

CHARTER OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN ALLIANCE

Establishment of the Pacific Ocean Alliance

1. In 2010, Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum endorsed Our Sea of Islands, Our Livelihoods, Our Oceania, A Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape (FPO) to drive the implementation of the Pacific Islands Regional Oceans Policy (PIROP).
2. The establishment of the Pacific Ocean Alliance (POA) arises from the FPO and the priority it accords to fostering partnerships in the development and implementation of ocean-related priorities at the national, regional and international levels.
3. The POA shares the overarching vision of the FPO, being 'A secure future for Pacific Island Countries and Territories based on sustainable development, management and conservation of our Ocean'.
4. As envisaged by the FPO, the POA is an information-sharing and coordination mechanism, facilitated by the Pacific Ocean Commissioner, which will:
 - "...provide effective ocean policy coordination and implementation, facilitate regional cooperation for the high seas, as well as support for national ocean governance and policy processes when required. This [will] include the context for support and streamlining to achieve national commitments to multilateral environmental agreements. Inter-regional cooperation [will] be developed and fostered" (FPO Action 2b); and
 - "...assess and explore emerging issues and to ensure effective coordinated action" (FPO Action 6a).
5. The POA complements existing networks of relationships between peers for informing decision making at the national, regional and global levels, across all ocean-related sectors. This includes formal mechanisms established through specific agreements, and community networks.

Guiding Principles

6. The POA is founded upon, and will be guided by, the following principles:
 - Sustainable development, management and conservation of the Ocean can only be achieved using integrated approaches;
 - Effective action will be founded on strong partnerships and, fostering cooperation and inclusiveness;
 - Improved understanding of the Pacific Ocean will strengthen decision making and programme delivery; and
 - Action must focus on the priorities and needs of Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs).

The Role of the Pacific Ocean Alliance

7. In line with direction provided in the FPO, the POA will:
 - Establish a network of key stakeholders that represents the diverse range of ocean interests;
 - Provide a central platform for engagement on ocean-related issues;
 - Promote improved coordination and collaboration between ocean stakeholders. This includes cooperation between stakeholders within the Pacific region, and with stakeholders from other regions;

- Foster integrated, informed and balanced decision-making at all levels, which factors in the economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits of the Pacific Ocean and islands, their coasts and coastal areas, and associated resources;
- Encourage the integration of ocean considerations into policies and programmes across all related sectors. Efforts to improve development effectiveness will be important in this context;
- Foster improved understanding about existing ocean stakeholders and their mandates and interests in specific areas of ocean and coastal management (such as fisheries, tourism, transport, energy, conservation, extractive industry, coastal zone development and planning, resilience, subsistence livelihoods and pollution control);
- Pool and share the knowledge and expertise of POA members for the benefit of its members, PICTs and the region as a whole;
- Build and strengthen networks of leaders, advocates and specialists to champion the Pacific Ocean and related issues at community, national, regional and global levels;
- Assist with monitoring and reporting on regional and global ocean-related priorities, particularly those outlined in the PIROP and FPO; and
- Facilitate assessment and exploration of emerging issues by members.

The Composition of the Pacific Ocean Alliance

8. The POA provides a platform at which all Pacific Ocean stakeholders can engage in frank and productive discussions. Accordingly, participation by all stakeholders is encouraged, including but not limited to:
 - PICTs;
 - Private sector organisations;
 - Civil society organisations;
 - Academic and research organisations;
 - Development partners; and
 - Regional and international organisations.

The Operation of the Pacific Ocean Alliance

9. The POA will be facilitated by the Pacific Ocean Commissioner. In facilitating the POA, the Commissioner will:
 - Provide high level representation on ocean issues;
 - Convene meetings of the POA on a triennial basis. Participating PICTs will be invited to host such meetings; and
 - Identify strategic opportunities for conveying reports and recommendations of the POA, including but not limited to: relevant meetings of Leaders and Ministers; meetings of the governing bodies of regional organisations; and the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP).
10. Where POA members agree there is a specific need, working groups and/or expert think tanks will be established. These groups will have clear terms of reference, and be time bound and output oriented.
11. The governance arrangement for the POA will be further developed and reviewed as the POA progresses.