Achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Pacific
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# Table of Contents

Table of Contents ..... vi
Acronyms ............... 1
Overview ............... 2
Background.............. 5
  From special status to special action 5
  Towards a new development paradigm 6
  Transformation of Pacific regionalism 6
Pacific regional sustainable development priorities 9
  Climate change and disasters related to natural hazards 9
  Oceans and fisheries 11
  Poverty reduction, reducing inequality and improving quality of education 13
  Improving connectivity 14
  Non-communicable diseases 15
  Empowering women and girls, and people with disabilities 16
Implementing the agenda 18
  Leadership and coordination 18
  Advocacy and communications 19
  Regional monitoring and indicators 19
  Integrated reporting 20
  Supporting the means of implementation 20
Global and regional integration 23
  High Level Political Forum 23
  Asia Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development 23
  Asia Pacific regional roadmap 24
  Asia-Pacific Sustainable Development Goals Outlook 25
Next steps ............... 26
Bibliography ............. 27
Annex 1: Pacific socio-economic indicators at a glance 36
Annex 2: Aligning the SDGs, SAMOA Pathway and Framework for Pacific Regionalism (FPR) 37
Annex 3: Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development 38
Annex 4: Overview of MDG achievement in the Pacific 44
Annex 5: Regional roadmap for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia Pacific 45
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronyms</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APFSD</td>
<td>Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development</td>
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<td>BoPA</td>
<td>Barbados Programme of Action</td>
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<td>CROP</td>
<td>Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific</td>
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<td>ECOSOC</td>
<td>United Nations Economic and Social Council</td>
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<td>ESCAP</td>
<td>Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific</td>
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<td>FICS</td>
<td>Forum Island Countries</td>
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<td>FFA</td>
<td>Forum Fisheries Agency</td>
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<td>FfD</td>
<td>Financing for Development</td>
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<td>FPR</td>
<td>Framework for Pacific Regionalism</td>
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<td>FSM</td>
<td>Federated States of Micronesia</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>GNI</td>
<td>Gross National Income</td>
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<td>HLPF</td>
<td>UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information communication technologies</td>
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<td>IUU</td>
<td>Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing</td>
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<td>IPCC</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change</td>
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<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>MSI</td>
<td>Mauritius Strategy of Implementation</td>
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<td>Non-communicable diseases</td>
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<td>OECD</td>
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<td>Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<td>PACER</td>
<td>Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations</td>
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<td>Pacific Aviation Safety Office</td>
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<td>Pacific Power Association</td>
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<td>Pacific Region Infrastructure Facility</td>
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<td>Pacific Small Island Developing States</td>
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<td>Republic of the Marshall Islands</td>
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<td>Secretariat for the Pacific Community</td>
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<td>Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme</td>
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<td>UNESCAP</td>
<td>United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific</td>
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<td>UNFCC</td>
<td>United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund</td>
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<td>UNOCHA</td>
<td>United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs -</td>
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<tr>
<td>USD</td>
<td>United States Dollar</td>
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<tr>
<td>USP</td>
<td>University of the South Pacific</td>
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<td>UNU-EH</td>
<td>United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organisation</td>
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Overview

The Pacific is a region of great diversity and high vulnerability, and as such has long presented as a unique case for targeted support to advance development, and ensure its sustainability. Progress under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was uneven across the region. Most countries managed to reduce child mortality and achieve access to universal primary education, yet very few made gains in poverty reduction or gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development, endorsed by Pacific leaders in September 2017, outlines the region’s transition from the MDGs and presents the collective approach to achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the context of national plans and priorities, the SAMOA Pathway and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. By design, there is a high degree of coherence across the 2030 Agenda, SAMOA Pathway and Framework for Pacific Regionalism, all being premised on the indivisible linkages between the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development. Together with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, they present a transformative shift in advancing sustainable development in the Pacific. The Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development builds on the strong leadership demonstrated by the Pacific in shaping the global agenda, and reaffirms the regional priorities for sustainable development. This report synthesises the current status of these priority issues, namely: Climate change and disasters related to natural hazards; Oceans and fisheries; Poverty reduction, reducing inequality and improving quality of education; Improving connectivity; Non-communicable diseases; and Empowering women and girls and people with disabilities.

Climate change and disasters related to natural hazards

Pacific island countries are amongst the highest at risk of experiencing natural disasters. The region experienced nine major weather related natural disasters between November 2013 and June 2015, impacting a quarter of the population of the eight affected countries. Pacific islanders are already facing the consequences of increasing number and intensity of extreme weather events, incremental sea-level rise, saltwater intrusion and drought. The world's highest rates of sea-level rise are expected in the Pacific, and even under the most optimistic projections this will lead to catastrophic impacts, especially for the region’s low lying atoll nations. Temperatures in the region have been increasing and, if emissions remain at current rates, will likely rise by between 2 and 4.5 with serious implications for fisheries, tourism, agriculture, biodiversity, food security, fresh water resources, infrastructure and health. Climate change represents the single greatest threat to the lives and livelihoods, security, social development and wellbeing of the region.

Oceans and fisheries

The Pacific region is 98 per cent ocean. Fish consumption in some Pacific island countries is three to four times the global average, representing up to 94 per cent of animal protein in the diet of coastal and urban communities. Fisheries, especially tuna, are also a significant resource for livelihoods, employment and opportunities for economic growth in the region. However, earnings from fisheries represent only a small percentage of the value of the landed catch, with the estimated value of tuna fisheries harvested or transshipped involving illegal, unreported, and unregulated activity between USD $518m and $740m. The Pacific marine environment is facing increasing anthropogenic pressures from resource exploitation, habitat destruction, pollution and the effects of climate change, with associated widespread declines in biodiversity and threats to key ecosystems. The protection of oceans has been the central tenet of the Pacific’s approach to sustainable development, with a focus on increasing the benefits and returns of marine resources while reducing pollution, addressing the causes and impacts of coral bleaching and ocean acidification, restoring healthy fish stocks, eliminating illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, and minimising or eliminating adverse environmental impacts of coastal and marine activities.

Poverty reduction, reducing inequality and improving quality of education

In committing to the implementation of the SDGs, Pacific leaders placed particular attention to the region’s ‘unfinished business’ on the MDGs. As a region, the Pacific reported the greatest difficulty in achieving MDG 1 on reducing poverty, with approximately one-in-four households below the basic-needs poverty line in their respective countries. At the same time, inequality and exclusion are rising in the Pacific, with rates of absolute inequality striking in a number of countries, and significant gender and geographical dimensions to its spread. While achieving universal primary education (MDG 2) has generally been met across the region, concerns linger about gender disparities in access, and the quality of education systems to tackle the drivers of poverty and inequality, and serve as a basis for achieving all of the SDGs. Notwithstanding the provision of education being squarely the domain of national governments, the Pacific Education Development Framework confirms the political recognition of quality education being a fundamental building block for development, warranting regional oversight.
Improving connectivity
The region cannot shift its geographic location, but improvements in flight and shipping connectivity, coupled with increasing supply and demand for Pacific goods and services (including tourism), can improve integration into global markets. At the same time, Pacific leaders have sought to capitalise on increased internet connectivity, with most countries now connected via submarine fibre-optic cables and the remaining countries likely to be connected to broadband by the end of 2019. Pacific leaders have prioritised ICT to increase access to world markets and global knowledge, reduce the cost of business across borders, enable faster dissemination of information, and improve service delivery.

Non-communicable diseases
Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) account for up to three quarters of all adult deaths in the region. Life expectancy is stagnating in several Pacific island countries, reflecting premature adult mortality from NCDs, many of which are preventable. The majority of deaths are occurring within economically active age groups, which has parlous implications for labor supply, productivity and household incomes. The underlying risk factors driving the epidemic are higher in many Pacific island countries and present the prospect of rising rates of NCDs, leading to additional pressures on health systems and budgets. Five Pacific island countries top world obesity rates; a number have some of the highest smoking rates; and seven of the world’s countries with the highest rates of diabetes prevalence are from the Pacific. At the same time, health risks associated with infectious tropical diseases, poor water and sanitation, mental health, and sexual and reproductive health issues remain a concern. Pacific leaders have placed specific focus on addressing cervical cancer.

Empowering women and girls, and people with disabilities
Women are seriously underrepresented in national parliaments, and currently hold only seven per cent of seats. Economic opportunities for women in the Pacific are amongst the worst in the world, and the incidence of violence against women is the highest in the world. Despite the bleak outlook, the 2012 Pacific Leaders’ Gender Equality Declaration presents an opportunity for accelerated action, with some recent gains. In 2016, temporary special measures resulted in the highest proportion of women ever voted into parliament in Samoa, and the Marshall Islands elected H.E. Dr. Hilda Heine as the region’s first female head of state or government. Several countries have also introduced domestic violence legislation. Disability has until recently been largely an invisible issue, with little accurate official data on incidence, few services, and challenging physical environments for people living with disabilities.

Implementing the agenda
The Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development presents a clear direction for implementing the 2030 Agenda in the context of the SAMOA Pathway and Framework for Pacific Regionalism. It outlines five key elements to promote national and regional ownership, and tailor the global aspirations for sustainable development to the Pacific context, namely: Leadership and coordination; Advocacy and communications; Regional monitoring and indicators; Integrated reporting; and Supporting the means of implementation. Annexed to the roadmap is an initial draft action plan and set of regional indicators. The roadmap and its annexes are living documents that are envisaged to be updated as implementation progresses.

Global and regional integration
The UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF) serves as the central global platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, focusing on a specific theme and set of goals each year and offering a platform for voluntary national reviews. The Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development has been established as the designated regional preparatory meeting for the HLPF, and is the forum for reviewing progress against the Regional Roadmap for Implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia-Pacific.
Most Pacific island countries have commenced, and in some cases completed, the initial phase of contextualising the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to national circumstances and priorities. There are examples of national plans aligned to the SDGs, including setting of national targets. Nevertheless, across the region much remains to be done in terms of programming and budgeting for implementation activities, and in terms of follow up and review processes, including identifying relevant indicators and reporting mechanisms. In terms of the latter, Pacific leaders have made it very clear that national indicators and reporting should inform regional and global obligations, and not vice versa, and that these should be streamlined in order to reduce the burden of reporting at the country level.

The deeply integrated and indivisible nature of the SDGs demands that the 2030 Agenda be implemented in its entirety. The breadth of the global agenda and the complexity of its interlinkages, coupled with the scarcity of capacity and resources at the national level, poses considerable challenges to small government administrations as they set priorities in a way that does not result in the cherry picking of goals or perpetuate the consideration of issues in silos. Regional and international support will also need to be geared in a way that avoids duplication or distraction from national priorities, so as to directly respond to national needs.

From special status to special action

The Pacific, a diverse region of 19 island countries and territories, has long been recognised by the international community as a special case for development, given its geographic isolation, remoteness from export markets, diseconomies of scale in production and exchange of goods and services, high vulnerability to external market shocks and increasing susceptibility to natural disasters and climate change. At the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (the SIDS Conference) held in Samoa in 2014, the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) pressed the international community to move beyond the ‘rhetoric of acknowledging [the] well documented vulnerabilities’ so as to meaningfully translate ‘sustainable development priorities into life transforming realities’. For the PSIDS, it was essential that the outcome of the conference, known as the SAMOA Pathway, serve as ‘a fully articulated roadmap’ for sustainable development.

The preparatory meetings for the SIDS conference provided an opportunity for the region to take stock of and shape its sustainable development priorities. The 2013 Nadi Outcome Document served as the starting point of the region’s priorities stocktake under the following headings: Climate change; health, especially non-communicable diseases; social development; governance; infrastructure; sustainable energy; oceans; sustainable resource management and protection; inclusive and sustainable economic management; and means of implementation and partnerships. Despite the concise headings, the 18-page outcome document presented as an all encompassing reference to the thematic areas previously identified through the Barbados Programme of Action (BoPA), the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation (MSI) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It did, however, note concern that there was a “disconnect” between the BoPA/
MSI and national priorities for a variety of reasons, including the multitude of international processes, each with different reporting requirements that cover certain aspects of sustainable development. It further noted that 'the post-2015 agenda provides an opportunity to streamline the international processes to address these concerns in an integrated manner'. The Pacific’s priorities would subsequently be honed over the course of the consonant intergovernmental processes that ultimately defined the post-2015 development agenda.12

Towards a new development paradigm

The Pacific troika of Nauru, Palau and Papua New Guinea shared one of the 30 seats of the UN General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG). All of the troika’s statements were delivered on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States and, at times, joined by neighbouring Timor-Leste. The PSIDS were actively engaged in all 13 sessions of the OWG, delivering over 30 statements during the period March 2013 to July 2014. From the outset, the PSIDS established oceans, climate change and energy as the most important development issues for the Pacific,13 and over the course of the deliberations would take every opportunity to remind the international community of these priorities14, particularly reinforcing the ‘axiomatic interlinkages’ between sustainable development and the marine environment as a critical source of work, food, and culture.15 Food security16 and water and sanitation17 were also referenced as priorities for the Pacific within the context of healthy ocean ecosystems and climate change. By the commencement of the intergovernmental negotiations, the priority goals championed by the PSIDS was expanded to include peace, justice and strong institutions (Goal 16) and the means of implementation (Goal 17).18 Through their submissions, the PSIDS spoke to the 19 focus areas covered by the Open Working Group,19 highlighting attention on poverty eradication20 as a cross cutting element of the agenda in toto, and placing particular emphasis on gender,21 social protection (with a focus on addressing the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalised)22 and non-communicable diseases23 as further priorities.

Transformation of Pacific regionalism

As the PSIDS engaged in the global negotiations to shape the post-2015 development agenda, at home the Framework for Pacific Regionalism was endorsed by leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum in July 2014 to replace the Pacific Plan (2005-2012). The Framework, which stemmed from the 2013 review of the Pacific Plan, provides an inclusive process for identifying regional priorities, which includes a series of tests for gauging regional relevance and the need for regional oversight and action. In 2016, the second year of the process, three thematic areas were identified as having met the tests for regionalism and emerged as priorities warranting leaders’ consideration, namely: ‘persons with disabilities’, ‘oceans’, and ‘regional mobility and harmonisation of business practices’.24 The five priorities previously endorsed by leaders in 2015 included: ‘ensuring greater economic returns on fisheries and strengthening of maritime surveillance and enforcement’, ‘climate change’, ‘information communication technologies (ICT)’, ‘cervical cancer’, and ‘West Papua (Papua)’.25

12 The SIDS Conference (that gave rise to the SAMOA Pathway), the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals and subsequent intergovernmental negotiations (that gave rise to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs) and the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (that gave rise to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda)
14 Over half of the PSIDS statements to the Open Working Group referenced oceans and climate change, and an additional five statements were delivered specifically on energy sustainability and security
15 PSIDS (2013) Statement delivered by H.E. Mr Stuart Beck, Permanent Representative of Palau to the United Nations on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States, to the Third Session of the OWG on Sustainable Development Goals, 22 May 2013, New York
18 PSIDS (2015) Statement delivered by H.E. Mr Mahe Tupouniua, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Tonga to the United Nations on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States, to the First Session (Integrating sustainable development goals and targets into the post-2015 development agenda) of the Post-2015 Intergovernmental Negotiations, 19 January 2015, New York
19 The 19 focus areas identified within the report of the co-chairs of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals were: Poverty eradication; Food security and nutrition; Health and population dynamics; Education; Gender equality and women’s empowerment; Water and sanitation; Energy; Economic Growth; Industrialisation; Employment and decent work for all; Promoting equality, Sustainable cities and human settlements; Sustainable Consumption and Production; Climate; Marine resources, oceans and seas; Ecosystems and biodiversity; Infrastructure; Means of implementation; and Peaceful societies, capable institutions - the report of the co-chairs is available online at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/3276focusareas.pdf
21 PSIDS (2014) Statement delivered by Mrs Helen Beck, Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Solomon Islands to the United Nations on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States, to the Eighth Session of the OWG on Sustainable Development Goals, 6 February 2014
The Framework for Pacific Regionalism further provides for ‘a regional monitoring framework, linking efforts in pursuit of deeper regionalism and the fulfilment of the post-2015 development agenda’, and in 2015 Pacific leaders called for the preparation of a set of ‘regional indicators to monitor the Pacific’s progress on the SDGs, including towards the high-level objectives of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism and implementation of the SAMOA Pathway’. In response to this directive, a Pacific SDGs Taskforce was established in July 2016 to develop a roadmap, through an inclusive, consultative and country-driven process, to guide regional responses for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals within the context of national plans and priorities, the SAMOA Pathway and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism.

27 Comprising representatives of Forum member countries, CROP agencies, UN and multilateral agencies, bilateral partners, non-state actors and regional research/academic institutions.
28 See Annex 2 - Aligning the SDGs, SAMOA Pathway and Framework for Pacific Regionalism
Pacific regional sustainable development priorities

The Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development\(^{29}\) was endorsed by leaders at the 48th Pacific Islands Forum in September 2017, and clearly identifies the regional sustainable development priorities as being those that are:

(a) transboundary in nature (i.e. climate change and disaster risk management, and oceans including integrated oceans management);
(b) address the ‘unfinished business’ of the Millennium Development Goals (i.e. poverty reduction, reducing inequality and improving quality of education); and
(c) require collective attention as identified through the Framework for Pacific Regionalism (i.e. non-communicable diseases; improving connectivity; and empowering women, girls and people with disabilities).

The priorities identified in the roadmap are underpinned by detailed mapping of national and regional priorities articulated through national plans and efforts to align these to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs,\(^{30}\) the region’s engagement in the global processes to define the 2030 Agenda,\(^{31}\) and regional commitments made through leaders’ declarations and regional sector frameworks, plans and strategies.\(^{32}\) These mapping exercises were reviewed through a series of inclusive regional consultations,\(^{33}\) which sought to best focus future regional attention on those areas where action at the regional level could best add value to national endeavours to achieve the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

The Pacific has strongly advocated the need for global action on the transboundary issues of climate change and oceans. Moreover, in recognition of their status as the foremost of regional priorities, fisheries and climate change are now standing agenda items for Forum Leaders to ensure their ongoing, close oversight.\(^{34}\) In other areas, the review undertaken as part of the mapping exercises suggests that while there has been a wide range of regional commitments made across a wide range of sectors, most can be described as indications of priority rather than binding undertakings against which there have been clear ways to monitor implementation at either country or regional levels.

In charting a new path for achieving sustainable development in the region, the Pacific Roadmap now focuses attention on a clear set of regionally defined priorities, reaffirming the need for national ownership backed by well targeted regional and international cooperation. The following discussion outlines the current status and extent of issues to be addressed under each of these regional priorities. These are not presented as an exhaustive list of the contemporary development challenges and opportunities in the Pacific, rather they are an agreed starting point to focus regional and international support to the attainment of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in the context of the Framework of Pacific Regionalism and the aspirations of individual countries. Increased understanding of the multidimensional and complex nature of the region’s development challenges together with emerging priorities identified for collective action by Pacific leaders, will need to be incorporated into the regional roadmap overtime, and in turn inform national, regional and international responses.

Climate change and disasters related to natural hazards

Pacific island countries are amongst the highest at risk of experiencing disasters related to natural hazards, with the average annual cost of direct losses estimated at USD $284 million;\(^{35}\) for some of the smaller economies this means the cost of a single event could exceed annual gross domestic product (GDP). The category 5 tropical Cyclone Pam, which struck the region in March 2015, was estimated to have cost Vanuatu close to USD $500 million, about 61 per cent of GDP.\(^{36}\) In February 2016, tropical Cyclone Winston, also a category 5 event, inflicted damages estimated in the order of USD $1.4 billion in Fiji, equivalent to 31 per cent of GDP.\(^{37}\) Between November 2013 to June 2015, the Pacific experienced nine extreme weather related events, with five of these having significant humanitarian consequences that impacted about a quarter of the population of the eight affected countries.\(^{38}\)

\(^{29}\) See Annex 3 - Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development


\(^{31}\) The discussion in the previous and subsequent sections of this report synthesises for the first time the regional priorities advanced through the intergovernmental processes that took place between 2012-15, and which gave rise to the 2030 Agenda, SAMOA Pathway, and Addis Ababa Action Agenda.


\(^{33}\) Pacific SDGs Taskforce commenced its work in June 2016, and undertook a series of consultative meetings culminating in the Pacific Regional Sustainable Development Multi-stakeholder Consultation and Dialogue held in Suva in June 2017.

\(^{34}\) Pacific Islands Forum (2017) Communique of the Forty-Eighth Pacific Islands Forum, Apia


\(^{36}\) Based on government estimates of cost and ESCAP data on gross domestic product from the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific


\(^{39}\) Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu

Achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Pacific
Increased number and intensity of extreme weather events is widely considered as one of the consequences of climate change, including increasing incidences of saltwater intrusion, prolonged heavy rainfall and flooding, increased temperatures, droughts, and more violent tropical cyclones. Pacific Islands Forum leaders endorsed the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific at their meeting in 2016, as a set of voluntary guidelines for different stakeholders in relation to integrating approaches to managing climate change and disaster risks.

Sea-level change is not geographically uniform and accurate longer-term modelling of changes specific to Pacific island countries does not yet exist, however a recent study has reported that the highest rates of sea-level rise are expected in the waters of the Pacific. The most recent global projections of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change have forecast a rise of 52-98 cm by 2100, if emissions continue to increase at current rates, or a 28-61 cm rise under the most ambitious scenarios to cut emissions. Even under the highly optimistic scenario, sea-level rise of over 50 cm would have a catastrophic impact on the region’s low lying atoll nations, including Kiribati, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Tokelau and Tuvalu, which are at some points barely 30 cm above sea-level, and have limited land mass and freshwater supplies. Recent research based on modelling from Kwajalein atoll in the Republic of the Marshall Islands indicates rising sea-levels attributed to climate change will have significant negative impacts on the ability of coral reefs to mitigate the effects of coastal hazards in the future, including coastal erosion and will likely lead to a greatly increased risk of flooding. In March 2014, the country faced an unexpected combination of unusually high tides and large 5 metre tidal surges that caused widespread flooding, causing damage to property and crops, and displacing nearly 1,000 people. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, which recorded the event, “such events historically occurred every few decades - but now they are occurring multiple times a decade”.

The first representative household survey undertaken in the region on the impacts of climate change and migration, reported that the majority of households in Tuvalu (97%), Kiribati (94%) and Nauru (74%) have experienced incremental sea-level rise, saltwater intrusion and/or drought, and that the impact of climate change is affecting people’s decisions to migrate, with more than 70 per cent of households in Kiribati and Tuvalu, and 35 per cent in Nauru reporting family members would likely migrate if climate change related impacts worsen. The study’s modelling, based on a temperature rise of 2 degrees celsius by 2100, suggests that by 2055, international migration trips for Kiribati and Tuvalu will increase by 35 and 100 per cent respectively.

A recent Pacific-wide scientific study has confirmed temperatures in the region have been rising by about 0.15 degrees celsius per decade between 1953 and 2010, and projected that by the end of this century, if emissions remain at current levels, temperatures will likely rise by between 2 and 4.5 degrees (relative to 1961-1990). The scientists noted that the warming observed was not due to natural processes alone, and that the projected increase in temperatures would likely result in increased health issues due to heat stress, disruption to agriculture, increased risk of coral bleaching, and damage to reef-based ecosystems. The production of coral reef fish in the Pacific has been projected to decrease 20 per cent by 2050 due to warming waters and coral bleaching associated with climate change. A systematic review of 29 peer-reviewed studies on fish, food security and health in the Pacific, published in 2016, concluded that ‘the major contribution of fisheries to livelihoods, revenue and development is undisputed’ with 14 regional studies identifying fish as the primary food source for Pacific islanders, five studies reporting fish/seafood as the primary source of dietary protein, and numerous country-level studies confirming the substantial contribution of fisheries to both subsistence and market-based economies, and that national rates of fish consumption are among the highest in the world.

40 Although in doing so, leaders noted that the framework does not replace or supersede existing regional political statements or declarations on climate change and disaster risk management - Pacific Islands Forum (2016) Communiqué of the Forty-Seventh Pacific Islands Forum, Pohnpei
41 Australian Bureau of Meteorology (2011) South Pacific Sea Level and Climate Monitoring Project: Sea Level Data Summary Report
42 Stortez, C. D. et al. (2019) ‘Many Atolls May be Uninhabitable Within Decades Due to Climate Change’ in Scientific Reports
45 Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), Flash Update, 7 March 2014
47 UNU-EHS and UNESCAP (2015) Climate Change and Migration in the Pacific: Links, attitudes, and future scenarios in Nauru, Tuvalu, and Kiribati. This publication draws on data collected in a representative survey conducted by UNU-EHS under the UNESCAP Pacific Climate Change and Migration project, which surveyed 852 households in Kiribati, Nauru and Tuvalu.
49 Dr Scott Power - https://www.theguardian.com, 26 June 2015
51 Charlton, K. E. et al. (2016) ‘Fish, food security and health in Pacific Island countries and territories: a systematic literature review’
The growing research base and modelling for the Pacific islands does not yet present a complete picture of existing and emerging impacts of climate change. Based on what is known to date, the PSIDS\(^{52}\) recognise climate change as ‘the single greatest threat to the lives and livelihoods, security, social development and wellbeing of the region’. Moreover, given the multidimensional nature of climate change, including rising sea-levels, air and sea-water temperatures, saltwater intrusion, flooding and drought, and its impacts on territorial sovereignty, fisheries, tourism, agriculture, biodiversity, food security, freshwater resources, infrastructure, migration and health, the PSIDS\(^{53}\) have called for a ‘transformational investment in climate change adaptation and mitigation, building infrastructure, institutions and capacity’ to help strengthen resilience and avoid other potential threats, including internal conflict and violence, as well as supporting calls\(^{54}\) to advance global mitigation measures, promoting incentives for investments in low-carbon solutions, increasing investments in education and awareness on climate change, protecting marine and terrestrial carbon sink and coral reefs, scale up investments in safe and clean renewable energy and infrastructure, and addressing loss and damage experienced by countries disproportionately impacted by global emissions.

**Oceans and fisheries**

In September 2017, Pacific leaders adopted\(^{55}\) the Blue Pacific identity as the core driver of collective action to strengthen solidarity, reinforce the potential of the shared stewardship of the Pacific Ocean, and improve ownership and returns from fisheries. As a catalyst for deeper regionalism, the Blue Pacific identity is intended to form the basis of a long-term regional foreign policy commitment to act as one ‘Blue Continent’.

The Blue Pacific presents a new policy narrative in recognition of the fact that the Pacific region is 98 per cent ocean; with fish consumption in some island countries three to four times the global average, representing between 50 and 94 per cent of animal protein in the diet of coastal and urban communities.\(^{56}\) Fisheries are also a significant resource for livelihoods, employment and economic growth in the region. Accounting for over 50 per cent of all exports in half the states, fisheries are also significant export earner in other countries that fall short of this threshold.\(^{57}\) The Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency\(^{58}\) estimates that in 2015, total employment related to tuna fisheries in member countries\(^{59}\) was 23,000, which is slightly up on previous years due to growth in offshore crew jobs, while employment in the onshore processing and packing sectors declined. In the same year, the estimated annual volume of tuna processed was in the order of 160,000 tonnes, representing an overall contribution of USD $267m to member economies, down from USD $308m the previous year, and the third consecutive annual decline.

There have, however, been advances in government revenue generation through the enhanced cooperation and management of fisheries by the Parties to the Nauru Agreement\(^{60}\) whose ‘vessel day scheme’ has increased the value of a fishing day fees from approximately USD $1,350 to between USD $8,000 and USD $13,000, resulting in total revenues rising from USD $60m in 2010 to an estimated USD $400m in 2015\(^{61}\). Nevertheless, actual earnings from fisheries remains disproportionately low, representing only a small percentage of the value of the landed catch, largely on account of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. A 2016 estimate\(^{62}\) suggests the volume of Pacific tuna fisheries harvested or transhipped involving IUU activity is (within a 90% confidence range) in the order of 276,546 to 338,475 tonnes, with a value of between USD $518m and $740m. Several valuable species, in particular big-eye tuna in offshore and beach-de-mere in inshore fisheries, are under significant pressure and risk depletion. Most of these resources are fished and consumed by non-Pacific islands countries.

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53 PSIDS (2014) Statement delivered by H.E. Mr Robert G. Aisi, Permanent Representative of Papua New Guinea to the United Nations on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States, to the Tenth Session of the OWG on Sustainable Development Goals, 3 April 2014
54 AGDIS (2014) Statement delivered by H.E. Ambassador Marlene Moses, Permanent Representative of Nauru to the United Nations and Chair of Alliance of Small Island States, to the Tenth Session (Climate) of the OWG on Sustainable Development Goals, 3 April 2014
56 Cavanagh,R.D. et al (2016) ‘Valuing biodiversity and ecosystem services: a useful way to manage and conserve marine resources’
58 FFA (2016) Economic and Development Indicators and Statistics: Tuna Fisheries of the Western and Central Pacific Ocean
59 Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu
60 The Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu
62 MPAF Asia Pacific (2016) Towards the Quantification of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing in the Pacific Islands Region
Furthermore, the marine environment in the western and central Pacific is facing increasing anthropogenic pressures from resource exploitation, habitat destruction, pollution and the effects of climate change, with associated widespread declines in biodiversity and threats to key ecosystems. For example, the economic cost due to coastal erosion, primarily from aggregate (beach) mining, on Majuro atoll in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, was estimated to be between USD $88m and USD $373m over 25 years, which far outweighed the relatively small contribution of mining to the economy, which between 1991 and 2001 accounted for an average of 0.3% of GDP, or approximately USD $300,000 per year.

The world’s first deep sea mining licence was approved in 2011 for an area of the Bismarck Sea in Papua New Guinea, with operations anticipated to commence in 2018, but the environmental, social and economic costs of the commercial exploitation of mineral resources from the ocean floor remain little studied, limiting the ability to predict impacts. Concerns exist about the capacity of governments in the region to regulate and manage this emerging industry, and it has been considered prudent to apply the precautionary principle - that in the absence of scientific consensus on whether an action is not harmful, the burden of proof that it is not should fall on those proposing the action.

Plastic pollution in oceans is an issue that has a growing body of political and scientific interest. Pacific leaders have committed to fast track the development of policies to ban the use of single-use plastic bags, plastic and styrofoam packaging, and have called on Pacific Rim partners to join and commit to action on addressing marine pollution and marine debris. With recent research estimating an average concentration of 26,898 items/km² in the South Pacific subtropical gyre, there are serious concern on the impacts of plastic pollution on marine ecosystems, fisheries and tourism. Fragments of plastic have been found in the stomachs of 35 per cent of fish in the North Pacific. Floating plastic waste, drifting with tides and currents across international and territorial waters, threatens marine based species with entanglement and chemical leaching, and can also kill coral by blocking sunlight and suffocating living polyps.

The Blue Pacific recognition of the importance of, and threats to, ocean resources builds on a long history of political mobilisation and commitment to ocean stewardship from regional leaders. The 2016 Pacific Islands Forum leaders’ Pohnpei Ocean Statement reaffirms commitments made under the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, the 2014 Palau Declaration: The Ocean: Life and Future, the 2002 Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy, and the 2010 Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape: “Our Sea of Islands, Our Livelihoods, Our Oceania” as the guiding regional ocean policy instruments. The protection of oceans is also a central tenet of the PSIDS ongoing global advocacy.

In May 2015, the secretary general of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Dame Meg Taylor, was appointed as the inaugural commissioner of the Pacific Ocean Alliance, which was established at the 2014 SIDS Conference. The PSIDS have sought to capitalise on the Oceans Alliance as a means to promote international partnership and cooperation in support of technological, scientific, and financial support to assess, conserve and sustainably manage marine resources, implement regimes to effectively monitor and control fishing vessels to combat illegal, unregulated unreported fishing, and for improving monitoring and observation on ocean acidification, information sharing and resource mobilisation.

The high profile role of Oceans Commissioner sends a strong signal to the international community of the region’s commitment to sustainable ocean management and conservation. In June 2017, the government of Fiji co-hosted, with Sweden, the high-level United Nations Oceans Conference in support of the Implementation of SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. The Oceans Conference brought global focus and attention to ocean conservation and management, and provided a platform to deepen commitments that will be followed up and reviewed under the region’s reporting under the 2030 Agenda, SAMOA Pathway and Framework for Pacific Regionalism.
Poverty reduction, reducing inequality and improving quality of education

In committing to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Pacific leaders placed particular attention to the region’s ‘unfinished business’ on the MDGs, reflecting the demand for the SDGs to build on the progress made over the last fifteen years, while also addressing the key areas not adequately covered in the millennium goals.

In September 2017, Pacific leaders, through their endorsement of the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development, focused the region’s unfinished business of the MDGs around poverty reduction, reducing inequality and improving education quality.

As a region, the Pacific reported the greatest difficulty in achieving MDG 1 - Reduce Poverty. While poverty has long been raised as an issue of concern by Pacific leaders, there has been no overarching regional framework to guide policy responses, and significant data gaps often masked the extent of poverty and hardship in the region. The most recent depth analysis, undertaken in 2014, on poverty, vulnerability and exclusion across Pacific island countries estimates that, on average, approximately one-in-four households have per capita expenditure/income below what would be considered as the basic-needs poverty line in their respective countries, excluding Papua New Guinea where the rate is much higher.

As a result of the growing awareness of the increasing levels of hardship and poverty in the region, poverty reduction strategies now feature prominently in most national development strategies and national plans, and in 2016 Pacific leaders reaffirmed their commitment to focus on poverty reduction, and mainstream it across all sectoral and thematic areas of work. Nonetheless, as the extent of poverty in the region becomes more apparent through analysis of national household income and expenditure surveys, so too is the changing dynamics of poverty due to high rates of urbanisation, and the decline of the region’s rich heritage of informal and traditional social protection ‘buffers’, based on elaborate kinship-based social structures linked to resource rights. Inequality and exclusion are rising in the Pacific, with rates of absolute inequality striking in a number of countries. In a similar pattern across Pacific island countries, the top 20 percent of the population consumes 6 to 12 times as much as the bottom 20 percent, with the bottom 20 percent accounting for very little of total consumption (from less than 5 percent in Papua New Guinea to about 7 percent in Vanuatu). Also evident are significant gender and geographical dimensions to inequality. Men more likely have greater command over resources relative to women. There is an increasing tendency towards the urbanisation of poverty (e.g. in Fiji urban inequality is substantially higher than rural inequality, and in Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu urban and rural inequality are now similar), although in some countries (e.g. Kiribati, Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu) inequality remains higher in rural areas. While data to estimate the rates at which people fall into and escape from poverty over time does not yet exist in the Pacific, it is evident that many people may be vulnerable to falling into hardship given the rate of inequality (and specifically the relatively low consumption shares of the second and even third quintiles across countries).
Another determinant of poverty and inequality in the Pacific is education, with households headed by individuals who have limited education or who do not work more likely to live in hardship. Achieving universal primary education (MDG 2) has generally been met across the Pacific. However, gender disparities persist within education systems that favour boys in some instances, and girls in others. Further, many young people still leave school without basic literacy and numeracy skills or the necessary foundational skills to lead prosperous and fulfilling lives. With successful efforts under the MDGs on achieving access to primary education, a consequence has been increasing numbers of young people competing for limited pre and post primary education opportunities, increasing the demand for better quality educational outcomes.

The provision of education is squarely the domain of national governments. However, the fundamental links between educational attainment, poverty and inequality, and its overarching basis for achieving sustainable development, education in the Pacific warrants particular attention to address a number of shared challenges in terms of equity in access (including children in outer islands and remote areas, children in families with low incomes, children with disabilities, and gender gaps in secondary education), quality (addressing low levels of student achievement in literacy and numeracy, untrained teachers, low relevance of curricula, lack of linkages between education and the labour market), and management and data collection (lack of data, low quality data, shortage of skilled staff). The Pacific Education Development Framework, endorsed by Pacific Islands Forum Education Ministers in 2009, confirms the political recognition of education as a fundamental building block for development, although the targets and indicators generally re-state international commitments, with a clear notation that ‘only in very specific circumstances is it appropriate to set regional targets for Pacific education given the wide variation in context and economic circumstances’.

Improving connectivity

The Pacific islands make up a vast oceanic region spread over an area equivalent to one third of the earth’s surface, with the 14 independent countries ranging in size from Nauru (land area of 21 square kilometres and population 10,000) and Niue (land area 259 square kilometres and population 1,000) to Papua New Guinea (land area of 462,840 square kilometres and population 7.6 million). Kiribati has the largest exclusive economic zone, with its 33 atolls and one island scattered across 3.55 million square kilometres of ocean. Long distances from major economic centres coupled with high cost and infrequent transport has continued to contribute to the region’s persistent and increasing trade deficit, which rose from under USD $2 billion in 2006 to around USD $15 billion in 2012.

The region cannot shift its geographic location, but improvements in flight and shipping connectivity, coupled with increasing supply and demand for Pacific goods and services (including tourism), can improve integration into global markets. In recognition that Pacific island countries have had limited success in benefiting from regional trade arrangements and accessing preferential markets, the Pacific Aid for Trade Strategy 2014-2017 reset the focus on improving trade-related infrastructure; increasing productive capacity for trade (e.g. supporting the private sector to exploit their comparative advantages and diversify their exports); promoting trade-related adjustment (e.g. helping with the costs associated with trade liberalisation, such as tariff reductions, preference erosion, or declining terms of trade); and improving trade policy and regulatory environments (i.e. lower bureaucratic or other burdens related to connectivity).

Pacific leaders have also looked beyond measures to improve trade related infrastructure and policy environments, with a focus on capitalising on expanding the reach of information and communications technology (ICT) services. Under the auspices of the Framework of Pacific Regionalism, ICT has been prioritised to increase ‘access to world markets and global knowledge’, and reduce the cost of conducting business across borders, enable faster dissemination of information, and better delivery of services.

The focus on ICT comes as the region has, over the last decade, moved away from its reliance on a single satellite for internet connectivity, with most countries now connected via submarine fibre-optic cables and the remaining countries likely to be connected to broadband by the end of 2019. In addition to regulatory and market reforms, this has resulted

98 Ibid.
99 Ibid.
100 Ibid.
101 Ibid.
105 At present, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Kiribati and Nauru remain reliant on satellite connection - Internet Society (2015)
in reduced prices and steep growth in internet uptake. Tonga, for example, has seen a five-fold increase in internet use within six months of its submarine cable becoming operational in 2013. In Fiji the ten-fold increase in mobile broadband subscriptions between 2011 to 2014 has been attributed to the overhaul of its spectrum allocation scheme and universal service programme. Vanuatu’s universal access policy, adopted in 2013, seeks to cover 98 per cent of the population with mobile and broadband services by 2018, and complements it e-government agenda that seeks to deliver broadband internet to all schools, health facilities and public offices.

Regionally, international internet bandwidth has increased by over 1,500 per cent between 2007 and 2014, rising from less than 100 megabits per second to over 1 gigabit per second. Despite the progress, much remains to be done to capitalise on the advances in technology. It is estimated that 40 per cent of the population in the Pacific have yet to gain internet access. Cost remains a barrier in some countries, where monthly spending on mobile broadband is between 10 and 20 per cent of the average monthly income. Regional leaders have acknowledged the challenges to realising the benefits of ICT expansion include the under-utilisation of ICT services, a lack of resources and expertise, and the threat of cyber-attacks and crime.

The improvements in infrastructure will need to be mirrored with increased investments in education, skills training, promotion and changes to the institutional, policy and regulatory environments so that Pacific island countries can take advantage of the growth of an IT based economy, particularly participating in the global outsourcing services market. As an example, Fiji (through the Fiji Trade and Investment Bureau) has implemented a number of favourable policies and incentives, including duty concessions, investment allowances, tax exemption and tax free zones, and in 2014 won the European Outsourcing Association’s Offshoring Destination of the Year Award. With more than half of the Pacific population under the age of 24, there is significant potential to develop an IT literate workforce to harness the opportunities rising from greater internet connectivity, and offset the permanent barriers imposed by geographical distance and the difficulties associated with labour mobility.

Non-communicable diseases

The epidemic of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) was branded a “human, social and economic crisis” by Pacific Leaders in 2011, at a time when global attention focused on curbing the death toll, socio-economic impacts and developmental challenges revealed in the 2010 Global Status Report on Noncommunicable Diseases. As the leading cause of deaths globally (68% in 2012), NCDs account for up to three quarters of all adult deaths in the region, many of which are premature and preventable. Life expectancy is stagnating in several Pacific island countries, and at fairly low levels. Given the declines in infant and child mortality, these patterns reflect premature adult mortality from NCDs. The majority of deaths are occurring within economically active age groups, which has parlous implications for labor supply, productivity and household income.

Also of concern is the assessment that the underlying risk factors driving the epidemic (unhealthy diets, physical inactivity, exposure to tobacco smoke or the effects of the harmful use of alcohol) are higher in many Pacific island countries. Five Pacific island countries top world obesity rates; Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Tonga have some of the highest smoking rates in the world; and Nauru has the world’s highest rate of diabetes prevalence (24.1% of the population) with six other Pacific island countries in the top 20 world ranking. Shifting dietary patterns, characterised by high consumption of foods high in fats, salt and sugar, and declining intakes of local foods, further presents the prospect of the rates of NCDs rising in the future, which will lead to additional pressures on health systems and budgets.

106 Internet Society (2015)
107 Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Regulator (TRF) of Vanuatu - http://www.trr.vu
109 Internet Society (2015)
113 Pacific Islands Forum (2011) Forum Leaders’ Statement on Non-Communicable Diseases
114 WHO (2011) Global Status Report on Noncommunicable Diseases 2010
116 Tuitama, Lea Talaelisi et al. (2014)
118 Magnusson, R.S. and David Patterson (2015)
120 Charlton, K. E. et al (2016)
Pacific leaders have acknowledged that most of the interventions required to control NCDs exist outside of the health sector, and have called for a ‘whole of government and whole of society’ response to the crisis. Concerted action has been pledged through the coordination of country-specific NCD roadmaps that address four key common strategies, namely: strengthening tobacco control, including raising taxes on cigarettes; reducing consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks, and salty and fatty foods; improving prevention and early treatment; and strengthening monitoring and evaluation. Some progress has been made, including a 15 per cent reduction in salt content for a common brand of noodles in Fiji, and most countries have met the target of a 10 per cent reduction in tobacco prevalence in pursuit of the regional goal of a tobacco-free Pacific by 2025. However, the response remains driven by the health sector, and has not been commensurate with the burden of NCDs. The epidemic continues to consume sizeable proportions of national health budgets, which in some some countries exceeds 60 per cent.

Following an assessment of public submissions received under the Framework for Pacific Regionalism in 2015, and given the regional focus on non-communicable diseases, Pacific leaders placed a specific focus on developing a ‘regional approach to address cervical cancer, including consideration of resource allocation for prevention and treatment.’

Empowering women and girls, and people with disabilities

Women have never comprised more than ten per cent of Pacific national parliaments. As of March 2017, regional participation of women in politics was in the order of seven per cent, ranging from zero in Federated States of Micronesia, Tonga and Vanuatu to about 16 per cent in Cook Islands and Fiji. Economic opportunities for women in the Pacific are amongst the worst in the world, with six Pacific island countries (Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu) placed at the bottom of global rankings in 2012 in respect of women’s access to property and finance. The incidence of violence against women is the worst in the world with over 60 per cent of women and girls in the Pacific having experienced violence at the hand of an intimate partner or family member. A study in Fiji found that addressing gender based violence was not only a ‘moral imperative, but also an economic necessity.’ The cost to the national economy in 2011 was about 6.6 per cent of GDP, and the World Bank has suggested a similar cost is likely in other Pacific countries that experience high rates of gender based violence. Also of concern is the economic marginalisation of women, with unequal access to employment, the gender wage gap, lack of property rights, and the heavy burden of unpaid care work. Only three countries (Cook Islands, Niue and Palau) achieved the targets under the Millennium Development Goal on gender equality.

Despite the bleak outlook, the 2012 Pacific Leaders’ Gender Equality Declaration presents a significant regional undertaking highlighting the need for accelerated action on the empowerment of women and girls. Since the adoption of the declaration there have been some steady gains in national policymaking, for example the introduction of temporary special measures to boost female representation in Samoa, which resulted in the highest proportion (10%) of female candidates elected in the 2016 general election. In January 2016, the parliament of the Republic of the Marshall Islands elected H.E. Dr. Hilda Heine as the country’s first female president, and the region’s first female head of state or government. Several countries have also introduced domestic violence legislation including Fiji, Kiribati, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. In order to maintain and advance progress, Pacific leaders have committed to the implementation of specific national policy actions to progress gender equality, with specific focus on supporting women with disabilities; adopting temporary special measures; improve women’s access to employment and economic opportunities; and improving sexual reproductive health services.

Disability has until recently been largely an ‘invisible issue’ in the Pacific, with little accurate official data on incidence, few services, and challenging physical environments for people living with disabilities. Children with disabilities have been reported ‘as an ”invisible” population as they are [often] unseen and their needs go unheeded’ due to ‘stigma, prejudice and discrimination’ and can also suffer from being ‘over protected and cared for to the extent that they are not encouraged to attend school or learn skills that would lead them to an independent life’. There is evidence that disabilities are found frequently among older persons in Pacific island countries, for example a national baseline disability study conducted in Fiji...
in 2008-9 found that 50 per cent of all disabilities were found in those aged 50 years and above.\textsuperscript{134}

The high incidence of diabetes in the region may be contributing to an increase in people with disabilities, with the World Health Organisation estimating that 13 to 65 per cent of persons living with diabetes will develop neuropathy, with up to 17 per cent of those requiring amputations, and up to 47 per cent will develop retinopathy leading to visual impairment.\textsuperscript{135}

In 2012, Pacific leaders ‘acknowledged that disability continues to be an issue of significance for the region, reflecting on the region’s ability to protect the marginalised’ and ‘that persons living with disabilities, and their families, continue to be disproportionately affected by poverty due to inaccessible services and the built environment, which prevent them from participating independently and being included in their own societies.’\textsuperscript{136} Leaders endorsed the Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2016-2025 to support Pacific governments promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities. The framework seeks to provide a regional modality to strengthen coordination and collaboration for national actions to remove barriers to equal participation and unlock the potential of Pacific people with disabilities.

\textsuperscript{135} Tavola, H. (2012)
\textsuperscript{136} Pacific Islands Forum (2016) Communique of the Forty-Seventh Pacific Islands Forum, Pohnpei
Implementing the agenda
In endorsing the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development,137 Pacific leaders reinforced the centrality of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism in contextualising global commitments under the 2030 Agenda and the SAMOA Pathway.138 This emphasis on contextualisation echoed a previous directive to formulate a regional set of indicators to monitor progress against the 2030 Agenda, SAMOA Pathway and Framework for Pacific Regionalism, and for reporting against these three frameworks to be streamlined to reduce the burden and increase the value of reporting for national governments.139 The Pacific Roadmap outlines five key elements to promote national and regional ownership, and tailor the global aspirations for sustainable development to the Pacific context, namely: Leadership and coordination; Advocacy and communications; Regional monitoring and indicators; Integrated reporting; and Supporting the means of implementation. Annexed to the roadmap is an initial draft action plan,140 and set of regional indicators. The roadmap and its annexes are living documents that are envisaged to be updated as implementation progresses. A progress update will be presented to the annual Forum Economic Ministers Meeting, and highlights of progress presented to Pacific Leaders every two years, in addition to their quadrennial consideration of the regional sustainable development report.

Leadership and coordination
Continued leadership from national governments will be critical to maintain momentum in tailoring and implementing the SDGs, and monitoring and reporting on progress. Across the region, improved national plans and gradual improvement in central systems have been mirrored by a growing tendency for more responsive international cooperation, evidenced by the greater predictability, alignment and harmonisation of aid, including increasing use of flexible budget support financing. Nevertheless, further measures are required by both Pacific countries and their partners to reinforce country ownership and coordination, especially in regards to coordination across sectors beyond central agencies.141

Stakeholder consideration142 of the initial draft action plan that accompanies the roadmap confirmed the need to enhance existing regional and national coordination mechanisms. While many countries have aligned the SDGs to national plans, the barrier to successful implementation was reported to be poor coordination across government sectors largely due to fragmentation and capacity constraints, and a resulting dependency on central finance and planning agencies. With the SDGs requiring a whole of government approach, it will be imperative for all agencies to find their place in the attainment of national goals. In some cases, the needs are clear, and in others, countries have indicated significant support will be required to map existing coordination mechanisms so as to best identify and target the necessary capacity support. The Samoa Monitoring Evaluation Reporting Framework (SMERF) was cited as an example of good practice (and as a step by step guide) in leading the localisation of SDGs, integrating these across sectors, and identifying the capacity constraints - notably in evaluation skills. The SMERF has also helped establish consultative mechanisms to include both civil society and the private sector in national follow up and review processes. Elsewhere, there are examples of good practice evident in the health and education sectors, where they have benefited from sustained planning and implementation capacity building efforts.

Overall leadership rests primarily with national governments, but civil society and the private sector also have essential roles in the planning, implementation, follow up and review of national plans and the SDGs. Pacific countries are at varying stages of establishing / strengthening the national mechanisms to better engage non-state actors. At the regional level, an annual private sector dialogue has been established under the patronage of the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting, and a civil society dialogue now takes place in the margins of the annual Forum Leaders meetings. In both cases these platforms have generally been well received, although concerns have been levelled that all too often the focus of engagement at the national level rarely extends beyond soliciting input into planning and policymaking with civil society and private sector representatives seeing further scope to be more actively involved in the delivery of development outcomes.143

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137 See Annex 3 - Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development
140 This initial draft is pending update to reflect the feedback from the Regional Meeting of Pacific SDG Coordinators and Agencies on Implementation of the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development co-hosted by UNEP, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and the Government of Samoa and held on 1–2 November 2017 in Apia, Samoa. This meeting also served as a sub-regional preparatory meeting for the 5th Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) to be held in Bangkok in March 2018.
141 Brien, D., R. Jauncey and J. Winter (forthcoming) Findings of the independent review of the Pacific Islands Forum (Cairns) Compact, report to the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
142 See note 140 above.
143 Brien, D., R. Jauncey and J. Winter, op.cit.
There is also recognition of the need to strengthen coordination amongst the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP agencies) in support of implementation efforts at the regional level, and in their provision of support to national members. Moreover, responding to transboundary issues that cannot be addressed by any one country or region alone, will necessitate regional leaders to continue their advocacy and engagement on the international stage, particularly in relation to climate change and oceans management.

**Advocacy and communications**

The Pacific’s engagement and advocacy throughout the framing of the 2030 Agenda has been heralded as something of a turning point for regional diplomacy and leadership. The Pacific Roadmap recognises the need to sustain strong leadership on the international stage to ensure the global agenda continues to respond to Pacific needs and aspirations. At the same time, it is considered essential to strengthen communications across the region to broaden the understanding and awareness of national and regional efforts undertaken under the auspices of the SDGs and national plans, to ensure informed and inclusive participation help broaden and sustain national and regional ownership and strengthen political oversight. This will include drawing the linkages across the complementary global, regional and national frameworks in languages and formats that resonate beyond development practitioners.

The draft roadmap action plan proposes the formulation of a regional and national communications strategies that use accessible, simple and clear language to raise awareness of priorities being pursued and activities undertaken to achieve them. It also notes that many countries may require support in preparing this exercise, with an initial step involving the identification of the key audiences and the messages to be communicated to them. This in turn will help determine the most suitable modes of communication to not only help inform a broad range of stakeholders, but also to act as a means of engaging them in the development process, and in generating inclusive public discussions on development priorities and progress across the region. These national and regional dialogues should help inform follow up and review processes, and also shape the narrative of national and regional reporting.

**Regional monitoring and indicators**

The initial draft set of regional indicators that accompanies the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development was developed through an extensive analysis of statistical capacity, mapping against existing regional frameworks and national plans, and consultative discussions across a wide range of Pacific stakeholders. The resulting 123 indicators selected from the global list, together with an additional five Pacific ‘proxy’ indicators, are not intended to be a definitive or final list for Pacific countries to report against. Rather this list represents the first assessment of measurability and relevance to the Pacific situation, and serves as a comprehensive starting point for further strengthening of data collection, analysis and contextualisation. The lack of baseline data and other serious data gaps that exist across the region, means that at present only 46 indicators can be reported against regionally.

Addressing the statistical limitations will require long-term commitment and investment in data collection and analysis, including in-country assessment of needs and mapping the global and regional indicators to national development plans and indicators where they exist. Nonetheless, in endorsing the roadmap, Pacific leaders have mandated that ‘to best tell the Pacific’s sustainable development story, the focus should be on the priorities of the region, and not solely on what can be measured according to international methodologies and standards.’ In this light, regional monitoring will seek to add value to the national and global narratives by focusing on tracking regional progress against the unfinished business of the MDGs (where data collection and analysis is well established), the transboundary issues, and the priorities determined by leaders as requiring collective action (see previous section outlining the Pacific’s regional priorities).

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144 Regional consultations culminated in the Pacific Regional Sustainable Development Multi-stakeholder Dialogue held in June 2017, to consolidate the views from key stakeholders on the elements roadmap, including regional indicators.

145 Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy, Phase 2 Design Document, October 2014

146 Based on criteria that there must be more than one-half of Pacific island countries and territories need data for it to be considered as having a regional baseline.
Regional reporting, therefore, will present a high-level narrative on the trends in development results and effectiveness, rather than a goal-by-goal comparison of countries’ relative performance against targets and indicators. Not only does this seek to integrate the narrative on results with the means of implementation, which have previously been pursued as separate work streams resulting in parallel regional reporting on development outcomes and effectiveness, it recognises that country reporting on the SDGs is voluntary, and should reflect national priorities, highlighting progress and additional support required in the context of national circumstances. So far, Samoa is the only Pacific island country to have undertaken a voluntary national review at the High Level Political Forum (in 2016). The lessons of this experience have been shared widely across the region\footnote{And more broadly, including at the 2017 Asia Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development}, and Kiribati is planning to report in 2018, followed by Palau, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu in 2019, and a second review by Samoa in 2020.

In addition to statistical support, national and regional monitoring and reporting will be further enhanced through the evolution of cross-country learning and support for more country-specific, qualitative and research-oriented understanding of development outcomes and effectiveness. All such support will need to be country-led, and respond to national priorities and needs assessments.

\textit{Integrated reporting}

Commencing in 2018, the Pacific will produce a quadrennial regional report on sustainable development. It will consolidate reporting on the region’s progress against the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, SAMOA Pathway and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, including the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration. The report will be submitted for consideration and endorsement by Forum Leaders before forming the basis of the region’s contribution to the High Level Political Forum when it convenes every four years under the auspices of the UN General Assembly (starting in 2019).

The quadrennial report is intended to clearly communicate the Pacific’s evolving story on sustainable development by providing a measure of progress on collective regional actions and the partnerships intended to support them\footnote{Around 300 partnerships were announced in the lead up to and during the SIDS Conference, with the Pacific engaged in at least 74 of them. While reflecting commendable interest and support, the high number of partnerships poses considerable issues in terms of monitoring and accountability, not the least of which will be ensuring they are/remain active, and that they deliver on pledges and implementation commitments}. It will provide an easily digestible, yet comprehensive, understanding of what has happened, and what yet remains to be done. In doing so, the report will guide forward regional planning and resource allocation, and improve responses to existing and emerging priorities.

Countries have clearly stated that they do not want to participate in ‘tick-a-box’ reporting exercises, airing a sense of caution for a template approach to be developed for regional reporting. The process of populating the regional report should, therefore, be designed to augment national reporting and frame the high-level narrative on the trends in results and effectiveness. The data limitations will necessitate further thinking on appropriate research and analysis methods, and ensure that these do not duplicate or distract from the reporting processes of member states and their development partners. While the reports are to be published every four years, the process of populating them will need to be continuous. This process will need to draw on a hinterland of monitoring, research and analytical capacity, and tap into peer learning to continually uncover examples of what works well.

For the inaugural regional report, due for completion in July 2018, the focus will largely be on efforts to contextualise the global agenda at national and regional levels, highlighting regional progress, challenges, and required actions/resources in implementing the SDGs, SAMOA Pathway, and Framework for Pacific Regionalism. It will be drafted by a technical working group of the Pacific SDGs Taskforce, supported by a technical data working group, and will draw on contributions from civil society, although the mechanisms for contributions have yet to be established. The initial report will follow the theme for the 2019 High Level Political Forum, ‘Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality’, and also highlight the region’s Blue Pacific identity.

\textit{Supporting the means of implementation}

Pacific leaders have recognised the need for international and regional collaboration to deliver national aspirations, and have called for this support to be consistent with the commitments made under the SAMOA Pathway and Addis Ababa Action Agenda, particularly in the areas of financing, statistics, partnerships, SDGs integration, and follow up and review\footnote{While advances have been made in some of these areas, many partners still provide substantial assistance off budget, compounding fragmentation and limiting oversight by central agencies of how partners and regional organisations are}. While advances have been made in some of these areas, many partners still provide substantial assistance off budget, compounding fragmentation and limiting oversight by central agencies of how partners and regional organisations are...
engaging at the sectoral level. Increasing use of national systems will be largely dependent on increasing confidence in these systems. Building institutional capacities requires sustained, long-term approaches and investment, and there is a long standing concern about the tendency towards ‘fly-in-fly-out technical assistance’ that has been viewed as a short term alleviation to what is a longer term issue, viz:

[T]oo often, capacity building means one-off workshops and short-term consulting work. The Pacific is the most workshopped region in the world, but it is clear that workshops alone do not lead to the meaningful and enduring transfer of critical skills and expertise necessary to achieve our development priorities. For the Pacific, we must move beyond capacity building to real “institution building.” What is needed is long-term in-country engagement backed by real resources that leaves in place durable institutions run by capable staff. This will be a crucial determinant of success for the implementation of strategies leading toward the achievement of the SDGs, and will have far reaching positive impact on the lives of our people.151

Under the auspices of the 2009 Forum (Cairns) Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat initiated a widely acclaimed programme of peer learning and exchanges. There is much potential and demand to build on these initial efforts at south-south cooperation to harness and exchange the knowledge and expertise that exists within the region. Feedback from regional stakeholders indicates a desire for these opportunities to grow beyond peer reviewing national plans to providing a broader suite of capacity building tools, and in particular providing support in preparing voluntary national reviews to the High Level Political Forum. The cost implications are significant - both in terms of moving people around the region and also the impact of taking people away from national tasks - but the potential benefits warrant careful consideration of factoring south-south exchanges into capacity building programmes. Likewise, there is an emerging appreciation of the need to make better use of regional meetings, which also bear substantial financial and time costs, to ensure adequate space for discussion and collaboration amongst peers, to think through and work collectively on potential solutions.

Following the regional meeting of Pacific SDG coordinators and agencies in November 2017, the draft roadmap action plan is to be updated by the Forum Secretariat in collaboration with the Pacific SDG Taskforce to include the feedback from countries on the specific help required with the tailoring and implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

150 Brien, D., R. Jauncey and J. Winter, op.cit.
Global and regional integration

**High Level Political Forum**

The High Level Political Forum (HLPF) is the central global platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. It adopts a Ministerial Declaration and provides political leadership, guidance and recommendations on implementation and follow-up; keeping track of the SDGs; spur coherent policies informed by evidence, science and country experience; as well as address new and emerging issues. Effective linkages will be made with follow-up and review arrangements of all relevant UN Conference and processes, including LDCs and SIDSs. By resolution of the General Assembly on the follow up and review of 2030 Agenda, the HLPF, under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), will focus on the following themes during the remainder of the current cycle:

(a) For 2017: “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world” with a focus on SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 9 and 14; 
(b) For 2018: “Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies” with a focus on SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12 and 15; and 
(c) For 2019: “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality” with a focus on SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13 and 16.

In addition to the focus goals each year, the HLPF also reviews SDG 17, underscoring the critical importance of the means of implementation. National voluntary reviews are another important feature of the HLPF, and Samoa was one of first countries globally to undertake the initial national SDG assessment in 2016. Samoa’s experience highlighted the importance of cooperation under the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, and the benefits in coordinating data, assessments, planning and implementation under both the SDGs and the SAMOA Pathway.

**Asia Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development**

At the Asia-Pacific regional level, the Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development (APFSD) has been established as the designated regional preparatory meeting for the High Level Political Forum and supports the 2030 Agenda follow-up and review process at the Asia-Pacific regional level through: assessing progress and providing opportunities for peer learning related to the theme and goals that will be reviewed at the high-level political forum; supporting the presentation of voluntary national reviews; and undertaking periodic review of progress of the Regional roadmap for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia Pacific.

**Box 1: 2017 HLPF Regional Preparatory Meetings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Regional Forum</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 Apr 2017</td>
<td>ECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development</td>
<td>“Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Apr 2017</td>
<td>ECLAC: Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development (LAC RFSD)</td>
<td>“Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 May 2017</td>
<td>ESCWA Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (RFSD) 2017</td>
<td>“Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing Asia-Pacific”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 May 2017</td>
<td>ECA Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (RFSD)</td>
<td>“Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is pertinent to note, in the context of reporting on the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development, that the theme of the 2017 APFSD (29-31 March) was “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing Asia-Pacific” the same as the HLPF’s. During APFSD, members of ESCAP, intergovernmental bodies, United Nations bodies and specialised agencies, major groups and other stakeholders engaged in a dialogue on regional perspectives on the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region. Again in line with the HLPF schedule, the 2017 APFSD included an in-depth review of the same cluster of goals (SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17) under review in 2017 by the HLPF.

153 https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf
155 See Box 1 - Box 1: 2017 HLPF Regional Preparatory Meetings
156 See Annex 5 - Regional roadmap for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia Pacific
The 2017 APFSD opened with speeches from keynote speakers including Ms Helen Hakena, a non-government representative from Papua New Guinea, who spoke passionately about sustainable development challenges in PNG and in the Pacific and asking ‘whether we need more prosperity or just fairer prosperity’. Ministers and senior officials from Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu a few other countries and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat participated in plenary panels and roundtables including on the review of the goals. The meeting again benefitted from the experience of Samoa and others in the Asia-Pacific region which had undertaken a national voluntary assessment. Of particular note in light of the UN Oceans Conference was the APFSD roundtable reviewing SDG 14. The roundtable featured the report of the Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting which had taken place in Suva in March, which was presented by the Fiji Fisheries Minister, and attracted a lot of comments including by the Pacific participants present. The full report of the 2017 APFSD gives the details and provides useful insights on how the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development could better influence the HLPF regional preparatory meeting in years ahead.

The 2018 Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development will convene under the theme ‘Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies,’ and again offers member states support in terms of linking national, sub-regional, regional and global processes; enhancing awareness and understanding of the theme of the upcoming High Level Political Forum, including the five goals under review; identify ways to strengthen implementation efforts through follow up and review; review progress on the Asia-Pacific regional roadmap; and offer opportunities for peer learning and exchange. A dedicated session will be provided on the voluntary national review (VNR) process, with the aim of targeting in-country support to VNR preparations through UN and other agencies.

Asia Pacific regional roadmap

The Regional roadmap for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia Pacific focuses on ‘shared regional priorities’ and identifies ‘opportunities for regional cooperation’ and support. The APFSD recognised it as a living document that served as guidelines for regional cooperation and support in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Interestingly in the context of the multi-stakeholder context of the HLPF follow-up and review process, civil society organisations recognised the road map’s contribution and benefits to developing and least developed countries, they called for wide stakeholder participation in its implementation and made several suggestions for future iterations to promote development justice and ensure inclusion of all marginalised groups. A copy of the APFSD roadmap is attached as Annex 5 to this report with an outline below in Box 2. Points worth making are: first, it identifies many opportunities for Asia-Pacific regional cooperation which the Pacific could target using its own SDG roadmap as the source document for Pacific priorities and accountability measures (indicators); second, it puts the means of implementation first with data and statistics at the top of the list; and thirdly first underscoring their critical importance to implementation; and third, it includes as thematic issues as well the issues of connectivity (and within it trade, transport and ICT) and energy.

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158 http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/statementbyHelenHakena.pdf
159 http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/pre-ods/81700358.pdf
160 To take place on 28-30 March 2018, in Bangkok
Box 2: Outline of the ‘Regional roadmap for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Objectives and guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. Priority areas of cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Means of implementation and partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Data and statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Policy coherence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) North-South, South-South, international and regional partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Thematic issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Leaving no one behind (social development)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Disaster risk reduction and resilience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Climate Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Management of natural resources (including oceans)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Connectivity for 2030 Agenda (trade, transport and ICT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Energy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Implementation

D. Tracking the progress of the regional roadmap through the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

**Asia-Pacific Sustainable Development Goals Outlook**

As a continuation of the Asia-Pacific MDG Regional Report, ESCAP, UNDP and ADB have established an Asia-Pacific SDG Partnership to develop and publish an annual SDG report to facilitate the regional review of SDGs in Asia-Pacific. The Asia-Pacific 2017 Sustainable Development Goals Outlook aims to develop a shared understanding of the opportunities and challenges confronting the region and provides a goal-by-goal snapshot of where it stands offering insights under each goal, highlighting bright spots and hot spots, and outlining emerging issues. There are many which are relevant or important for the Pacific but it could be a lot better with a more concerted effort to participate as a region in the annual HLPF global and regional review process. In considering the format of the quadrennial Pacific regional SDG progress report, it is important, given the need for integrating reporting and minimising parallel and duplicative streams of work, that focus be made on the HLP review themes and goals. This will also strengthen Pacific’s participation at the HLPF, whether in New York or through the regional platforms and reports of the APFSD, the Asia Pacific SDG Outlook, or the Asia Pacific regional roadmap.

In the overview section at the beginning of the Asia Pacific SDG outlook report, it notes that ‘Asian and Pacific governments have moved to implement the 2030 Agenda much faster than was the case with the Millennium Development Goals. Some countries (including a few in the Pacific) have taken steps to integrate the SDGs into existing national development plans, policies and legislation, while many other governments are establishing or strengthening coordination bodies or mapping institutional responsibilities’163. Its examination of the SDGs goal by goal shows that governments in Asia Pacific ‘confront many common and fundamental challenges’ as they implement the SDGs. One such a key challenge is that the ‘widening gaps between the rich and the poor and low wages threaten to reduce the sustainability of economic growth and are also associated with negative environmental outcomes.

Of relevance to the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development is what the Asia Pacific SDG Outlook report says about the ‘many transboundary issues’ that ‘will require a regional response and joint actions’. Issues highlighted in the Asia Pacific report with important transboundary dimensions include migration, trade and environmental protection, particularly in relation to water resources and cross-border investment. The report notes that SDGs deal with goals and regional public goods such as climate change, mitigation, digital connectivity, trade and investment agreements’ and that ‘regional cooperation and partnerships for investing more in public goods are needed’164. It again picks up ‘trade and investment’ as an example of where policy coherence and links between goals needs recognition. ‘For example, multilateral free trade and investment agreement provisions can further mainstream public policy objectives to health and food security’165.

A final key observation in the Asia Pacific SDG Outlook report is that ‘implementing the SDGs in a transformative agenda

164 Ibid (p. 15)
165 Ibid (p. 16)
requires new government capacities’. A key requirement is for ‘governments and all stakeholders to develop a more concrete understanding of the interactions between the goals’. Regionalised and ‘localised indicators, data collection and monitoring systems should also reflect these interlinks’166 and there is a risk if these being lost when what appear to be duplicate indicators are removed from the Pacific list without appreciating the reasons for the same or similar indicators appearing under different goals.

**Next steps**

The Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development sets the overarching framework to guide implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in the context of the SAMOA Pathway, Framework for Pacific Regionalism, and most importantly national development plans. The Pacific SDGs Taskforce that coordinated the production of the roadmap is to be re-constituted following its final meeting in November 2017. A revised terms of reference will guide the re-constituted Taskforce to refocus its work on supporting implementation efforts at national and regional levels. The reformed Taskforce will oversee the updating of the roadmap action plan, in concert with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, to factor in the specific feedback provided by countries and representatives of civil society and the private sector. A technical working group of the Taskforce will oversee the production of the first Pacific Regional Report on Sustainable Development, due for submission to the Forum Officials Committee in July 2018. This report will not only provide an update on regional progress, its formulation will reveal valuable insights into data, research and capacity gaps that have thus far not been identified, and which can inform updates to the roadmap action plan.

166 Ibid (p. 17)
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Achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Pacific
Annex 1: Pacific socio-economic indicators at a glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cook Islands</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>1,830,000</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>14,119</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federated States of Micronesia</td>
<td>701</td>
<td>2,978,000</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>3,015</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>0.640</td>
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<td>Fiji</td>
<td>18,272</td>
<td>1,290,000</td>
<td>892</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>4,922</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>0.727</td>
</tr>
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<td>Kiribati</td>
<td>811</td>
<td>3,550,000</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1,443</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>0.590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall Islands</td>
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<td>2,131,000</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>0.7</td>
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<td>92</td>
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<td>Niue</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>390,000</td>
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<td>-0.8</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>..</td>
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<td>Palau</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>616,000</td>
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<td>1.6</td>
<td>12,123</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>0.780</td>
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<tr>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
<td>462,840</td>
<td>3,120,000</td>
<td>7,619</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2,798</td>
<td>64.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Samoa</td>
<td>2,935</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>193</td>
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<td>99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solomon Islands</td>
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<td>583</td>
<td>4.1</td>
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<td>Tonga</td>
<td>650</td>
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<td>Vanuatu</td>
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<td>2,783</td>
<td>85.2</td>
<td>0.594</td>
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</table>

Notes: * % population over 15 years  .. data not available
### Annex 2: Aligning the SDGs, SAMOA Pathway and Framework for Pacific Regionalism (FPR)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SDG Goals</th>
<th>SAMOA Pathway Priority Areas</th>
<th>FPR Objectives (Agreed Priorities)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 NO POVERTY</strong></td>
<td>Sustainable, Inclusive and Equitable Economic Growth</td>
<td>Improve livelihoods and well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 ZERO HUNGER</strong></td>
<td>Food Security / Nutrition</td>
<td>Improve livelihoods and well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</strong></td>
<td>Health and NCDs</td>
<td>Improve livelihoods and well-being (cervical cancer)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4 QUALITY EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td>Social Development: Education</td>
<td>Improve livelihoods and well-being (Stable and safe conditions for all)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5 GENDER EQUALITY</strong></td>
<td>Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment</td>
<td>Improve livelihoods and well-being (Stable and safe conditions for all)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Water &amp; Sanitation</th>
<th>Sustainable Energy</th>
<th>Sustainable, Inclusive and Equitable Economic Growth</th>
<th>Social Development: Culture and Sport / Disaster Risk Reduction</th>
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<td>Economic growth that is inclusive and equitable (regional mobility and harmonisation of business practices)</td>
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<td>Improve livelihoods and well-being</td>
<td>Improve livelihoods and well-being (cervical cancer)</td>
<td>Improve livelihoods and well-being (Stable, Inclusive and persons with disabilities)</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</strong></th>
<th><strong>13 CLIMATE ACTION</strong></th>
<th><strong>14 LIFE BELOW WATER</strong></th>
<th><strong>15 LIFE ON LAND</strong></th>
<th><strong>16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</strong></th>
<th><strong>17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Sustainable Consumption &amp; Production / Management of chemicals and waste, including hazardous waste</td>
<td>Climate Change</td>
<td>Oceans &amp; Seas</td>
<td>Biodiversity (Desertification, land degradation and drought; Forests / Invasive Alien Species)</td>
<td>Social Development: Promoting peaceful societies and safe communities</td>
<td>Means of Implementation / Partnerships, Financing, Trade, Capacity Building, Data – Statistics, Technology</td>
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<td>Improve livelihoods and well-being / Use the environment sustainably (climate change)</td>
<td>Improve livelihoods and well-being / Use the environment sustainably (oceans, fisheries, and maritime surveillance)</td>
<td>Improve livelihoods and well-being / Use the environment sustainably (oceans, fisheries, and maritime surveillance)</td>
<td>Strengthened governance, legal, financial, and administrative systems / Stable and safe conditions for all</td>
<td>Strengthened governance, legal, financial, and administrative system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Pacific
TRANSMITTAL LETTER FROM THE CHAIR AND
VICE-CHAIRS OF THE PACIFIC SDGs TASKFORCE

24 July 2017
Meg Taylor, DBE
Secretary General
Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
Suva
FIJI

Dear Secretary General,

In June 2016 the Pacific SDGs Taskforce commenced its work to produce a roadmap to guide and consolidate the region’s efforts to implement and monitor the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, the SAMOA Pathway and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. The initiative was a direct response to the Leaders decisions (refer paras 33,34,35,36, 2015 Communique), and all our deliberations were held in a spirit of positive cooperation and conducted through inclusive, consultative and country-driven processes. Our work culminated in the Pacific Regional Sustainable Development Multi-stakeholder Consultation and Dialogue held in Suva in June 2017, which sought to consolidate the views from key stakeholders on the key elements of a draft roadmap for sustainable development in the Pacific.

We are pleased to be able to, on behalf of the Pacific SDGs Taskforce1, transmit The Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development for consideration at the 48th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Apia, Samoa. In the roadmap we outline five key elements to promote ownership and tailor the global aspirations for sustainable development to the Pacific context in order to benefit our people and communities. We have sought to build on existing work streams, avoid duplicative efforts, and reduce the burden and increase the value of reporting.

Annexed to the Draft Implementation Strategy that accompanies the roadmap is a set of indicators which has been selected through a rigorous analysis of statistical capacity and mapping against regional frameworks and national plans, from the global list. This list is not intended to be final nor prescriptive for countries to report against. Rather it is presented as an initial assessment of measurability and relevance to the Pacific situation, and serves as a comprehensive starting point for further strengthening of data collection, analysis and contextualisation. While there were different views expressed on the number and specifics of the list of indicators, we agreed that to best tell the Pacific’s sustainable development story, the focus should be on the priorities of the region, and not solely on what can be measured according to international methodologies and standards. While the taskforce has yet to reach consensus on the draft Implementation Strategy, we can advise that the taskforce is in full support of the roadmap and commends it for consideration and endorsement of Forum Leaders.

This roadmap charts a new path for achieving sustainable development in the region. As a living document it spans the period of the 2030 Agenda with an initial focus on embedding the means of implementation over the next three years. It is submitted with a sense of optimism, that together we can take bold steps towards our collective ambition to advance the region through sustainable development. Translating this from rhetoric to reality requires a transformational shift in how we approach, implement and communicate our efforts in pursuit of development outcomes that improve the lives and livelihoods of the people of the Pacific. Through this roadmap we believe that we can and we must do this.

Yours sincerely on behalf of the Pacific SDGs Taskforce,

Peseta Noumea Simi, Chair
CEO, Samoa Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Cristelle Pratt, Vice Chair
Deputy Secretary General, PIFS

Iosefa Maiava, Vice Chair
Head of UNESCAP Pacific Office

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1 Representatives of Pacific Islands Forum Member countries, Non-state actors, CROP, UN agencies and bi-lateral and multilateral development partners.
THE PACIFIC ROADMAP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

FINAL DRAFT FOR CONSIDERATION 21JUL17

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

Introduction

Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum have made a commitment to the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), recognising the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and calling for the support of development partners in delivering the promise of SDGs. They directed that the global agenda be contextualised to national and regional priorities, and reporting be streamlined across the SDGs, SAMOA Pathway and Framework for Pacific Regionalism.2

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

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

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

i) Leadership and coordination

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

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

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• Forum Leaders maintain ultimate oversight of the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs as reflected in their national plans, the SAMOA Pathway, the Framework for Pacific Regionalism and the Pacific Leaders Gender Declaration through their collective regional and national leadership, and participation in the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meetings, the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development when it meets at the level of Heads of State and Government under the auspices of the General Assembly every four years, commencing in 2019;
• Member states are encouraged to participate in the voluntary national reviews to the UN High-level Political Forum when it convenes under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in other years, which is the basis for tracking global progress against the SDGs;
• Progress against the SDGs, regional sustainable development aspirations and national plans is anchored in governments’ ability to implement policy. This will be enhanced through national coordination mechanisms that deepen collaboration across all of government and harness the willingness of the private sector and civil society to contribute to planning, implementation, follow up and review;
• The Pacific SDGs Taskforce and its reference group is the inclusive regional coordination mechanism established to coordinate regional efforts in implementing the directives of leaders on sustainable development and provide oversight for the implementation of the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development;
• The Pacific SDGs Taskforce and CROP SD Working Group will report to the CROP heads of agencies and the Forum Officials Committee, and establish regular communication with national coordination mechanisms to facilitate inclusive consultation and informed input;
• The National Sustainable Development Strategies Partnerships Group, Heads of Planners and Statisticians, and the Pacific Statistics Steering Committee will support the work of the Pacific SDGs Taskforce in relation to identifying, contextualising and strengthening planning, budgeting, public financial and aid management and statistical systems including identifying relevant data and other information to track progress against regional indicators to inform the regional story; and
• Regional and international multi-stakeholder platforms hosted by UN and other agencies, including the Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development provide opportunities to advocate priorities and promote shared accountability for transboundary issues, leverage support, and inform knowledge sharing and reciprocal learning.

ii) Advocacy and communications

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

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

As a region, we need to continue to demonstrate our strong global leadership in shaping the international development agenda to ensure it continues to respond to our needs and aspirations. It is important to use every opportunity to advocate regional priorities on the world stage to leverage global learning, knowledge, and support that is delivered in a manner and in a way that is conducive and appropriate to Pacific context. The 3 following points provide the foundation for the regional communications and advocacy strategy to promote informed and inclusive participation:
• National and regional communications efforts should focus on raising awareness of priorities being pursued and activities undertaken to achieve them using accessible, simple and clear language to ensure the concepts that underpin sustainable development are easy to understand;
• National reports and the quadrennial regional report on sustainable development will form the basis for shaping the messages to communicate the Pacific’s sustainable development story and journey, and to inform the evolving global narrative; and
• Traditional and social media will play an important role in political, technical and community advocacy, and in generating inclusive public discussions on development priorities and progress in countries and across the region.

iii) Regional monitoring and indicators

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

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

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

**iv) Integrated reporting**

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

• Commencing in 2018, the Pacific will produce a four-yearly report on sustainable development. It will consolidate reporting against the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, SAMOA Pathway and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism including the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration, to be submitted for consideration and endorsement by Forum Leaders;

• The quadrennial reporting interval allows for a meaningful assessment of trends over what are often slow moving indicators, and coincides with the global reporting to the UN High-level Political Forum when it convenes under the auspices of the General Assembly;

• The quadrennial regional report will be informed by and complement national reporting, and bring together lessons from reporting on appurtenant commitments and processes, including: the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, The Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. It will replace previous parallel reports on the MDGs and development effectiveness;

• The report will clearly communicate the Pacific’s evolving story on sustainable development by providing a measure of progress on collective regional actions and the partnerships intended to support them. It will provide an easily digestible, yet comprehensive, understanding of what has happened, and what yet remains to be done. In doing so, the report will guide forward regional planning and resource allocation, and improve responses to existing and emerging priorities;

• The inaugural report in 2018 will focus on the comprehensive process of contextualising the global agenda at national and regional levels, and establish baselines and progress, where available, against regional priorities. It will introduce the Pacific’s development story on the global stage, and the breadth of coverage will deepen as data collection and analysis is strengthened at national and regional levels;

• Country reporting on the SDGs is voluntary. Participation in the voluntary national reviews to the UN High-level Political Forum may be aligned to national reporting timelines, and serve as a complementary rather than additional accountability mechanism. Periodic reviews of national plans, and when the global thematic focus aligns to specific national priorities, may be particularly useful junctures in which to share lessons, priorities and progress on the international stage; and

• Regional and international multi-stakeholder platforms hosted by UN and other agencies will generally follow the global thematic focus and reporting format of the High-level Political Forum. To reduce reporting burdens and achieve the objective of integrated implementation and monitoring, reporting from the Pacific could benefit from alignment with the global and Asia-Pacific regional processes.

v) Supporting the means of implementation

Pacific experience illustrate that effective development requires, strong political leadership, effective institutions and capacities and mutually accountable and inclusive partnerships. To be most effective, the allocation and use of resources for development has to happen in a supportive political environment, and needs to be the business across all of government. Central agencies have key roles, but the implementation and monitoring of national plans and SDGs cannot be their sole domain. We know from experience that in many countries much remain to be done to improve collaboration amongst core planning, development coordination, statistics and financial management agencies, and to strengthen sectoral involvement in resource planning, execution, follow-up and review. We also know that there is willingness amongst the private sector, civil society and development partners to participate in the pursuit of sustainable development, and we need to deepen their involvement. None of these things work perfectly in any country, so it is essential that member states keep learning from each other and from global practice.

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

• Member states are encouraged, and will be supported on request by regional and UN agencies, to undertake country-led assessments of capacity constraints to deliver national plans and the 2030 Agenda, with the view to identifying long-term strategies for strengthening institutional capacity to deliver, monitor and report on national priorities;

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

Next steps
The Pacific SDGs Taskforce Draft Implementation Strategy which informed the preparation of the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development includes a draft action plan that will be finalised once the roadmap is endorsed. This version of the roadmap is geared towards ensuring a regional report for presentation to the inaugural High-level Political Forum to be convened under the auspices of the UN General Assembly in July 2019. On reaching that milestone, it is advised that the roadmap be reviewed and the Draft Implementation Strategy and Action plan updated, to set the focus of the region and member states on the next four-year reporting cycle.
### Annex 4: Overview of MDG achievement in the Pacific

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**Key:**
- **Achieved**
- **Mixed**
- **Not achieved**

Source: Pacific MDG Tracking Report, 2015
Annex 5: Regional roadmap for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia Pacific

Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific 73/9. Regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, and resolution 70/299 of 29 July 2016 on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda at the global level, in which the importance of the regional and subregional dimension of follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda was acknowledged,

Recalling also resolution 72/6 of 19 May 2016 of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on committing to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific, in which it encouraged all members and associate members to continue to work on the development of a regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda and requested the Executive Secretary to support the process,

Having considered the report of the Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development and its annexes,1

1. Endorses the report of the Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development and the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific as contained in annex II;1

2. Calls upon member States to cooperate in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as provided for by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/1, and, at the regional level, in light of the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific;

3. Invites development partners, in particular the relevant organizations of the United Nations system, to collaborate with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in promoting sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region through all appropriate mechanisms and within their mandates, including enhanced cooperation in support of the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific;

4. Reiterates its request to the Executive Secretary to support member States in their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda in an integrated manner and in light of the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific;

5. Requests the Executive Secretary, as convener of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism, to strengthen and promote communication, cooperation and collaboration among the relevant organizations of the United Nations system in the Asia-Pacific region and other stakeholders, as appropriate, in support of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals by member States, in particular least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and Pacific island developing countries;

6. Also requests the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its seventy-fifth session on progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

6th plenary meeting
19 May 2017

1 E/ESCAP/73/31.
The Framework for Pacific Regionalism further provides for 'a regional monitoring framework, linking efforts in pursuit of deeper regionalism and the fulfilment of the post-2015 development agenda', and in 2015 Pacific leaders called for the preparation of a set of 'regional indicators to monitor the Pacific’s progress on the SDGs, including towards the high-level objectives of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism and implementation of the SAMOA Pathway'.

In response to this directive, a Pacific SDGs Taskforce was established in July 2016 to develop a roadmap, through an inclusive, consultative and country-driven process, to guide regional responses for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals within the context of national plans and priorities, the SAMOA Pathway and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism.

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2. Comprising representatives of Forum member countries, CROP agencies, UN and multilateral agencies, bilateral partners, non-state actors and regional research/academic institutions.
3. See Annex 2 - Aligning the SDGs, SAMOA Pathway and Framework for Pacific Regionalism.