



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



DEVELOPMENT OF PACIFIC REGIONAL PLAN TO MAINSTREAM BIODIVERSITY ACROSS AGRICULTURAL SECTORS, INCLUDING FISHERY, CROPS, LIVESTOCK AND FORESTRY

October 2024

SDGs:



Countries:

Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu

Project Code:

TCP/SAP/3902

FAO Contribution:

USD 230 000

Duration:

15 November 2022-31 May 2024

Contact Info:

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Implementing Partners

Ministry of Environment (MoE), ministries responsible for biodiversity, ministries responsible for agriculture, fisheries, livestock and forestry.

Beneficiaries

Stakeholders of productive sectors working at all levels (regional, national and local) that are impacting on the biodiversity of participating countries, including relevant ministerial policymakers and ministerial technical officers engaged in national strategies on biodiversity and non-state actors (NSA) from private sectors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), farmers, Indigenous People, women, youth, fishers and forest-dwellers, among others.

Country Programming Framework (CPF) Outputs

CPF 2012-2022

Output 2: Sustainable and climate-smart practices towards resilient agriculture, fisheries and forestry production systems.



BACKGROUND

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted the landmark Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) in December 2022. The GBF emphasizes the importance of biodiversity mainstreaming, defined as "a process of embedding biodiversity considerations (potentials, needs and risks) into the policies, strategies, plans and activities of key public and private actors that impact or rely on biodiversity, ensuring its conservation and sustainable use both locally and globally."¹

During the 36th session of the FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific in 2022, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Member States recommended that the organization: (i) develop a regional plan to promote cohesive action on mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors, including fisheries, crops, livestock and forestry in the Pacific region; (ii) ensure that the regional plan is demand-driven, involves a multi-stakeholder consultation process, and aligns with relevant global and regional frameworks and initiatives; and (iii) include key areas and actions for FAO technical support to the Pacific region to meet regional and national goals in line with the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031 and the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity, in alignment with the post-2020 GBF and FAO's regional priority of building sustainable and resilient agri food systems in the Pacific Small Island Developing States.

In response to this advice, this project was developed to support the preparation of a regional plan for promoting cohesive action on mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors, including fisheries, crops, livestock and forestry in the Pacific region.

IMPACT

The project aimed to mitigate the negative impacts that productive sectors have on biodiversity and to establish sustainable, resilient agrifood systems in Pacific countries. To achieve this, the project successfully developed the "Pacific Action Plan on Mainstreaming Biodiversity Across Agricultural Sectors (2024-2030)" (Pacific Action Plan), following a highly consultative, multi-stakeholder process that identified priority needs and challenges across the Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). This plan facilitates coordinated and cohesive action among stakeholders and ministries responsible for biodiversity across various sectors. The Pacific Action Plan was presented, distributed, and officially endorsed by FAO members during the 37th session of the Asia-Pacific Regional Conference (APRC) in February 2024.

Following its endorsement, representatives from the Ministries of Agriculture (MoAs) of Pacific Islands were invited to participate in CBD sub-regional meetings, where they will collaborate with CBD national focal points to enhance the implementation of the GBF in 2024.

¹ GEF. 2016. Biodiversity mainstreaming in practice: A review of GEF experience.
<https://www.thegef.org/publications/biodiversity-mainstreaming-practice-review-gef-experience>

ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS

The Pacific Action Plan was developed using a bottom-up approach, ensuring it was tailored to the unique circumstances of the PICTs. Over 200 national stakeholders from the public and private sectors participated in national consultations, which aimed to revise and update priorities, needs and gaps related to the sustainable use and management of biodiversity for food and agriculture. Prior to the consultations, a comprehensive stocktaking of relevant policies and initiatives, along with an analysis of the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), was conducted for each country to identify current priorities. These consultations took place in the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, while the remaining FAO PICTs contributed in writing. A final workshop to validate the plan was held in Nadi, Fiji, from 15 to 17 November 2023. The project finalized and disseminated the Pacific Action Plan during the FAO 37th APRC in February 2024.

The Pacific Community (SPC), the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), and the Secretariat of the CBD are key FAO partners in the region. This collaboration dates back to 2016, when these organizations jointly published the Technical Guidance on Mainstreaming Ecosystem Services and Biodiversity into Agricultural Production and Management in the Pacific Islands, coordinated by FAO as part of the EU funded project “Capacity-Building Related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) Countries” (ACP MEAs). This long-standing partnership has significantly added value to the project’s follow-up activities.

During the development of the plan, additional partnerships were established with various institutions, including the Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation, the Pacific Island Farmer Organisation Network (PIFON), the Pacific Agricultural Plant Genetic Resources Network, the Pacific Blue Foundation, Conservation International, the Global Hub on Indigenous Peoples’ Food Systems, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research, and Birdlife International. Moving forward, further engagement with sector specific agencies, NGOs, and the private sector will be needed to support the implementation of the Pacific Action Plan.

Over 200 national stakeholders were engaged in consultations that provided recommendations for revising and updating national priorities, needs and gaps regarding the sustainable use and management of biodiversity for food and agriculture. The participation of NSAs, including farmers, Indigenous Peoples, women, youth and NGOs, was highly valued by government stakeholders.

The Pacific Action Plan was formulated through an inclusive, country-owned process that engaged all FAO Members in the PICTs during national stakeholder consultation processes.

The project successfully achieved its two outputs. Output 1, the preparation of a biodiversity mainstreaming regional plan, was achieved through a number of activities. Under Activity 1.1, a project inception workshop was organized in April 2023 (hybrid) to officially launch the project. The project staff presented and clarified the tasks and responsibilities between the government and FAO and agreed on the scope, methodology and timeline of the project activities. Under Activity 1.2, national stakeholder consultations were conducted in each country to discuss the preparation of the Pacific Action Plan. These national consultations took place in ten PICTs, with in person meetings in four countries (Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu); hybrid national stakeholder consultations in four countries (Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Tonga and Tuvalu) and through a questionnaire in two countries (Marshall Islands and Palau). In addition, a briefing was organized for Australia and New Zealand on 16 August 2023. National outcome reports were prepared for each country. Under Activity 1.3, the Pacific Action Plan was drafted based on the outcomes of the national stakeholder consultations, which were analysed and considered in formulating the plan’s priority actions.

Output 2, the finalization, validation and dissemination of the biodiversity mainstreaming regional plan, involved several key activities. Under Activity 2.1, the Pacific Action Plan was finalized based on feedback from countries, using minutes, outcome reports, summaries and questionnaire responses received from country stakeholders. This feedback was shared and validated with the participating countries. Under Activity 2.1, a regional validation workshop was organized in Nadi, Fiji, from 15 to 17 November 2023, where participants refined the contents of the Pacific Action Plan and discussed its implementation plan and potential funding support for the proposed activities.

Under Activity 2.3, the Pacific Action Plan was then edited, published and printed for dissemination during the FAO 37th APRC held in February 2024 in Sri Lanka, where it was officially endorsed by FAO Member States.

IMPLEMENTATION OF WORK PLAN AND BUDGET

The project was implemented within the original timeframe and budget. The Pacific Action Plan was submitted to the FAO 37th APRC for final endorsement in February 2024. However, the preparatory work for the national stakeholder consultations took longer than expected, primarily due to the complex ownership of the biodiversity agenda. Biodiversity management typically falls under the responsibility of environmental sectors, where national biodiversity focal points are appointed. This led to complex negotiations between the environmental and agricultural ministries to determine which ministry (or office) should serve as FAO's counterpart focal point. Although this process took time, the project successfully engaged both ministries and ensured the appropriate stakeholders were involved in the national stakeholder consultations and the regional validation workshop.

FOLLOW-UP FOR GOVERNMENT ATTENTION

As mentioned earlier, the Pacific Action Plan was endorsed by FAO member countries during the 37th APRC in February 2024. It is now expected that FAO members in Pacific countries will begin implementing the identified priority actions. FAO remains open to requests from its members for guidance and technical assistance to support the effective implementation of these key actions. The results and progress of the Pacific Action Plan's implementation will be reviewed and reported periodically to the FAO APRC. Therefore, establishing a robust monitoring mechanism for mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors should be considered an integral part of each country's implementation efforts. FAO and government counterparts are also expected to collaborate in identifying resource partners to support the implementation of the Pacific Action Plan.

SUSTAINABILITY

1. Capacity development

The project fostered a deeper understanding of the role of biodiversity in achieving sustainable agrifood systems among regional and national stakeholders. As a result, representatives from the MoAs were invited to participate in CBD regional meetings, where they will work closely with CBD national focal points to enhance the implementation of the GBF in 2024.

2. Gender equality

The national stakeholder consultations emphasized the importance of recognizing the roles and contributions of women in mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors. Gender equality and the role of women are also specifically addressed in the Pacific Action Plan. Notably, the project attracted significant interest from women in leadership positions during the consultation process. Studies have shown that women are more likely to engage in the sustainable use of biodiversity resources. In implementing the Pacific Action Plan, it is recommended to ensure the collection of disaggregated data, where possible.

3. Environmental sustainability

The project emphasizes environmental sustainability by promoting the sustainable use of biodiversity in food and agriculture. The Pacific Action Plan advocates for an ecosystem-based approach to agriculture.

4. Human Rights-based Approach (HRBA) – in particular Right to Food and Decent Work

The project adopted a comprehensive HRBA, particularly in safeguarding the rights of Indigenous peoples, including ensuring free, prior and informed consent in several key areas of the Pacific Action Plan, such as traditional systems and traditional knowledge.

5. Technological sustainability

The Pacific Action Plan encourages the adoption of biodiversity-friendly practices and technologies that support sustainable agricultural systems. These technologies aim to minimize environmental impact while enhancing the resilience and productivity of agrifood systems.

6. Economic sustainability

The establishment of a regional framework, the Pacific Action Plan, will foster cohesive and coordinated actions across the region. This framework is expected to enhance economic sustainability by aligning the efforts of donors and project implementers, ensuring more efficient use of resources and long-term financial support.



DOCUMENTS AND OUTREACH PRODUCTS

- ❑ **FAO.** 2024. *Pacific action plan on mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors (2024-2030)*.
<https://www.fao.org/3/no389en/no389en.pdf>
- ❑ **FAO.** 2024. *The Pacific Action Plan on mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors (2024-2030)*.
- ❑ **FAO.** 2024. *Guidance Documents with Matrix of Priority Areas and Actions prepared for the 14 countries*.
- ❑ **FAO.** 2024. *National Stocktaking Reports prepared for 14 countries*.
- ❑ **FAO.** 2024. *Outcome Reports of the National Stakeholder Consultations in 10 countries*.



ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS - LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Expected Impact	The regional plan on biodiversity mainstreaming will have a cohesive impact in reducing the negative impacts that productive sectors exert on biodiversity		
Outcome	Endorsed report on Regional plan to promote cohesive action on biodiversity mainstreaming available		
	Indicator	Regional plan to promote cohesive action on biodiversity mainstreaming endorsed by FAO Pacific Member countries.	
	Baseline	0	
	End Target	One regional plan endorsed by the FAO members of the APRC.	
	Comments and follow-up action to be taken	The Pacific Action Plan on mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors is expected to promote cohesive action among FAO Pacific Member States. The Action Plan incorporates all recommendations provided by the consulted Pacific countries, based on the results of stocktaking exercises that assessed the current status of biodiversity mainstreaming at the country level, including its integration into the activities of various sectoral partners. The timely provision of FAO technical support at the national level ensured that the proposed Pacific Action Plan was prepared for submission and endorsement by member states during the 37 th APRC, held in February 2024. The project’s timing was also appreciated by the consulted member countries, given the pressing need to update their NBSAPs by September 2024. As a result of the national consultations, the updated NBSAPs can now incorporate perspectives from the agricultural sectors. The continued involvement of the appropriate focal points from the agricultural sector in the CBD processes, alongside the national biodiversity focal points from the environmental sector, will be an important follow-up activity. A proposed initiative is currently underway with support from the FAO ACP MEAs project. This initiative can also serve as an immediate follow-up, leading to the launch and implementation of the newly endorsed Pacific Action Plan, ensuring it aligns with the NBSAPs.	
Output 1	Biodiversity mainstreaming regional plan prepared		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
	Hybrid stakeholder consultation completed.	Participants from all 14 project countries attend the stakeholder consultation.	Yes
Baseline	0		
Comments	Overall, the FAO government counterparts have been highly collaborative throughout the project activities, making their relevant technical staff available to attend and actively participate in the national stakeholder consultations.		
Activity 1.1	Organize project inception workshop		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	In April 2023, a hybrid project inception workshop was organized to launch and formally announce the project to the invited FAO SAP member countries and regional partners. Key partners, including the CBD Secretariat, SPC and SPREP, participated in the event. Project staff and consultants presented and clarified the tasks and responsibilities of both the government and FAO, and they agreed on the scope, methodology and timeline for the project activities. The project activities were subsequently rolled out.	

Activity 1.2	Conduct a stakeholder consultation per country to discuss preparation of biodiversity mainstreaming regional plan	
	Achieved	Yes
	Comments	There were several preparatory activities conducted prior to the stakeholder consultations aimed at discussing the preparation of the Regional Action Plan. A Project Task Force (PTF) was established during the initial stage of the project, composed of FAO technical officers from SAP, the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) and headquarters, as well as the Assistant FAO Representatives (AFAORs). They were requested to provide technical guidance and ensure the smooth implementation of project activities. The PTF members included the SAP Food and nutrition officer, SAP Natural resources and climate change officer, SAP Agriculture officer, SAP Fisheries officer, SAP One health officer, RAP Senior forestry officer, RAP Land officer, headquarters biodiversity team, headquarters ACP MEAs coordinator and AFAORs for Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Following the project launch, a PTF meeting was organized on 12 April 2023 to discuss the plans and preparations for the project activities. The SAP task force members supported the project team during the national stakeholder consultations held in Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The collaboration and support from the AFAORs in the five countries were crucial for organizing the national stakeholder consultations. Subsequently, PTF members were consulted during the organization of the national stakeholder consultations to identify key contacts within the ministries and review the NBSAPs as requested by Tuvalu. A guidance document for each of the 14 FAO member countries (including Tokelau as an Associate Member) was developed, featuring a matrix that listed relevant country priority areas and actions on mainstreaming biodiversity in agricultural sectors. This matrix served as the primary background document to initiate discussions during the national stakeholder consultations, helping to identify and update the country's priority areas and actions related to mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors. In preparing the guidance document, three major national reports were reviewed: (i) the country-specific report on the State of Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture, which is a comprehensive assessment developed by FAO between 2014 and 2017 (covering Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tonga); (ii) the most recently published NBSAPs; and (iii) the published Sixth National Reports submitted to the CBD regarding post-2020 Aichi Targets achievements. The team organized and conducted several in-depth bilateral preparatory meetings with the relevant counterpart ministries, both from the MoAs and MoEs. This was an important initial step to introduce the project objectives and activities, identify the appropriate focal points for each country and foster stronger buy-in and ownership of the process. A crucial part of the preparatory process in organizing each national stakeholder consultation was identifying stakeholders. This information was gathered based on inputs from various sources, including the FAO SAP database, FAO country staff, RAP, PIFON, Pacific Island Association for NGOs (PIANGO), NGOs, civil society and ministries. The preparation of the agenda and invitations was discussed and finalized with the lead ministry (or ministries) co-hosting the stakeholder consultations. At times, it was challenging to clarify who should take the lead since the national biodiversity focal point typically resides within the MoE. In most cases, FAO SAP sent out the invitations directly to participants, providing descriptions of the collaboration and involvement of different ministries. While the initial plan was to conduct hybrid stakeholder consultations for all countries, the project sought additional support from another FAO headquarters project (ACP MEAs), which provided travel funding for project consultants. This support enabled the organization of in-person consultation workshops in four countries: Solomon Islands (30 May 2023), Fiji (5 June 2023), Samoa (7 June 2023) and Vanuatu (4 August 2023). These face-to-face workshops were dynamic and participatory, involving diverse stakeholders. Additional support from FAO national consultants in Cook Island, the Federated States of Micronesia and Tuvalu, along with an assistant representative in Tonga, allowed the project to conduct a combination of hybrid and face-to-face meetings in four countries: the Federated States of Micronesia (1 August 2023), Tuvalu (10 August 2023), Tonga (13 September 2023) and Cook Islands (19 October 2023). The hybrid consultations involved country participants attending face-to-face in a meeting room while SAP Biodiversity consultants joined via Zoom. National stakeholder consultations were also organized through questionnaire distribution in two countries, Marshall Islands and Palau. Additionally, a briefing consultation was organized for Australia and New Zealand on 16 August 2023.

Activity 1.2	Conduct a stakeholder consultation per country to discuss preparation of biodiversity mainstreaming regional plan	
	Achieved	Yes
	Comments	Despite the absence of hybrid national consultations in Kiribati, Nauru, Niue and Palau, all these countries (except Palau) actively attended and participated in the Regional Validation Workshop held in Nadi, Fiji, from 15–17 November 2023. Although Palau intended to attend the workshop, logistical flight issues prevented participation. Nevertheless, the country engaged with the project team during several bilateral meetings and discussions. The project team was unable to conduct consultations in Tokelau, although efforts were made to reach the representative. One of the key results generated by the project is the increased awareness among over 200 diverse stakeholders who participated in the national stakeholder consultations. These participants included senior ministry officials from agricultural sectors (covering crops, livestock, forestry and fisheries), environmental sectors and other relevant ministries, including health and trade (Fiji) and climate change (Vanuatu). NSA, such as representatives from research and academic institutions, producers and farmers, Indigenous Peoples, the private sector, women and youth, were also involved. All consultation workshop reports and minutes were prepared, disseminated and validated. A National Stocktaking Report for each of the 14 FAO member countries (with Tokelau) was prepared by the Project national stocktaking expert. This report is an internal FAO SAP document that serves as a background and internal knowledge working document to assess and analyse ongoing initiatives in each country related to the conservation, management and sustainable use of biodiversity across agricultural sectors. The report mapped current initiatives against what has been identified as priority areas and actions resulting from the national stakeholder consultations, identifying possible gaps and challenges that warrant potential technical support and intervention by FAO in collaboration with national and regional partners.
Activity 1.3	Prepare draft biodiversity mainstreaming regional plan	
	Achieved	Yes
	Comments	The results, inputs, findings and recommendations gathered during the national stakeholder consultation processes provided the foundation for the preparation of the draft Pacific Action Plan, which was developed by the project's international technical consultant.

Output 2	Biodiversity mainstreaming regional plan finalized, validated and disseminated		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
	Biodiversity mainstreaming regional plan disseminated.	Biodiversity mainstreaming regional plan disseminated by project end.	Yes
Baseline	0		
Comments	The project successfully drafted, validated and disseminated the Pacific Action Plan during the validation workshop, which was attended by twenty representatives from eleven Pacific Island countries. Each country nominated two representatives to represent the agriculture and environment sectors. Additionally, three regional and international NGOs or Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and three partner organizations, including the CBD Secretariat, SPC and SPREP, participated in the workshop. A validation workshop report was prepared, and the finalized Pacific Action Plan was developed based on the outcomes of the discussions from the workshop.		
Activity 2.1	Finalize Biodiversity mainstreaming regional plan		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The finalized Pacific Action Plan was developed based on the outcomes of the discussions from the validation workshop. An information document, reflecting the proposed finalized Pacific Action Plan validated during the regional workshop, was presented and submitted to the 37th APRC for endorsement. The final Pacific Action Plan was printed and disseminated for distribution and is also available on the FAO website at this link: (https://www.fao.org/3/no389en/no389en.pdf).	
Activity 2.2	Organize validation workshop to validate and share final biodiversity mainstreaming regional plan		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	PTF members and project partners (SPC, SPREP, CBD and NGO platforms) were consulted to review the prepared draft Pacific Action Plan prior to the regional validation workshop. The draft Pacific Action Plan was also shared and disseminated to the countries for their review, comments and feedback before the validation workshop. During the validation workshop held in Nadi, Fiji, from 15 to 17 November 2023, the draft Pacific Action Plan was reviewed, discussed, deliberated and validated by the participants. The finalized Pacific Action Plan consolidates and updates the key priority areas and actions for the Pacific Region. It provides a systematic approach for countries to examine the interconnections between various issues across sectors, which is particularly useful for revising NBSAPs. This approach entails collaboration between agricultural and environmental sectors. Additionally, the Pacific Action Plan serves as a technical document containing specific actions and activities that can be utilized for future planning and resource mobilization by countries, partners and donors. The country-led process that brought the results from the national stakeholder consultations to the regional validation workshop fostered a sense of ownership among the participants, who actively engaged during the workshop and will be responsible for implementing the Pacific Action Plan. The workshop included 20 ministerial representatives from 11 Pacific Island countries, with two representatives from each country nominated to represent the agriculture and environment sectors. Additionally, three regional and international NGOs/CSOs and three partner organizations, including the CBD Secretariat, SPC and SPREP, participated, along with support from four FAO SAP biodiversity team members and the FAO Fiji Project coordinator.	
Activity 2.3	Share final and validated biodiversity mainstreaming regional plan		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The validated and finalized Pacific Action Plan was edited, published and printed for dissemination during the FAO 37th APRC held in February 2024 in Sri Lanka, where it was subsequently endorsed by the FAO Member States.	

Partnerships and Outreach

For more information, please contact: Reporting@fao.org

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