionally and inter-regionally with the view to build back better, in alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and with the support of the Executive Secretary, as appropriate. It also encourages them to work in cooperation with other concerned UN bodies and relevant stakeholders, including by enhancing national social protection systems using the Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific, and furthering regional cooperation in trade and investment, tourism, the creative and digital economies, connectivity and energy, including through the Commission’s regional cooperation mechanisms, frameworks and agreements.

2.2.2. Explore new socio-economic opportunities.

Pacific SIDS need to continue efforts to grow their economies, diversify their production bases, and deal with supply side constraints to production for domestic consumption and trade exports. Many economies need to sustain economic growth through (i) investments in education, health and social protection as the core of sustainable and equitable economic growth, and (ii) structural transformation and diversification based on comparative advantage, which is fundamental to improving the lives of the people in the region.

With the strengthening of social protection systems and inclusion policies to improve well-being, policymakers are able to guarantee opportunities for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, while leaving no one behind. Furthermore, at the regional level, these new socio-economic opportunities can enhance national capacities and raise resources for development expenditure.

Thus, key policy objectives include minimizing budget revenue volatility, strengthening the medium-term orientation of fiscal policy, and investing in inclusive economic development programs. There are concrete opportunities in improving the quality and efficiency of developing expenditure through reforms in financing architecture, and strengthening national development planning systems and institutions that could ensure improvement in socio-economic policy coherence and implementation of tailored development programmes.

21 ESCAP (2022). The workforce we need: social outlook for Asia and the Pacific. Available at Social Outlook for Asia and the Pacific | ESCAP (unescap.org).

2.2.3. Synergize sectoral strategies.

PSIDS’ economies must be prepared to manage any crisis and cushion any adverse impacts of them, particularly for the most vulnerable communities. There are some specific policy actions that require synergizing across sectors: (i) maritime connectivity, (ii) digital connectivity, and (iv) women’s economic empowerment for accelerating dynamic and inclusive economic growth.

In particular, more affordable and accessible digital technologies are key policy initiatives to increase digital skills and achieve universal and meaningful connectivity. In the case of maritime connectivity, countries are working towards transportation issues including inter- and intra-island connectivity. Sustainable maritime connectivity needs to be environmentally sound, safe, affordable and well-maintained, so that it follows regional and international transportation arrangements. Furthermore, the development and management of transport infrastructure are becoming increasingly critical to raise energy efficiency (Box 2.4).

Box 2.4
The Fifth Pacific Regional Energy and Transport Ministers’ Meeting

Hosted by the Government of Vanuatu from 8 to 12 May 2023, the theme of the meeting was “Accelerating Decarbonization in the Blue Pacific”. Ministers and representatives from 20 Pacific countries adopted the Efate Outcome Statement. They called for Leaders to consider the establishment of a Pacific Energy Commissioner and called on developed countries and major emitters to meet their commitments and ensure access to funding for the Pacific to transition away from reliance on fossil fuels.

Source: [https://gem.spc.int/meetings/5th-pacific-regional-energy-and-transport-ministers-meeting-2023](https://gem.spc.int/meetings/5th-pacific-regional-energy-and-transport-ministers-meeting-2023)

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Box 2.5
Strategic Framework for Pacific Statistics 2022–2030

The Strategic Framework for Pacific Statistics 2022–2030 provides the basis for statistical demands to be met and for statistics to be used for the development of evidence-based policies and measures for the benefit of all Pacific people.

Two Pathways are envisaged: the first is for statistical production, management, and use, and the second for statistical support services. Used concurrently, and with support from development partners and donors, these two pathways encompass the whole of the statistics cycle. They are served by five mutually supportive and interlinked key focus areas that cover capacity and capability development of national statistics organizations and national statistics users; support for the improvement and efficiency of statistical collection, production, analysis and dissemination; support for statistical priority-setting by NSOs through the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS); and regional statistical governance and coordination with and between NSOs, statistical stakeholders and development partners and donors.


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By strengthening governance through transformed policy and regulatory frameworks and enhancing national sectoral capabilities, Governments require the mobilization of new and additional financing to invest in SDGs acceleration. With an estimated gap of some US$4.2 trillion per year, the SDGs require a quantum leap in finance flows – from billions to trillions.24

2.2.4. Scale up blue-green economy strategies.

The blue economy is a source of income, food, and a way of life for Pacific people. The Pacific already relies heavily on ocean ecosystems and resources for economic development and people’s livelihoods. Beyond this, oceans are also a source of income generation across (i) sustainable fisheries, (ii) coastal and ocean tourism, (iii) marine transport, and (iv) marine ecosystem conservation. For the blue economy to continue to be an effective source of economic growth and employment generation in the future, sustainable management of the blue economy is key to delivering SDGs for the region.

Ending fossil fuel subsidies and introducing a carbon tax are other policy choices that are essential to promoting green economy-led development opportunities.25 These combined policy options could generate the needed financing sources to reduce investment gaps to cover the cost of SDGs achievement.

By increasing the blue-green sectors and their productivity, economies can improve overall food security and nutrition, which will build knowledge of new technologies among entrepreneurs and local stakeholders. These new policy interventions can improve physical infrastructure to expand the benefits of long-term opportunities in increasing regional public good for all communities (Box 2.6).

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**Box 2.6**

**Fiji Sustainable Bond Framework**

Fiji launched its Sustainable Bond Framework at the UNFCCC COP 27 in Egypt. The first framework of its kind by a SIDS, it helped create a robust taxonomy for green, blue, and social projects. The Framework was designed to help Fiji better communicate its sustainable development finance priorities with bilateral, multilateral, private and philanthropic investors, in preparation for Fiji’s issuance of its first ever sovereign blue bond.


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2.3 Regional and national policy initiatives

Pacific SIDS have undertaken multiple regional and national initiatives for achieving a Pacific cooperation and integration agenda. At the regional and national levels, some of the key cooperation frameworks and approaches are highlighted below in line with three broad areas as identified in Chapter 1:

2.3.1. Promote inclusive and equitable economic growth and social development.

Regional initiatives

Water and Sanitation and Health (WASH) Outcomes

The links between climate change, water, sanitation and health are critical for SIDS. For example, the infrastructure goal of the Kiribati Development Plan and Kiribati Vision 20 Years (KV20) intends to build capacity and resilience of communities in the outer islands through WASH initiatives. Among the positive practices is community participatory consultation, which includes youth, women and elders in the identification of WASH-related infrastructure project needs. Communities committed to supporting the projects through their Village Action Plans, which were developed with the assistance of SPC and MISC. Kiribati has highlighted the challenges of a “projectized” approach to WASH initiatives, and the benefits of a more programmatic, nation-wide, multi-stakeholder approach to foster sustainability.

Innovation via the Solutions Platform

The SIDS Solutions Platform is a global initiative launched by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and other partners to facilitate knowledge exchange, innovation and scaling up of solutions for sustainable development among SIDS. It organizes regional forums for SIDS to showcase their solutions and learn from each other by helping to incubate, promote, scale-up and replicate locally grown ideas to accelerate the achievement of agriculture, food, nutrition, environmental and health interventions. The Solutions Platform has helped spread the use of digital and mobile technologies, and remote-sensing techniques to transform agri-food systems in the Pacific SIDS.

Financing Options – the use of Bonds by the Pacific SIDS

Three Pacific SIDS (the Federated States of Micronesia, Tuvalu and Papua New Guinea) have so far issued green bonds or similar financial instruments to enhance their financing possibilities. In 2018, the Federated States of Micronesia issued a USD 10 million green bond to finance renewable energy projects. It was certified by the Climate Bonds Initiative and was oversubscribed by 100 per cent. In 2021, Tuvalu issued a USD 10 million blue bond to finance marine conservation projects. It was certified by the Climate Bonds Initiative and was oversubscribed by 150 per cent. Papua New Guinea issued its first green bond in 2022. It was issued by the Papua New Guinea Sustainable Development Trust (PNGSDT) and raised USD 100 million, and was also massively oversubscribed. Its proceeds will be used to finance renewable energy projects, energy efficiency projects, and climate change adaptation projects in Papua New Guinea.

These bonds are significant because they demonstrate the potential for green and blue bonds to help Pacific SIDS finance their transition to a low-carbon and climate-resilient future. Several other Pacific SIDS, including Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Samoa and Vanuatu, are now considering issuing similar bonds as a way of assisting their transition to low-carbon futures. Green bonds and similar financial instruments are valuable tools for the Pacific SIDS to help achieve their climate and development goals.
National initiatives

COOK ISLANDS

In 2021, Cook Islands adopted the Te Ara Akapapa’anga Nui National Sustainable Development Agenda (NSDA) 2020+ 2021–2121. Central to the Agenda will be the aspiration towards Turanga Memeitaki – Well-being for All, which at its most basic is a vision for each person attaining a state of being comfortable, healthy, and happy. Put simply, well-being can be described as judging life positively and feeling good. As the Agenda states, “although well-being may seem more subjective, it is our job to measure the best way possible so that we can track attainment of well-being for all across the nation.” 26

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The Government of PNG has put in place the District Development Authority Act (2014) to manage the Service Improvement Programme to ensure that development priorities consider the needs of remote and isolated rural populations and the marginalized and most vulnerable groups in society.

FIJI

Fiji reported that the inception of the BPO Council of Fiji, also known as Outsource Fiji, in 2017 became a game-changer for the country’s economy, as it employs over 8,000 Fiji citizens. This has resulted in a conducive business environment, increased foreign investment initiatives, and an educated workforce.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

The Government of the Solomon Islands has facilitated economic growth and increased employment through public and private investments in its agriculture, fisheries, forestry and tourism industries. The Government has also prioritized the protection of employees by developing stringent labour laws, in which employers are mandated to ensure compliance in respect to employment contracts, minimum wages, working hours, leave entitlement and other benefits.

2.3.2. Mitigate and adapt to climate change and other external shocks.

Regional initiatives

**Pacific Climate Change Centre**

The Pacific Climate Change Centre (PCCC), hosted at the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP), is the regional centre of excellence for climate change information, research and innovation. It organizes activities to build capacities in adaptation, mitigation, climate services and project development, and promotes applied research on these topics. One of its missions is to improve information flows between various stakeholders, including meteorological services, climate practitioners, scientists, policymakers and those implementing policies, programmes and projects. It also offers space for visiting researchers who are working on issues concerning climate change in the Pacific.

The second phase of the project commenced in September 2023. The PCCC is strengthening support to Pacific SIDS through capacity-building and training around accessing climate finance and providing readiness support to the SIDS. It is also developing innovative climate finance solutions through engagement with the SIDS and the Pacific’s private sector. The PCCC represents an important means for accelerating climate action, in support of the target of keeping global temperature increase to within 1.5 Celsius and achieving net-zero emissions.

**The Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change Project (PACC)**

The PACC project is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and UNDP and implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). The project is focused on water and food security and coastal management, through the Pacific climate change portal and relevant national portals. The project has delivered on the ground adaptation in each country, provided important lessons learned and numerous studies, and now serves as a basis for knowledge management on adaptation in the region. Despite the project’s success, however, its activities need to be implemented in all sectors, in all communities, and in all countries. This challenge requires a concerted effort to develop new proposals for each of the SIDS, for which more support is needed to identify concepts, develop full projects and support implementation.

**Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) agreement**

Over 70 countries, including seven Pacific Island nations, have signed up to the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) agreement, also known as the UN High Seas Treaty. The BBNJ agreement was adopted in June 2023, after almost two decades of negotiations. The Pacific has been at the forefront of these negotiations, emphasizing the need to protect the ocean and its resources from exploitation. Among the priorities advanced by Pacific negotiators is the recognition of basing the framework on the best available scientific information and traditional knowledge, and recognizing the special circumstances of the SIDS, as well as the special interests and roles of coastal States. A robust conservation instrument also requires adequate and meaningful provisions of the means of implementation, including capacity and technology. The Federated States of Micronesia was the first country to sign the agreement, followed by Palau, Solomon Islands, Fiji, Tuvalu, Samoa, New Zealand and Australia from the region.

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National initiatives

**KIRIBATI**

Kiribati heavily relies on its underground water for domestic consumption. Saltwater intrusion and rising sea levels pose a significant challenge to the country’s freshwater sources. The Kiribati Government and its development partners are working together to address these issues, through initiatives including the promotion of rainwater harvesting systems, improving water storage and distribution infrastructure, and implementing wastewater management solutions. (Kiribati Ministry of Public Works and Utility, 2008)

**TONGA**

The Government of Tonga is an example of how a central Ministry’s funding allocation (sourced from various multilateral donors) for the implementation of resilience building projects has been an important catalyst for moving projects ahead.

**VANUATU**

In 2018, Vanuatu became one of the first countries in the world to implement a ban on single-use plastic bags, straws, and polystyrene packaging. Other countries in the region such as Fiji, Tuvalu and Samoa have followed suit.
2.3.3. Forge cooperation and partnerships.

Regional initiatives

Pacific Resilience Facility

During the 2023 Forum Economic Ministers Meeting (FEMM), Ministers considered and supported the re-designed Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF). As a game-changing and transformative initiative emphasizing the importance of national and regional approaches, the PRF is expected to increase and speed up access to climate finance for adaptation needs. The PRF requires the support of development partners and multilateral development banks, as transformative partnerships are the key to the Pacific’s prosperity. 28

Partnership for Prosperity

At the 2023 FEMM meeting, the Cook Islands proposed a Pacific Partnership for Prosperity (PPfP), which is aimed at catalyzing the implementation of the 2050 Strategy by ensuring its Implementation Plan is well supported politically and financially to deliver its goals and outcomes. The Ministers welcomed the PPfP as a potential accelerator for achieving some of the key priorities envisioned by the Pacific region under the 2050 Strategy, including promoting research and development in areas where the region currently lacks capacity. 29

National initiatives

Tuvalu

Tuvalu implemented its Sustainable Healthy Food Security Strategy, an integration of the Tuvalu Food Security Strategy and the UN Food Systems Pathways. The Strategy has five thematic areas which include (i) Eat Safe and Nutritious Food, (ii) Strengthen Governance and Finance, (iii) Change and Shifting of Diets, (iv) Increase Local Food Production, and (v) Strengthened Partnership. The Government of Tuvalu believes that successfully implementing the Strategy requires a multisectoral/multistakeholder hands-on approach. (Government of Tuvalu, 2021)

Solomon Islands

Dedicated academic courses are now offered in the region, as well as strong collaboration with universities from around the Pacific Rim. The work of Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) University in the Solomon Islands is an example of a productive collaboration that has been transformative for local community members, with homes built reflecting their lifestyles yet built to withstand serious climate events.

A set of regional and national frameworks can leverage collaborative approaches in the Pacific to create several significant impacts across key broad themes. To take the partnerships forward, Governments should engage with the private sector, civil society, development partners, and the international community. As a guiding principle, Pacific SIDS should continue to work in collaboration with development partners such as UN and Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) agencies, to tailor strategies contextualized for each country, using all available resources and expertise.

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Analysis indicates that Pacific SIDS’ average economic growth rates are generally low and have been volatile over the past decades. Due to heavy reliance on a narrow range of industries, sustained economic growth remains a challenge for many of these smaller economies. Furthermore, economic vulnerability and fragility have been significant constraints to achieving the SDGs in the region.\textsuperscript{30}

A high incidence of informality, especially in the labour market, poses another set of barriers to improving productivity and growth, as well as to ensuring advancement of the SDGs. This highlights the relevance of social protection systems and inclusion approaches.

Figure 3.1 shows that between 1980 and 2022, PSIDS had the world’s second lowest average GDP growth rate, after the European Union. The PSIDS were also rated alongside countries in “Fragile and conflict-affected situations” and from “Africa Western and Central”, as they experienced the largest variability of GDP growth rate during this period. This indicates that between 1980 and 2022, Pacific SIDS not only experienced one of the lowest average GDP growth rates, but that their growth rates were also among the most volatile.

Along with the economic and labour market context, the geographic and climate characteristics of Pacific SIDS contributed to driving up the costs of insurance. This resulted in many business operators being unable to meet the legal requirements to qualify for business registration and/or financial products, which meant they were forced to operate informally. In recent years, the Pacific has been experiencing a growing frequency of climate-related disasters, which detrimentally affect the planet and people, hindering progress towards the SDGs.
3.2 Current perspectives: impact analysis

Pacific Governments continue to reaffirm that SIDS remain a special case for sustainable development. Climate change remains the greatest existential threat to the region, and PSIDS are collectively impacted by its adverse impacts. With the ongoing fiscal situation of Pacific SIDS, additional financial resources and investments in productive sectors are essential for generating jobs and creating dynamic economic growth opportunities.\(^\text{31}\)

During the preparatory meeting for the 4th International Conference on SIDS for the Pacific Region, held in Tonga from 16 to 18 August 2023, the Nuku’alofa Outcome Document was endorsed. It provides an important platform to rejuvenate socio-economic aspirations and climate action in the Pacific SIDS. The gathering cited the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent as the blueprint to advance Pacific regionalism for the next three decades – articulating the region’s long-term vision, values and thematic priorities.

Similarly, the UN Secretary-General identified Six Transitions that were needed to realize the SDGs. While doing so he reminded the world leaders in attendance that the SDGs were adopted by all world leaders as essential facets of the sustainable future we want; of a world transformed for the benefit of all humanity.

These six Key Transitions could have catalytic and multiplier effects across the SDGs: (1) food systems; (2) energy access and affordability; (3) digital connectivity; (4) education; (5) jobs and social protection; and (6) climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. These transitions require effective means of implementation, including radical improvements in the utilization of science, technology, and innovation, bridging the data gap, and strengthening SDG localization (Box 3.1). \(^\text{32}\)

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\(^{32}\) ESCAP-The Pacific Urban Partnership (2023): The Pacific Urban Partnership.pdf (unescap.org)
Box 3.1
Political declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly (15 September 2023)

The Political Declaration adopted at the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development reaffirmed a commitment to bold, ambitious, accelerated, just and transformative actions, anchored in international solidarity and effective cooperation at all levels. Leaders committed to enhancing global, regional, national and local partnerships for sustainable development, engaging all relevant stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, academia and youth, and recognizing the important contribution they can make toward achieving the 2030 Agenda and localization of the SDGs. The importance of the regional dimension of sustainable development in addressing regional challenges and scaling up action among countries was also reaffirmed.

Source: Available at https://www.un.org/en/conferences/SDGSummit2023/political-declaration

Box 3.2
Simulation model

The results reported in this section are based on the Global Trade Analysis Project (GTAP) computable general equilibrium (CGE) model, which was used to estimate the potential economic development impact of cooperation across Pacific SIDS in monetary terms. The GTAP global GCE modelling framework is a useful tool for ex ante analysis of the economic development outcomes of different cooperation scenarios among countries. Simulation results are being run under the GTAP closures where factor endowments, technology, and tax and subsidy rates are exogenous variables.

The analysis shows how economic policies, social approaches and infrastructure development strategies are linked to SDGs at the country level using the CGE model. The results provide a conceptual and analytical framework for how socio-economic development and climate-disaster issues could be incorporated within the global CGE modelling framework, with the introduction of global SIDS’ specific shocks and policy measures. By introducing various scenarios, the analysis highlight gains with a specific focus on SIDS in the Pacific. In particular, the implications of these scenarios on jobs creation, productivity gains and environmentally sustainable growth are important policy considerations for Governments. The analysis underscores the importance of appropriately implementing socio-economic and climate-resilient policies through national, subregional and regional initiatives, supporting SIDS’ policy action areas including through enhanced regional cooperation.

By harnessing cooperation and partnerships, regional and national policy initiatives can boost economic growth and improve cross-sectoral development.\(^{33}\)

Investing in the Six Transitions can also have additional socio-economic ripple effects and benefit environmental interventions thorough the improvement of technology-led productivity growth. Both at the regional and country level, cooperation and investment in a package of six specific sectors generates significant additional GDP gains in absolute monetary units and on a per capita scale.

The ESCAP simulation, using the Global Trade Analysis Project (GTAP) computable general equilibrium (CGE) model, highlights that enhanced cooperation through economic, social and climate action is essential to retaining much of the gains that are being lost due to shocks and uncertainties.\(^{34}\)

The simulation was conducted to estimate the improved level of income and human development outcomes in the Pacific SIDS, which is being combined from national level average gains (Box 3.2).


\(^{34}\) See ESCAP 2017 for further details on the methodology. CSN Report 2017_1.pdf (unescap.org)
Furthermore, in the estimation, the analysis makes projections of the size of GDP (in US$ millions at the current price), the size of GDP per capita (in US$ at the current price), and the Human Development Index (HDI) in 2034 for the Pacific SIDS under five scenarios:

a. Scenario 1 is the base case scenario, also the business-as-usual scenario;

b. In Scenario 2, shocks have been included by assuming countries in the model may face these uncertainties emanating from regional/global economic downturns, and climate change-related shocks and/or changes. These shocks imply that countries' overall development will be impacted. Therefore, this is the business-as-usual scenario plus global shocks (economic and climate);

c. In Scenario 3, global/regional cooperation and solidarity have been included by assuming countries in the model will engage in development partnerships, and intra-SIDS’ cooperation will take place around economic, technological and climate policies. Therefore, this is the business-as-usual scenario plus a scenario of global/regional cooperation;

d. In Scenario 4, shocks exist, as above, but countries are cooperating around SIDS’ development issues, which contributes to reducing the adverse impacts of shocks. Therefore, this is the business-as-usual plus global/regional shocks (climate and economic) plus a scenario of global/regional cooperation; and

e. In Scenario 5, the model includes the business-as-usual plus global/regional shocks (climate and economic) plus a scenario of global/regional cooperation plus the six Key Transitions (food systems; energy access and affordability; digital connectivity; education; jobs and social protection; and climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution).

Based on these assumptions, simulation results present the projected GDP (in US$ millions at the current price) score for 2014, 2022 and 2034 under these five scenarios.

Table 3.1: Impact on GDP (US$ millions at current price)

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Source: Simulation exercises

UNDP (2023): Available at Towards 2023 Human Development Report | Human Development Reports (undp.org)
Table 3.1 presents the results related to the impact on national income (GDP) for the Pacific SIDS. For all countries, the base case scenario, known as the BaU scenario, will generate gains in national income. Under this scenario, the increase in national GDP of Pacific SIDS will be as high as $64.5 billion by 2034, i.e., approximately 47 per cent of the level of national GDP of those countries between 2022 to 2034, when the global SIDS programme of action will complete its fourth decade. Estimated national GDP gains for Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste and Solomon Islands are $44.1 billion, $4.8 billion and $2.6 billion, respectively.

Examining the results from this simulation exercise on a country-by-country basis reveals that, in terms of percentage change in GDP, the national GDP gains will be largest for Solomon Islands (61 per cent) and the lowest for Nauru (17 per cent). This illustrates the importance and potential benefits of a continued policy focus to implement the SDGs in the PSIDS.

It should be noted that under the second scenario (BaU with shocks), the negative cumulative impact on national GDP would be about 32 per cent by 2034, which is smaller than in Scenario 1 for the Pacific SIDS combined. At the national level, the largest gains would be for Solomon Islands (46 per cent) and the lowest gains would be for Palau (0 per cent).

With the enhanced role of global/regional cooperation around economic and climate action, in Scenario 3 (BaU and global cooperation), between 2022 and 2034, the estimated Pacific SIDS combined GDP gains will be as high as $72.4 billion by 2034, i.e., approximately 65 per cent of the level of national GDP of those countries between 2022 to 2034. Estimated national GDP gains for Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Timor-Leste are $49.6 billion, $8.4 billion and $5.4 billion, respectively. In this scenario, again in terms of percentage change in GDP, the national income gains are largest for Solomon Islands (79 per cent) and lowest for Palau (33 per cent).

Under Scenario 4 (BaU, shocks and global cooperation), global/regional cooperation could play an important role, as enhanced cooperation through economic, social and climate action could retain much of the gains made in GDP under Scenario 3, which is being lost due to shocks and uncertainties. In this scenario, the Pacific SIDS’ combined GDP would rise by 50 per cent. It also appears that Pacific SIDS would experience varying degrees of impact, where some countries would be in a better position than others to have larger growth rates under their business-as-usual process, gain from global cooperation, and counter the negative shocks.

Under Scenario 5 (BaU, shocks, global cooperation and Six Transitions), the Six Transitions could have catalytic and multiplier effects on raising income and other development outcomes. The Pacific SIDS’ combined national GDP would be as high as $82.8 billion by 2034. Along with cooperation, specific investments in these sectors would bring significant impacts across the economy.
The simulation results are also shown in terms of the projection for GDP per capita (US$ at current price) in Table 3.2. Between 2022 and 2034, under Scenario 1 (BaU), on average, the PSIDS’ GDP per capita would rise by 22 per cent (from US$3114 to US$3790), though individual countries would expect to see their GDP per capita rise between 9 per cent (Nauru) and 40 per cent (Fiji).

Under Scenario 2 (BaU and shocks), between 2022 and 2034, these estimated results of average GDP per capita would be much smaller across the Pacific SIDS, as the gains would rise by only 9 per cent. A country-by-country analysis, in terms of percentage change in GDP per capita, projects that Fiji would gain the most (26 per cent), while Nauru would gain the least (-5 per cent).

Under Scenario 3 (BaU and global cooperation), between 2022 and 2034, the Pacific SIDS’ average GDP per capita would rise by 37 per cent (from US$3114 to US$4256). The greatest increase would be for Fiji (57 per cent) while the lowest estimated gains would be for Nauru (26 per cent).

Under Scenario 4 (BaU, shocks and global cooperation), much of the gains in increasing GDP per capita under Scenario 3 would be lost due to shocks. The Pacific SIDS’ average GDP per capita would rise by 24 per cent. It also appears that Pacific SIDS would experience varying degrees of impact, which would result in some countries being in a better position to experience larger GDP per capita growth rates under their business-as-usual processes, gain from global cooperation, and counter the negative shocks.

Under Scenario 5 (BaU, shocks, global cooperation and Six Transitions), again putting efforts into these Six Transitions could negate negative shocks and provide benefits to Pacific SIDS’ human development outcomes.
The regional and national SDG gains, as measured with the HDI, are presented in Table 3.3. Between 2021 and 2034, under Scenario 1 (BaU), the combined PSIDS’ average HDI would rise by 7 per cent, though the potential gains at the country level would expect to see development gains increase between 9 per cent (Papua New Guinea) and 2 per cent (Micronesia, F.S., Palau, Samoa).

As mentioned previously, under Scenario 2 (BaU and shocks), between 2021 and 2034, the Pacific SIDS’ average gains on development outcomes would fall by 3 per cent, with Papau New Guinea experiencing the largest fall (-3 per cent).

Further, with the enhanced role of global/regional cooperation around economic and climate action, under Scenario 3 (BaU and global cooperation), between 2021 and 2034, the combined Pacific SIDS’ average development gains as measured with the HDI would rise by 14 per cent, with Papua New Guinea experiencing the largest rise (17 per cent) and Palau the lowest (3 per cent).

With the return of shocks and uncertainties to the model, under Scenario 4 (BaU, shocks and global cooperation), much of the gains as measured with the HDI under Scenario 3 would be lost. The Pacific SIDS’ average HDI measurement would rise by 8 per cent. At the regional level, the Pacific SIDS would collectively experience varying degrees of impact, with some countries’ estimated development gains being higher than others under their business-as-usual processes, along with gains from global cooperation, and ability to counter negative shocks.

Table 3.3: Impact on Human Development Index (HDI)

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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>2014 GDP</th>
<th>2022 GDP</th>
<th>2034 GDP (BaU)</th>
<th>2034 GDP (BaU + shocks)</th>
<th>2034 GDP (BaU + global cooperation)</th>
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Population Weighted Average for PSIDS

Source: Simulation exercises
The projections suggest that while the BaU scenario (Scenario 1) presents a modest rise in Pacific SIDS’ GDP, GDP per capita and SDGs as proxied by the HDI, global cooperation (Scenario 3) can amplify these positive impacts, while negative shocks (Scenarios 2 and 4) can suppress much of these gains.

Scenario 5 (BaU, shocks, global cooperation and Six Transitions) shows that the Six Transitions play important roles in improving overall socio-economic development gains across the Pacific SIDS.

Employing socio-economic and climate policy actions and strengthening cooperation and trust through regional leadership can play a pivotal role in minimizing risks from shocks and uncertainties, while expanding new and emerging opportunities for the communities.

In summary, global/regional development is an essential component of long-term policymaking for Governments, and they should adopt strategic partnerships to bring peace and prosperity for all their people. By investing in global/regional cooperation, countries are expected to reap benefits through gains in economic growth and employment creation, while contributing to sustainable development and promoting solidarity in the Pacific.
CHAPTER 4
THE WAY FORWARD

With the ongoing regional policy conversation in the Pacific, this publication highlights several key policy parameters and strategic initiatives to chart pathways for Pacific SIDS. Since the establishment of the regional architecture in the Pacific, several initiatives including the Pacific Plan (2005) and Framework for Pacific Regionalism (2014), and now the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent (2022), have been shaping the Pacific’s vision and aspirations.

Pacific SIDS have been at the forefront of championing regional actions to promote prosperity and peace. This publication highlights that there are regional and national policy initiatives and frameworks, along with inclusive institutions and good governance, to promote inclusive and equitable economic growth and social development; mitigate and adapt to climate change and other external shocks; and forge cooperation and partnerships. However, it also underscores that the acceleration of the SIDS’ development agenda needs to be in synergy with ongoing regional and subregional frameworks.  

The current chapter describes how Governments, civil society, the private sector, academia and youth in the Pacific SIDS can bring together their strengths and expertise to leverage cooperation in enhancing the voices of Pacific people. It proposes three policy actions that are discussed in this publication, namely (1) promote inclusive and equitable economic growth and social development; (2) mitigate and adapt to climate change and other external shocks; and (3) forge cooperation and partnerships (Box 4.1).

The Nuku’alofa Outcome Document, along with the Praia (Cabo Verde) Declaration, provides an important framework for Pacific SIDS to unite in pursuit of sustainable development and resilient futures for all (Box 4.1). Through transformative and cooperative efforts and collective action, as well as regional leadership, there are significant opportunities to positively contribute to the planet, people and prosperity.

Box 4.1
Key elements of the Praia (Cabo Verde) Declaration

In Cabo Verde, where the SIDS met for the Interregional Preparatory Meeting of the 4th International Conference on SIDS from 30 August to 1 September 2023, all SIDS reaffirmed their special case for sustainable development. The following are the key elements of the Outcome Document:

Agreed to strengthen the institutional, regulatory and domestic policy environment and trade facilitation bodies to promote climate-smart trade, enabling business environments for private sector investment, and entrepreneurship and enterprise development, especially for women and youth.

Underscored that human capacity development is essential for addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse impacts of climate change.

Called for partnerships with regional and international partners to control sources of pollution, to support investment in modern integrated solid waste management systems, as well as the development of country-specific strategies to reduce the risk of disasters.

Committed to strive for universal access to quality primary healthcare while improving health preparedness to better cope with future epidemics, including the mental health epidemic, pandemics and non-communicable diseases. This is to be achieved through promoting healthy lifestyles and preventive care, as well as improved coordination and integration between disaster and health risk management systems to strengthen prevention and response.

SIDS recognized that development financing, as well as innovative and low-cost financing, remains critical for them. They called on regional and national financial institutions to support their economic, social and environmental advancements. They also called for the swift operationalization and capitalization of the Loss and Damage Fund, and the creation of dedicated windows for SIDS under climate financing mechanisms.

Source: Outcome Document for the Interregional Preparatory Meeting of the 4th International Conference on SIDS, Available at: https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/interregional%20outcome%20-%20FINAL.pdf
Pacific SIDS’ economic growth and social development outcomes continue to remain a matter of focus, mostly due to heavy reliance on narrow domestic production bases, as well as other vulnerabilities such as climate change-related disasters and uncertainties from external shocks. The low average GDP growth rate, lack of robust social protection systems and the informality of labour markets have complicated the momentum of productivity growth and integration, notwithstanding technological advancement.

To promote inclusive and equitable economic growth and social development, Pacific SIDS can strengthen regional cooperation through coordinated economic policy actions around macroeconomic stability, and by focusing more on structural economic transformation, such as increasing service delivery efficiency, strengthening governance structures, and encouraging more private sector investment, with a focus on foreign direct investment inflows in eco-tourism. Similarly, PSIDS can strengthen social protection systems while promoting pro-employment policies and long-term investments in job creation, developing market-relevant skills, building MSMEs and women entrepreneurship, and mobilizing support for labour and climate mobility policies within national and regional cooperation frameworks, such as the 2050 Strategy (Box 4.2).

Box 4.2
Implementation Plan of the 2050 Strategy

At the Fifty-Second (52nd) Pacific Islands Forum was held in Rarotonga, Cook Islands from 6 – 10 November 2023, Pacific Leaders welcomed and endorsed the Implementation Plan for the 2050 Strategy. The Implementation Plan articulates specific goals, outcomes, and regional collective actions across each of the 2050 Thematic Areas.

Leaders emphasised the importance of the implementation mechanism and reporting arrangements for the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan, including sustained CROP Coordination, effective Means of Implementation, Partnerships and Resourcing, and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) by mid-2024. Leaders further emphasised the importance of mapping existing regional strategies and linkages of Ministerial decisions.

2. Mitigate and adapt to climate change and other external shocks

The increasingly complex climate change-induced disaster ‘riskscape’ requires synergized and concerted actions at the regional level, as highlighted in the Pacific Perspectives 2022 edition. Pacific SIDS are proactive in undertaking various resilience strategies to overcome transboundary challenges. The acceleration of climate action has therefore been at the heart of Pacific policies, especially through establishing regional and subregional cooperation approaches. 37

Apart from focusing on integrating the disaster-climate-health nexus; strengthening ocean and climate policy synergies; promoting climate-smart and digital trade policy measures; and enabling sustainable energy transitions; regional cooperation is essential for supporting the development of national early warning systems, as well as to realizing the goal of achieving “Early Warning for All in the Pacific SIDS by 2025”. It is imperative to continue supporting strong subregional partnership mechanisms, such as the ESCAP-WMO Typhoon Committee and the Panel on Tropical Cyclones, which could be established in the PSIDS. Both these intergovernmental regional bodies have supported the exchange of knowledge, best practices and mutual support, to better prepare for natural disasters for over 50 years. Furthermore, with the strong disaster risk management and response plans of Pacific SIDS, there are excellent opportunities to further enhance cooperation among the Pacific SIDS through Tsunami Warning Focal Points.

3. Forge cooperation and partnership

Fostering cooperation and partnerships among Pacific SIDS and all development partners is essential for leveraging new opportunities in achieving the SDGs. As we ensure effective partnerships across various agencies and nodal points, the 2050 Strategy is poised to minimize fragmentation and duplication of efforts. Coordination among multiple implementation partners would reduce overlaps and resource wastage.

Global, regional and subregional cooperation frameworks should strengthen coordination mechanisms and ensure high-impact and contextualized initiatives in the Pacific. By promoting Pacific SIDS’ priorities, people in communities would gain the most and power imbalances would be minimized. The regional and subregional platforms would ensure that Pacific voices are heard in decision-making processes and implementation programmes. Equitable and durable partnerships are essential to ensuring due consideration of the regional context, while maximizing available resources, technical expertise and institutional frameworks. Finally, forging cooperation and enduring partnership arrangements are dependent on sustainability, long-term commitment and knowledge sharing towards advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. 38

38 UNESCAP. Asia-Pacific SDG Partnership. https://sdgasiapacific.net/home
ESCAP’s readiness to strengthen regional cooperation in the Pacific

As the most inclusive intergovernmental platform in Asia and the Pacific, the ESCAP Commission continues to work with the Pacific family and promote regional cooperation. ESCAP remains committed to enhancing the voice of the Pacific in various regional and global fora.

By using the 2030 Agenda lens, ESCAP is working with the Pacific UN development system to support the implementation plan of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, adopted by the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders in 2023.

At the Pacific level, ESCAP programmes will continue to highlight bright spots of policy actions on a range of socio-economic and climate issues across Pacific SIDS, so that these initiatives protect people and the planet. At the national level, ESCAP will continue to support the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023–2027. In terms of capacity-building, ESCAP Regional Institutions remain committed to supporting the Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) agencies around economic and trade issues, sustainable connectivity, and SDG monitoring and assessment through the existing regional cooperation agenda.

As ESCAP moves forward across national, subregional and regional levels, there is growing recognition of the need to place Pacific SIDS’ priorities at the heart of ESCAP policy decisions.

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____________________.(2023). Pursuing Well being in the Pacific and Beyond, organized by Government of the Cook Islands, ESCAP Subregional Office for the Pacific, and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 10th APFSD 2023-associated event. Available at: APFSD10: Associated and Pre-Events | ESCAP (unescap.org)


____________________.(2023). Pursuing Well being in the Pacific and Beyond, organized by Government of the Cook Islands, ESCAP Subregional Office for the Pacific, and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 10th APFSD 2023-associated event. Available at: APFSD10: Associated and Pre-Events | ESCAP (unescap.org)


ADVOCATING THE ASPIRATIONS OF SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES


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The ESCAP secretariat supports inclusive, resilient and sustainable development in the region by generating action-oriented knowledge, and by providing technical assistance and capacity-building services in support of national development objectives, regional agreements and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.