

# PACIFIC ISLANDS OCEANIC FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROJECT (PIOFMP)

## Summary

The Western and Central Pacific Ocean is home to over half of the



world's tuna stocks as well as 15 Small Island Developing States (SIDS) that are highly dependent on the sustainable management of tuna and other ocean resources for livelihoods. Because tuna are highly migratory, the cooperation, scientific capacity, and resources were lacking to ensure good management and enforce fishing regulations.

This project moved forward the establishment and

implementation of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Convention to overcome

regulatory, institutional, and political barriers. This project

supported improved scientific capacity for fisheries management and technology needed for monitoring and enforcement. Permitting and access systems for foreign vessels are shifting the cost

of management to those profiting from the fish and providing needed government revenue. This

overcome challenges posed by distance.

From 1998-2012, there has been a 500% increase in the value of tuna caught by Pacific SIDS and during the project there was a 50-1,000% increase in fishing contribution to GDP in seven participating countries. In addition to significant revenues for these countries with limited sources of foreign exchange, Pacific Islanders now can be assured that the ocean will continue to provide for generations to come.

## Development Problem

The goal of the Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project (PIOFMP) was to assist

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project supported comprehensive monitoring and compliance systems, using technology to

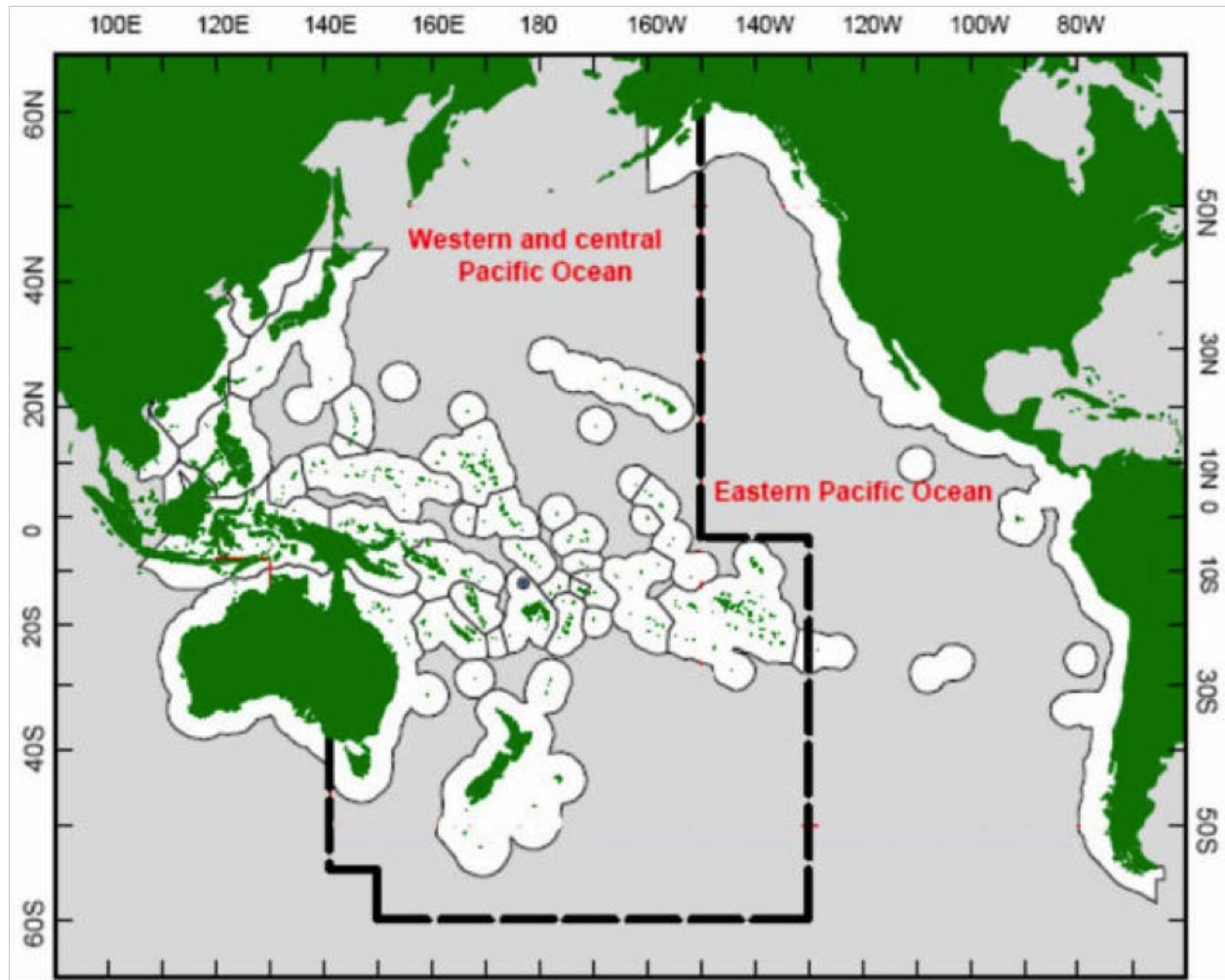
Pacific Small Islands Developing States (PacSIDS) in promoting sustainable development through

improved management of transboundary oceanic fishery resources while conserving marine biodiversity.

The Pacific Islands region includes 15 small island developing states (SIDS), of which four are least developed countries (LDCs), and covers almost 10 billion acres - about 10% of the Earth's surface.

These waters hold the world's largest stocks of tuna and related open ocean species. These fish stocks are dominated by highly-migratory fish species with ranges extending through waters under the jurisdiction of around 20 countries and into large areas of the high seas. The broader Western and Central Pacific (WCP) Ocean provides half of the world's tuna catches. The health and sustainable use of the ocean in this region is critical as Pacific islanders are largely dependent on the status of the coastal and marine ecosystems.

The burden enforcement across vast areas of ocean fell on PacSIDS that often used



*The FAO designation of the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (black dotted line), which is also the WCPF Convention area. The EEZs (Exclusive Economic Zones) are shown with pockets of high seas.*

foreign aid to cover costs, while unscrupulous actors could still take advantage of the patchwork governance or lack thereof on the high seas. At the same time, a lack of scientific capacity and coordination among PacSIDS meant that little was known about the status of these fisheries, such as if they were overfished.

### Program Logic:

The idea of this project was that cooperation and capacity building would result in the sustainable management of tuna stocks ensuring that they would increase development and continue to provide for generations to come

on the PacSIDS. The scientific knowledge and capacity of would allow countries to work together to harvest this valuable resource at levels for long term sustainability. Previous analyses had identified a series of barriers to sustainable management that this project sought to address, including outputs of establishing legally binding limits, permitting systems, and enforcement programs.

The series of activities undertaken by this project were designed to change fishing behaviors to be within newly known sustainable limits and shift the benefits to the





citizens of PacSIDS themselves. The results of the outputs listed above would be reduced illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing, while increasing revenues for PacSIDS countries both from permit fees and employment as well as improved livelihoods through employment and subsistence fishing. The ultimate impact would be the fisheries are sustainably managed delivering significant benefit PacSIDS and supporting this and future generations.

At the same time, the global community benefits from the protection of one of the most productive fisheries and areas of tremendous biodiversity.

### **Analysis, Appraisal and Previous Approaches**

The GEF previously supported the South Pacific International Waters Strategic Action Program (1997) and pilot implementation phase (2000-2005) leading to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries (WCPF) Convention and a Commission for the long-term conservation and sustainable use of highly-migratory fish stocks. There were also several agreements on various aspects of fisheries, such as the Nauru Agreement and Palau Arrangement. The WCPF Commission brought together these many agreements while

bringing adjacent areas of high seas under the rule of law. This project (2005-2011) supported the ratification and implementation of the Convention and establishment of the associated Commission.

PacSIDS, however, have been challenged by their lack of resources to gain an effective voice in the regional forum to maximize their share of the benefits. This project strengthened PacSIDS capacity and coordination, which has helped shift the costs of management and enforcement to those profiting from the fish and

generate revenue for the PacSIDS.

A significant innovation of this project was the establishment of a comprehensive set of monitoring and compliance programs, including the world's largest on-board observer program and the world's only regional satellite-based vessel tracking system to overcome the challenge of enforcement across vast stretches of ocean.

A major change to the fishery was to charge access fees for foreign vessels while limiting the number of fishing days to protect the tuna stocks. In the short term, these changes can cost jobs and reduced income. But, over time these changes can result in higher catches per boat per day and, thereby, increased value. From 2007 to 2015, members of the Nauru Agreement have increased fees from \$400 to \$8,000 per day because of increased revenues and collapsing fisheries in other regions.

### Beneficiaries/Clients

Measures adopted by the WCPFC and PacSIDS have increased catches in national waters by almost 60% from 1,803,300 tons in 1997 to 2,880,951 tons in 2012.

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These higher catches were the result of improved management practices and analysis showing that some species were being harvested below sustainable levels.

These increases in catch, value, and value capture contributed to the economic development of PacSIDS. Between 1998 and 2012, the overall value of all tuna species landed by the Pacific SIDS fleet increased by 500% from \$200 million to \$1,200 million. Improved management of tuna fisheries led to a 50-1,000% increase in fishing contribution to GDP in seven PacSIDS over the project period. On average, tuna catches make up 10% of the regional GDP of PacSIDS. However, the contribution likely much larger, as this estimate excludes postharvest activities such as processing. In addition, tuna fishery-related jobs provide 6-8% of all wage employment in the region. About 10,000 Pacific Islanders are directly employed on tuna vessels, while an estimated 21,000-31,000 people

are employed indirectly in tuna-related employment. The number of people employed by local inshore tuna processing facilities in PacSIDS doubled from 5,555 people in 2002 to 11,116 people in 2008. In the Solomon Islands, the country's tuna processing facility employs about 1,700 people, 65% of whom are women. Processing the tuna locally allows for a greater share of the tuna value chain to be captured locally.

PacSIDS benefited from foreign fishing access fees. Between 1999 and 2007 PacSIDS realized an average of 24% increase in access fees or a 3% increase as an overall contribution to government revenue.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

The project Monitoring and Evaluation system included:

- a formal project design process, a project document developed along the principles of Logical Framework Analysis;
- quarterly progress reporting – on project administration,



activity planning and resource application, plus identifying problems and remediation proposals;

- annual reporting – on project administration, progress, and nature and timing of outputs achieved; this is normally accompanied by formal review procedures including a meeting of the Regional Steering Committee and an exchange of information and views between project managers and various agencies;
- independent mid-term review establishing progress against the project document to assess project design and identify challenges (and remedies where appropriate);
- independent terminal evaluation assessing project outputs, outcomes and impacts against objectives and the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability; and
- review of the independent evaluation by the GEF Independent Evaluation Office.

“SMART” indicators were developed in these areas: Process - policy, institutional and general governance aspects; and stress reduction and environmental status indicators - the adoption of conservation and management

measures, impacts on fish stocks, status of ecosystems and illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. The terminal evaluation indicated that the project largely met the targets for



these indicators and was rated as satisfactory overall.

To date, the economic benefits, such as the per day vessel access fee, are beyond anticipated. UNDP and other institutions have continued to provide support to project activities, but with time we seen the outsized impacts of this project and how national governments are increasingly supporting these activities.

### **Operational, Environmental, and Social Risk Mitigation:**

Because the project was designed to benefit the environment, and it did not invest in large-scale infrastructure, environmental and social risks were low. On the social side, there was the

possibility that some livelihoods would be temporarily reduced or disrupted if scientific results showed a need for a complete closure of a fishery. This was, however, unlikely and was

outweighed by the benefit of bringing sustainable management to these fisheries to sustainability

Operational risks associated with the project were also low, for several reasons:

- There is a great deal of momentum and commitment at all levels within the PacSIDS and strong continuing interest from other states to establish an effective WCPF Commission.
- The national and regional agencies involved in the execution of the project had a good track record of collaboration and delivery.
- The fishery resources involved have a high commercial

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value and if appropriate management arrangements, including binding cost-sharing arrangements nationally and regionally were established, funding should be available to ensure the sustainability of the technical programs and activities.

Nevertheless, the implementation of the project was moderately challenged by the weak absorptive capacity of PacSIDS given the smallness of government with limited staff and budgets. To ensure project success and sustainability, it supported analysis of institutional capacity at various times, including one in 2007.

Countries covered included Nauru, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Samoa, Tonga, Marshall Islands and PNG. Several initiatives in these countries were funded by other donors AusAID, NZAID and ADB. The project also increased the number of staff by 28 in 6 of the smallest SIDS through cost-sharing arrangements, with the full cost being assumed by the governments at the end of the project.

## Lessons Learned and Applied

The project has been extremely successful in facilitating the ratification of the WPCF

Convention and accelerating the establishment of the Commission. This is largely a result of directing executing agency resources to support PacSIDS in their engagement with the Commission. While it is unlikely that there will be many more opportunities to establish other Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMO), the mechanisms built into this project will have relevance to the establishment of other regional country-driven organizations. In addition, lessons can be learned from empowering SIDS in their engagement with larger countries and international organizations.

The delivery mechanism for the regional project that engaged existing intergovernmental organizations and other stakeholders in the Pacific. The execution of the project by FFA and SPC which have the mandates over the key project outcomes and have long-standing relationships with the PacSIDS was instrumental in project success particularly in a geographically dispersed and isolated area.

The project also spawned the West Pacific East Asia Oceanic Fisheries Management Project to cover the three Asian countries that have significant stake in the WCPF Convention area – Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam – to cover the entire transboundary range of West and Central Pacific tuna resources. The project design was similar, but developed for the needs of these larger countries.

## Sustainability

The project's independent evaluators assessed the project as "Very Good" in terms of sustainability because the project sufficiently built the capacity of the regional institutions to carry on necessary activities after project closure. However, there was still work to be done at the national level to build coherence and capacity, particularly in smaller SIDS. This project is part of on-going series of initiatives, and many of these issues are being addressed by a follow-up project and other donors.

The assessment considered the durability of most skills and capacities developed as good. The project has done much to establish and strengthen national systems in planning, information management, developing and modifying legislation,

and participation in scientific programs.

The rapid escalation of access fees is expected to contribute significantly to sustainability of project outcomes. With countries realizing the monetary and other real economic benefits from improved management of oceanic resources within their EEZs, they are expected to return these fees to fisheries sector.

## Partnerships

This project represented a powerful partnership at the global and regional level, starting first with the GEF and the United Nations Development Program, which implemented and supervised it. It also involved fourteen Pacific Island country governments and one territory (Tokelau). Other key partners included the following entities:

### *Forum Fisheries Agency and Secretariat of the Pacific Community:*

These organizations have been providing services to their respective member countries over several decades through well-developed systems to manage such cooperation – through annual coordination meetings, through project coordination meetings, through the broad structures of the respective agencies, and through regular engagement between agency staff and fisheries administrations across the region.

They are key members of the annual Marine Sector Working Group, a meeting of relevant Council of Regional Organizations of the Pacific agencies to coordinate activities in the marine sector. Against this background, it was a relatively straightforward process to allocate project roles and tasks between these two main executing agencies and beneficiary countries.

### *WWF and Pacific Islands Tuna Industry Association (PITIA):*

One of the project goals was to facilitate the engagement of regional nongovernment stakeholders with the work of the WCPFC, which was achieved in funding WWF and PITIA to attend meetings of the WCPFC. WWF and PITIA headed up a program of information dissemination and awareness raising, focused primarily on other stakeholders. The strength of this partnership is underscored by the significant resources that the initial GEF Grant of \$10.95 million attracted to the effort as co-financing. The project mobilized a total of \$136.4 million in co-financing from the PacSIDS and other WCPFC Commission members, the FFA, SPC bilateral aid agencies, and others. This amount significantly exceeded the amount of co-financing expected at project approval.

## Dissemination

The project was included in a number of outreach materials, including a case study in a UNDP-GEF Publication entitled [Catalysing Ocean Finance](#), published in 2012 and a UN-DESA publication [How oceans and seas related measures contribute to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: Local and regional experiences](#), published in 2014.

Lessons learned were also shared in a documentary entitled ["Saving Our Tuna"](#) which was co-produced for Discovery Channel Asia. The movie highlights how GEF support assisted the governments and tuna industry to make significant investments to improve fisheries management in the region, particularly in new technologies for enhancing fisheries monitoring and enforcement. The movie premiered in Asia on World Oceans Day, June 8, 2014, shown on Discovery Channel Asia over an extended period and screened at the Global SIDS Conference in Samoa in September 2014. It was also a runner-up in the short documentary category at the 2014 Blue Ocean Film festival.





## Supplemental Material

### Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project (PIOFMP)

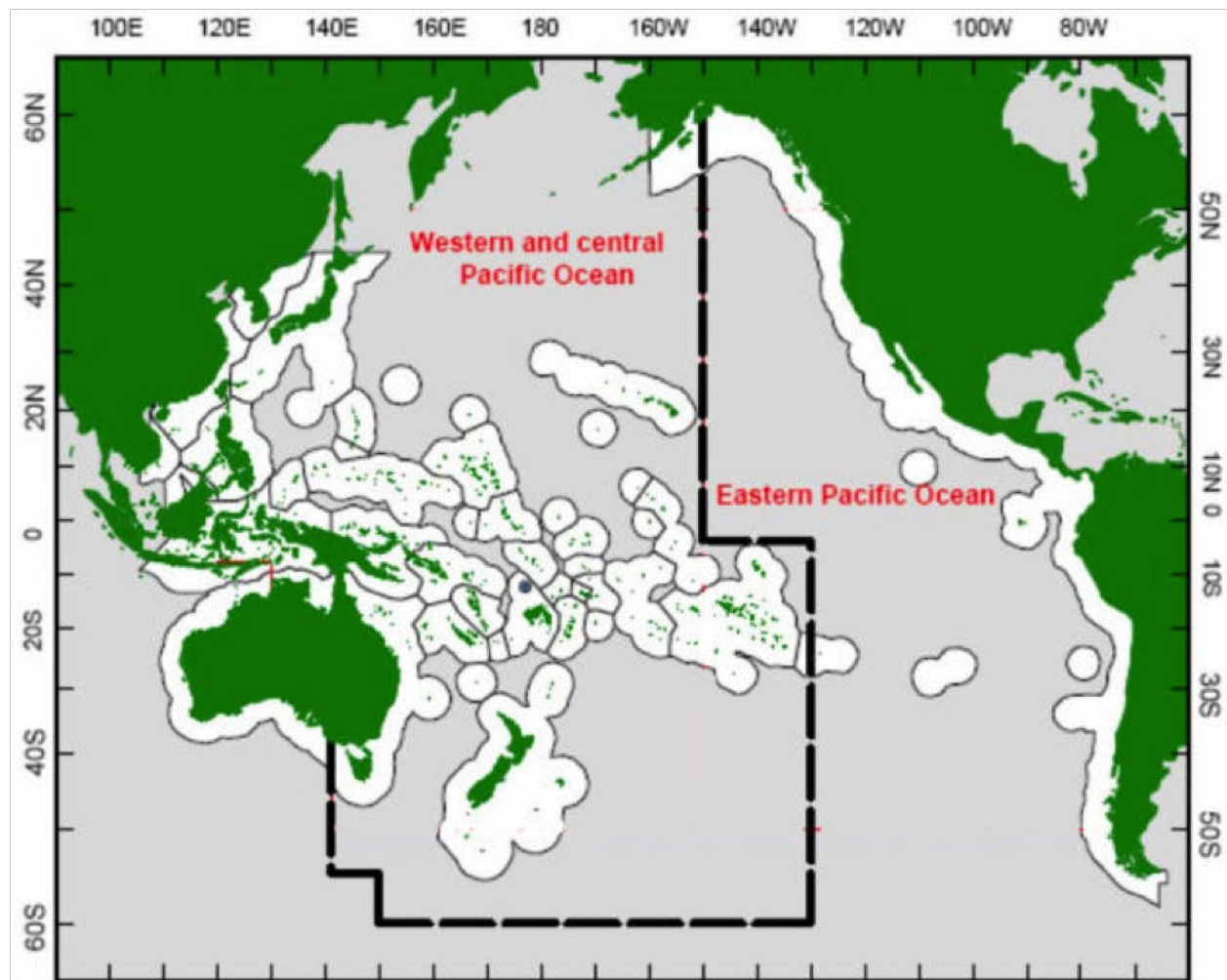
#### Development Problem

A published description of the project is in:

Hudson, A. (ed) 2012. Catalysing Ocean Finance Volume II. United Nations Development Program and Global Environment Facility (Case Study #5)

[http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/environment-energy/water\\_governance/ocean\\_and\\_coastalareagovernance/catalysing-ocean-finance/](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/environment-energy/water_governance/ocean_and_coastalareagovernance/catalysing-ocean-finance/)

The project scope is shown below. The FAO designation of the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (black dotted line), which is also the WCPF Convention area. The EEZs are shown with pockets of high seas.



A movie on Pacific tuna that describes the context, the initiatives and impacts of the project was shown in Discovery Channel Asia and at the Global SIDS Conference in Samoa in 2014. A short 'trailer' (6 minutes) version is in the link below while the full movie (23 minutes) can be provide upon request.

<http://vimeo.com/93876032>

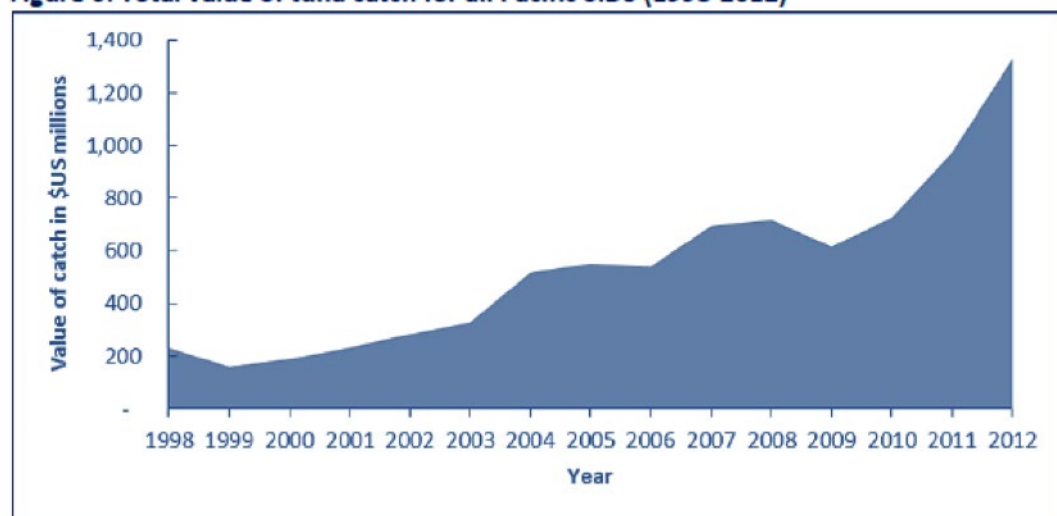


## Beneficiaries/Clients

The economic, social and environmental benefits from the project are further described in UNDESA, UN-DOALOS/OLA, IAEA, IMO, IOC-UNESCO, UNDP, UNEP, UNWTO (2014): How oceans- and seas-related measures contribute to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: local and regional experiences. Online publication. (Chapter 5). <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=400&nr=1339&menu=35>

Several illustrative figures from this publication are provided below.

**Figure 6: Total value of tuna catch for all Pacific SIDS (1998-2012)**



Source: UNDP, 2014.

**Figure 5: Change in value of fishery exports for Pacific SIDS, 1997-2007<sup>3</sup>**

Country	1997	2007	% change
Cook Islands	\$2,919,136	\$4,120,828	+ 41%
Fiji	\$29,193,745	\$63,217,953	+ 116%
Federates States of Micronesia	\$4,878,387	\$12,301,318	+ 152%
Kiribati	\$1,483,871	\$1,893,375	+ 28%
Marshall Islands	\$473,000	\$37,342,000	+ 779%
Nauru	0	0	0
Niue	N/A	N/A	N/A
Palau	\$2,213,419	\$19,000,000	+ 758%
Papua New Guinea	\$48,106,666	\$101,000,000	+ 110%
Samoa	\$10,785,287	\$7,634,000	- 29%
Solomon Islands	\$35,472,033	\$19,784,631	- 44%
Tonga	\$2,573,670	\$4,861,780	+ 89%
Tokelau	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tuvalu	\$4,233	\$4,216	- 0.4%
Vanuatu	\$394,954	\$1,230,189	+ 211%
Total	\$138,498,401	\$272,390,290	+97%

Source: Redrawn from Gillett (2009).

## Monitoring and Evaluation

Midterm Review Report: <http://erc.undp.org/evaluationadmin/manageevaluation/viewevaluationdetail.html?evalid=2928>

Terminal Evaluation Report: <http://erc.undp.org/evaluationadmin/manageevaluation/viewevaluationdetail.html?evalid=5272>

## Dissemination

[http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/environment-energy/water\\_governance/ocean\\_and\\_coastalareagovernance/catalysing-ocean-finance/](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/environment-energy/water_governance/ocean_and_coastalareagovernance/catalysing-ocean-finance/)

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=400&nr=1339&menu=35>

[http://www.asia-pacific.undp.org/content/rbap/en/home/ourwork/environmentandenergy/in\\_depth/ecosystems/documentary-saving-our-tuna/](http://www.asia-pacific.undp.org/content/rbap/en/home/ourwork/environmentandenergy/in_depth/ecosystems/documentary-saving-our-tuna/)



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