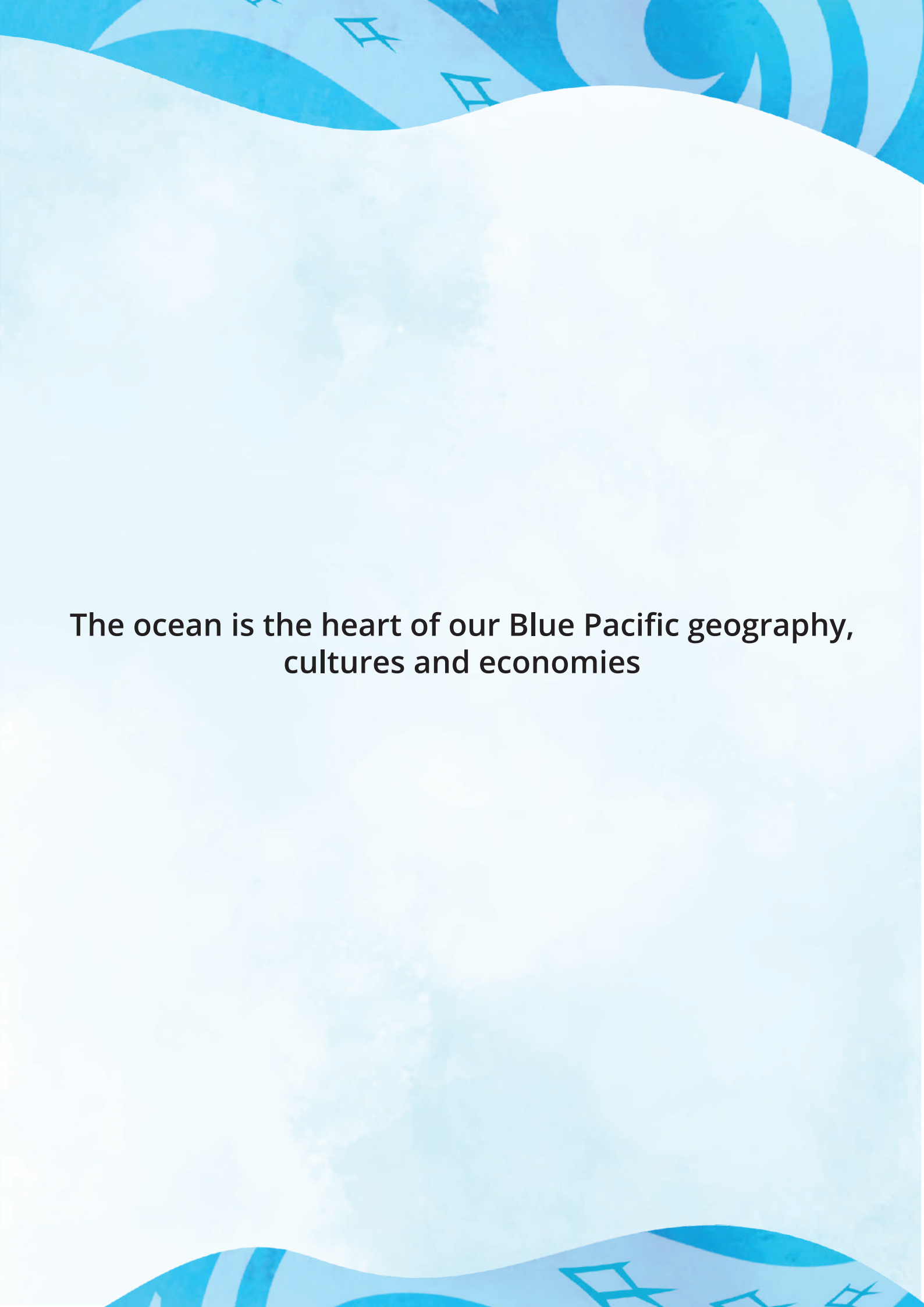




Pacific Islands Forum

Ocean Messages Guide





**The ocean is the heart of our Blue Pacific geography,
cultures and economies**

2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent:

A Global support, particularly from international partners, for the upcoming 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, as the region's long-term plan to take forward our ambition and our determination for a sustainable and inclusive future for all Pacific people.

Preserving Maritime Zones in the face of climate change-related sea-level rise:

B Support by all UN Member states for Forum Leaders' Declaration on Preserving Maritime Boundaries in the face of Climate Change-Related Sea-Level Rise.

Climate change:

C Urgent action to reduce global emissions in line with the 1.5 degrees temperature goal of the Paris Agreement and to develop a work programme on oceans within the UNFCCC process.

Biodiversity:

D Finalisation, adoption, and entry into force of a robust and ambitious international, legally binding instrument for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdictions (BBNJ).

Nuclear Issues:

E Action to address the longstanding issues of nuclear testing legacy in the Pacific and to safeguard the Pacific Ocean, environment, and peoples from nuclear contamination and harm, noting Japan's plans to release nuclear wastewater into the Pacific Ocean.

Marine pollution:

F Pacific Rim and all countries to expeditiously implement measures to prevent and effectively manage marine pollution and litter, in accordance with international law.

Blue economy:

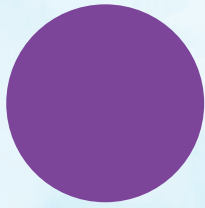
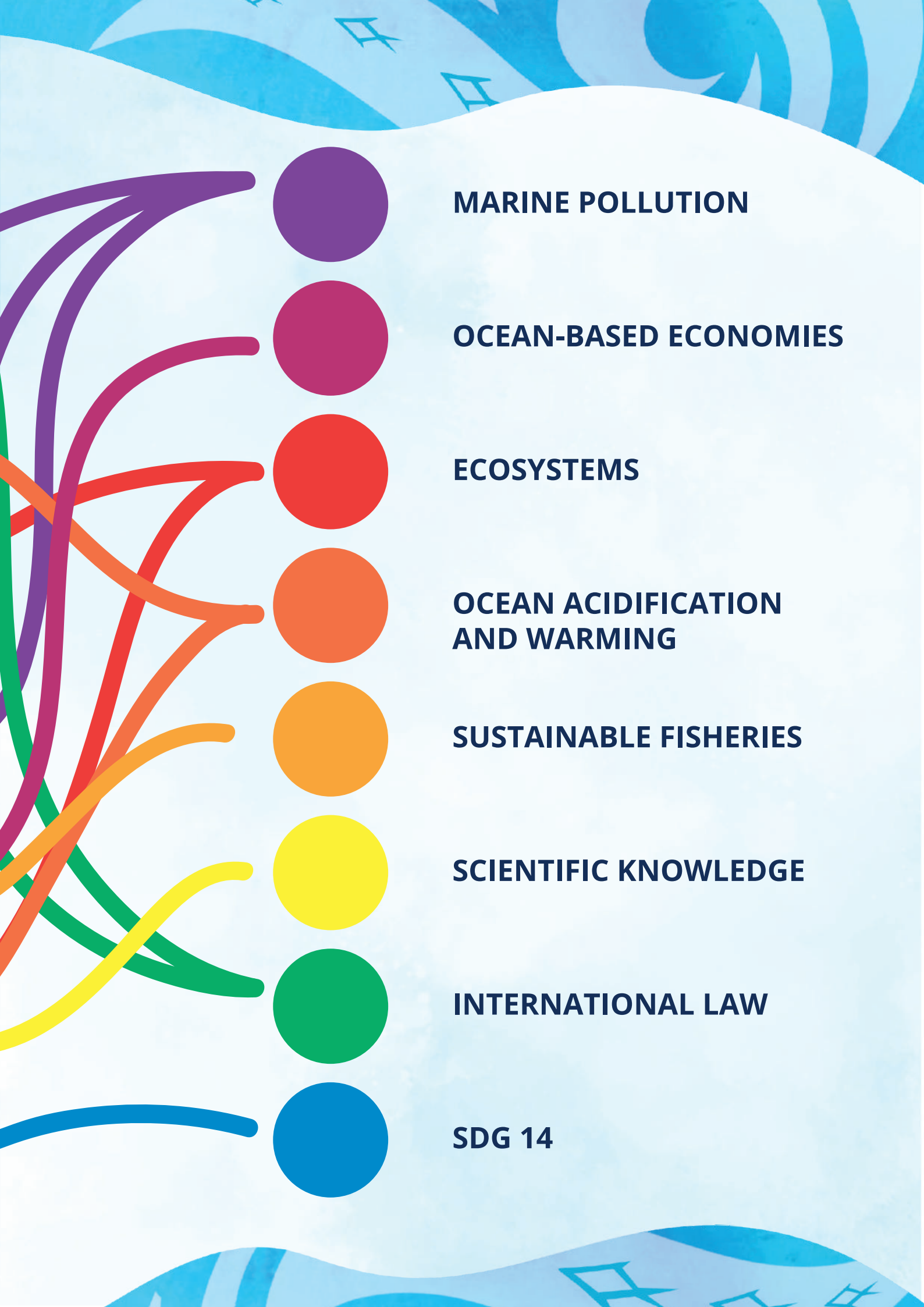
G Finance and support for a Blue Pacific sustainable blue economy and to maximise the sustainable economic returns of the Pacific region's fisheries including an end to illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing and harmful fisheries subsidies.

UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development

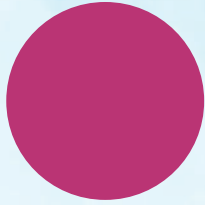
H To support increased investment in science, data, and information in our region, to better understand the impacts of climate change on the ocean, blue carbon protection and restoration initiatives for climate mitigation and adaptation, as well as monitoring and prediction to strengthen resilience and decision making on the sustainable development, management and conservation of our Blue Continent.

SDG 14:

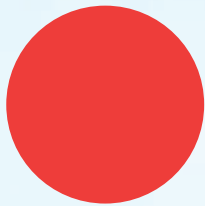
I Achievement of SDG 14 and its targets by 2030, recognising Pacific leadership to establish an oceans-focused goal.



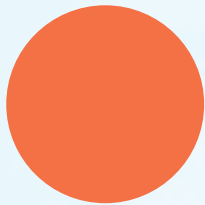
MARINE POLLUTION



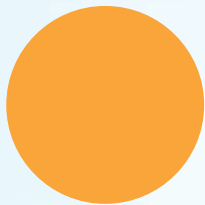
OCEAN-BASED ECONOMIES



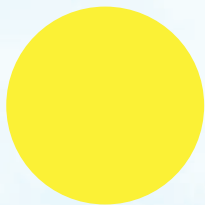
ECOSYSTEMS



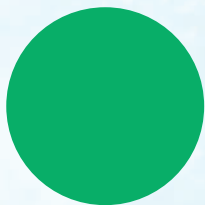
**OCEAN ACIDIFICATION
AND WARMING**



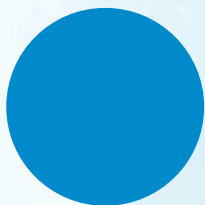
SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES



SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE



INTERNATIONAL LAW



SDG 14

Interactive Dialogue 1 – Addressing Marine Pollution

1. Communication Messages

We must negotiate a new legally binding agreement to end plastic pollution. The Pacific is not a dumping ground for the world's plastic waste. We contribute as little as 1.3% of the world's plastics but the majority of global plastic waste ends up in our Ocean. We MUST change our global plastics economy; we have less than 30 years before we have more plastic than fish in our ocean.

Through the 3Rs and national-level bans on single use plastics we are tracking towards a safer circular economy as an approach to addressing waste and pollution issues in the Pacific. This helps to ensure practices and products that prioritise safe, non-toxic and hazard-free substances at all stages of the value chain.

We encourage the adoption, implementation of processes and policies that will enable a safer circular economy in the Pacific region, which prioritises waste and pollution prevention and may include, but it is not limited to, import and manufacturing restrictions on problematic products (such as single-use and toxic plastics and products that cannot be safely recycled or reused in the region), extended producer responsibility including backloading and reverse logistics, and container deposit fees/advanced recovery fees, which promote and support safe reuse, right to repair, repurpose, and recycling infrastructure and practices.

We strongly urge the development of National Plastic Pollution Prevention Plans (N4Ps) with measurable and timebound targets. The end goal is a phase out of all plastics and plastic products that cannot be safely reused or recycled in the region. This will help us safely manage plastic pollution in the region.



1. Policy Decisions

In 1990 the Noumea Convention came into force. This is the Pacific regional component of the Regional Seas Programme that is a comprehensive umbrella agreement for the protection, management and development of the marine and coastal environment of our Pacific Region.

Forum Leaders recognize that marine pollution is putting entire ecosystems and species at risk, in addition to the people who depend on them for livelihood and economic development. Forum members contribute less than 1.3 percent of the mismanaged plastics in the world's oceans but are one of its main recipients.

As the Blue Pacific, we have developed and implemented a regional action plan on marine litter as part of the Cleaner Pacific 2025 Strategy. However, we recognize the interconnectivity of the world's oceans means that marine pollution requires the involvement of all countries and people, to be effectively addressed.

Our Forum Leaders will shortly consider our new 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, which will put the ocean at the heart of our common future. This takes forward our ambition and our determination for a sustainable and inclusive future for all our people.

Forum Leaders call on Pacific Rim countries to expeditiously implement relevant measures to prevent and effectively manage marine pollution and litter, including through land-based sources, in accordance with international law.

Forum Leaders call on governments to ensure that appropriate global mechanisms are in place to enable the transformation of the global plastics economy. Forum Leaders supported the resolution of the second session of the fifth United Nations Environment Assembly to establish an intergovernmental committee for negotiations to commence towards a global plastic binding agreement by 2024.

Forum Leaders have voiced concerns over the potential significant threat of nuclear contamination to the Blue Pacific with regards to Japan's announcement of its plans to discharge over a million tons of Advanced Liquid Processing System (ALPS) Treated Water from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station into the Pacific Ocean. Forum Leaders highlight the priority of ensuring international consultation, international law, and independent and verifiable scientific assessments with regards to Japan's announcement.

Forum Leaders express concern for the significance of the potential threat of nuclear contamination, World War II wrecks and unexploded ordnances to the health and security of the Blue Pacific people and prospects, and acknowledge the importance of addressing the longstanding issues of nuclear testing legacy in the Pacific.

Interactive Dialogue 2 – Promoting and strengthening sustainable ocean-based economies, in particular for Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries

2. Communications messages

The Pacific Ocean is our endowment fund. It must be protected for our future generations. Given our special circumstances as Small Islands Developing States, we **MUST** create a sustainable ocean economy with you, our development partners to address challenges from COVID-19. It's critically important to implement ocean governance objectives in the region. To do that, we must develop innovative financing mechanisms and mobilise financial resources.

2. Policy Decisions

As custodians of the Blue Pacific, we have demonstrated our leadership and collective resolve to protect the Pacific Ocean. It is our endowment fund, inherited from our ancestors and which we share with future generations. By deepening collectively responsibility and accountability for the stewardship of the ocean, we can protect our people, place and prospects and secure the future of our Blue Pacific Continent.

Forum Leaders have a longstanding commitment to sustainable ocean management, use and conservation including through the 2002 Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy; 2010 Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape; Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries, and the Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Islands Region.

We call on greater collaboration with development partners to improve economic recovery efforts and the formation of a sustainable ocean economy in response to COVID-19 pandemic challenges. We call for the development of innovative financing mechanisms, to mobilize financial resources to improve the amount and efficacy of finance to effectively implement ocean governance objectives in the region.

Forum Leaders call for increased investment in coastal and marine ecosystem restoration and management capacities, sustainable aquaculture development and research activities. Investment is needed for the future of sustainable coastal and marine tourism, economic resilience of fisheries and community-level economic uplift and food security.

Recognizing that the Blue Pacific's maritime transport industry plays a critical role, Forum Leaders call for the sustainable and resilient development of the maritime industry, including investment in new technology and operations, to ensure safe, accessible, efficient and affordable maritime transport which contributes to the International Maritime Organizations decarbonization strategy and a quieter maritime sector.

Forum Leaders are committed to promote partnerships that provide incentives for investment in sustainable ocean-based renewable energy – for new economic opportunities and energy security.

Interactive Dialogue 3 – Managing, protecting, conserving and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems

3. Communication messages

The UN declared this the decade on ecosystem restoration, as we are in the grips of a triple planetary crises – climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss. Island ecosystems in particular are vulnerable to these impacts. The Pacific Islands continue to work towards the Aichi targets, however Small Island Developing States cannot do this alone. Forum Leaders remain committed to the ongoing development of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and similar measures, that will include new targets to continue to safeguard our biodiversity.



3. Policy Decisions

Forum Leaders are concerned by the biodiversity crisis and emphasize the importance of strong ocean governance in place both within, and beyond, national jurisdictions of countries of the Blue Pacific, to ensure holistic and sustainable management of the ocean.

Forum Leaders commit to responsibly and effectively manage 100% of the Blue Pacific Ocean within and beyond national jurisdiction to ensure its health, productivity, resilience, and safety, based on the best available scientific information and traditional knowledge.

Forum Leaders support global action to develop and implement the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. This Framework, along with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, will provide further momentum to holistically safeguard our rich biodiversity.

Forum Leaders have a longstanding commitment to managing, protecting, conserving and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems including through the Noumea Convention and Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Islands Region.

Interactive Dialogue 4 – Minimizing and addressing ocean acidification, deoxygenation and ocean warming

4. Communication messages

Our ocean is our biggest resource as Pacific Islanders. We **MUST** stop killing our ocean. Reduce your CO₂ emissions to mitigate ocean acidification. Forum Leaders want a work programme on oceans to be developed within the UNFCCC process. We need observation systems to better understand the impacts of climate change on the ocean. As well as blue carbon protection, strengthening natural disaster response, and risk reduction strategies for our islands.

4. Policy Decisions

Climate change presents the single greatest threat to the livelihood, security and wellbeing of the Pacific and its peoples. Currently, at approximately 1.2°C of average global warming above pre-industrial levels, our seas are rising, our oceans are warming and becoming acidic, and the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events are inflicting damage and destruction on our peoples, ecosystems, economies and countries.

The shared prosperity and security of our Blue Pacific can only safely exist if the international community pursues efforts to limit global warming to 1.5°C.

Forum Leaders call for urgent action to reduce and prevent the irreversible impacts of climate change on our ocean. The recognition of the ocean-climate-biodiversity nexus entails that the protection of one cannot be at the expense of the other, and that radical ambition is required.

Forum Leaders call on the international community to meet or exceed their obligations and timelines set out under the Paris Agreement and deliver more ambitious climate action.

Forum Leaders call for the development of a work programme on oceans within the UNFCCC process.

Forum Leaders call for increased investment in the establishment of systematic oceans observing systems including oceans acidification, to better understand the impacts of climate change on the ocean, blue carbon protection and restoration initiatives for climate mitigation and adaptation, as well as monitoring and prediction to strengthen natural disaster response and risk reduction strategies for our islands.

Forum Leaders call on global financing institutions, including the Green Climate Fund, Global Environment Facility and the Adaptation Fund, to increase investments on oceans and climate change.

Interactive Dialogue 5 - Making fisheries sustainable and providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets

5. Communications messages

Tuna fisheries is an important revenue source for Forum Island Countries, providing more than 30% and as much as 80% of government revenue for five countries and more than 22,000 jobs across the region. But our industry is being destroyed by IUU fishing, harmful fisheries subsidies, climate change and marine pollution. Forum Leaders want Distant Water Fishing Nations to remove harmful fisheries subsidies that lead to overcapacity and overfishing. The Western and Central Pacific Ocean provides over 50% of the global tuna catch.

Our Pacific therefore is a key element in global food systems and security. A sustainable Pacific fishery is part of the future we want.



5. Policy Decisions

Forum Leaders, guided by our Regional Fisheries Roadmap are committed to ensuring the long-term sustainability and economic viability of the Blue Pacific's fisheries resources, recognising its centrality to the wellbeing of our communities and economies.

Revenues from tuna fisheries provides much needed income for Forum Island Countries. For five countries, this accounts for more than 30% and as much as 80%, of government revenue. The industry also provides over 22,000 jobs across the region.

The sustainability of our fisheries, and our economic returns from this vital industry, are compromised by IUU fishing, harmful fisheries subsidies, climate change and marine pollution.

Forum Island Countries are experiencing economic decline in their longline fishing industries, particularly in the albacore fishery, due to competition by the heavily subsidised fishing vessels of Distant Water Fishing Nations. Forum Leaders call for constructive partner engagement in recovering the fish stock to a level that restores profitability to the fishery, and secures increased economic benefits to all.

Forum Leaders call upon Distant Water Fishing Nations (DWFN) to remove harmful fisheries subsidies that lead to overcapacity and overfishing, taking note of the difficulties faced by some countries.

Forum Leaders also call on DWFNs to support recognition of 'zone-based management' approaches in regional management arrangements to support Forum Island Countries in undertaking effective management of tuna fisheries within Exclusive Economic Zones.

We call for focused investment and capacity building towards retaining the traditional knowledge of sustainable fishing practices for future generations of Pacific people.

We call for the increased use of technology, to address threats to the long-term sustainability of fisheries resources and associated impacts on the social and economic well-being of our people.

We emphasise that whilst support from development partners is welcomed, development assistance must be driven by Forum Island Countries' needs, and developed in alignment with existing regional frameworks and mechanisms, such as the Regional Fisheries Roadmap.

Interactive Dialogue 6 - Increasing scientific knowledge and developing research capacity and transfer of marine technology

6. Communications messages

Our Leaders want to use the best available scientific information and traditional knowledge to manage 100% of the Blue Pacific Ocean in a responsible and effective way, to ensure its health, productivity, resilience and safety. As part of the Decade for Oceans Science, all Pacific nations have recognized the need to pursue scientific efforts on oceans to help fill the knowledge gaps against SDG14 targets.

We call on organizations to pursue scientific efforts on oceans to help fill the knowledge gaps against SDG14 targets.

We call on donors to increase investment in scientific research into the impacts of a changing climate on our oceans, islands and natural resources, and in the science and technical work required to inform the development of adaptation and mitigation strategies for the region.

6. Policy Decisions

Forum Leaders commit to responsibly and effectively manage 100% of the Blue Pacific Ocean within and beyond national jurisdictions to ensure its health, productivity, resilience, and safety, based on the best available scientific information and traditional knowledge.



Interactive Dialogue 7 - Enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

7. Communications messages

We want to make our Pacific Blue Continent a reality by securing our maritime zones against the threat of sea-level rise. Our legal entitlements in our maritime zones should not be lost nor challenged either, due to sea-level rise. Therefore, preserving maritime zones is essential and fundamental to ensuring a just international response to climate change-related sea-level rise.



7. Policy Decisions

On 6 August 2021, we marked our 50th Anniversary with our Leaders' issue of the Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the face of Climate Change-related sea-level rise and its Aide-Memoire, signaling deep mutual commitment and a strong and decisive step to safeguard the homes and interests of the Pacific peoples into perpetuity.

Securing our maritime zones against the threat of sea-level rise, and preserving our existing rights and entitlements stemming from maritime zones, is the defining issue underpinning the full realization of our Blue Pacific Continent.

Our past, present and future development are based on rights and entitlements guaranteed under the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

As the Blue Pacific Continent, we are proactive on all fronts to collectively fight this climate battle with every possible means and avenue available to us, including through the UNFCCC and UNCLOS. Our objectives intersect towards the ultimate goal that our legal entitlements as sovereign nations are not lost nor challenged due to sea-level rise.

Preserving maritime zones in the manner set out in the Declaration is essential and fundamental to ensuring a just international response to climate change-related sea-level rise. It further reinforces our call to world leaders to urgently commit to decisive climate action that limits global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Our Declaration is premised on States establishing their maritime zones in accordance with UNCLOS, and seeks to clarify the interpretation of UNCLOS as it stands. The Declaration is firmly based and grounded in the primacy of UNCLOS, is fully consistent with the letter and spirit of UNCLOS, including its underlying principles of stability, security, certainty and predictability, and represents our formal collective view on how UNCLOS rules on maritime zones apply in the situation of climate change-related sea-level rise.

As proclaimed by our Leaders, our maritime zones, and the rights and entitlements that flow from them, shall continue to apply, without reduction, notwithstanding any physical changes connected to climate change-related sea-level rise. Further, we do not intend to review and update the baselines and outer limits of our maritime zones as a consequence of climate change-related sea-level rise.

We call on support for the Declaration by all UN Member states and the international community.

Forum Leaders recognize the ocean in areas beyond national jurisdiction as a global common to be preserved for the benefit of present and future generations, and strive for the expeditious finalization, adoption, and entry into force of a robust and ambitious international, legally binding instrument for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdictions (BBNJ).

This new BBNJ framework must be based on the best available scientific information and traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities; taking into account the precautionary approach; recognizing the special circumstances of Small Island Development States (SIDS); recognizing the special interests and roles of coastal states; and taking into account cumulative impacts of activities, as well as of climate change, without undermining existing relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional and sectoral bodies.

Interactive Dialogue 8 - Leveraging interlinkages between Sustainable Development Goal 14 and other Goals towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda

8. Communications messages

As Forum leaders, we have been on the world centre stage in demanding urgent action on oceans. The result is the adoption of SDG14 and its targets. But that is clearly not enough. The ocean has enormous potential to meet sustainable development needs but it's clear that with the ongoing exploitation and degradation of marine ecosystems, the risks are increasing every day.

A healthy ocean is the greatest legacy we can gift our future leaders, and our Blue planet.

A healthy ocean is the planet's greatest nature-based solution to climate change, ocean change and the ecosystem/biodiversity/cultural/economic losses that accompany them.

Investing in SDG 14 and life below water is a core SDG for our Pacific – it is an intersecting goal which brings huge co-benefits across all other SDGs.

8. Policy Decisions

Forum Leaders have demonstrated strong, global leadership in calling for urgent action on oceans, which led to the adoption of SDG14 and its targets.

The potential of the ocean to meet sustainable development needs is enormous, but only if our oceans can be restored and maintained to a healthy and productive state. Ongoing trends of exploitation and degradation of marine ecosystems show that not only have endeavours to date been insufficient, but risks are increasing every day. More must be done to protect our ocean, as it provides solutions to some of our existential challenges such as climate change.

Pacific Leaders are committed to the full implementation of commitments under the global development agenda whilst also ensuring they are contextualized to suit Pacific circumstances - anchored in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism and National Sustainable Development Plans.

We have endorsed the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development and the 132 Pacific Sustainable Development Indicators to guide regional efforts and support countries to accelerate the achievement of their development aspirations.

We emphasize the importance of the S.A.M.O.A Pathway, and the need to continue to strengthen the 'special case' and special differentiated treatment of SIDS.

We call for durable and effective partnerships and sustainable development financing that take account of the context of SIDs, and respect regional and national policy coordination mechanisms and systems. We call for an effective monitoring and accountability framework for the S.A.M.O.A Pathway.



