Governing an Ocean Continent: resolving cross-scale coordination and capacity challenges

Pacific Regional Ocean Policy and Governance Dialogue

21 August 2023
DAILY SEA SURFACE TEMPERATURE 60°S–60°N

Data: ERA5 1979–2023 • Credit: C3S/ECMWF

Source: Copernicus Climate Change Service 2023
Fragmented architecture

Source: Global Ocean Commission (2014)
Blue Pacific Ocean Continent

Source: Pacific Community (SPC) (2020)
Timeline of regional institutions

- 1947: Pacific Community (SPC)
- 1971: Pacific Islands Forum (PIF)
- 1978: Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC)
- 1979: Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)
- 1993: Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)
- 2009: [Event or Development]

Source: Quirk (2023)
Regional integration

- Recalibration through review and reform
- Establishing hierarchy on ocean issue areas
- Differentiating competence
- Addressing mandate creep
- Developing functional linkages
- Joint donor funding instead of competition for donor resources
Pacific Island Regional Ocean Policy

PACIFIC ISLAND REGIONAL OCEAN POLICY

VISION
A healthy ocean that sustains the livelihoods and aspirations of Pacific Island communities.

GOAL
The goal of this policy is to ensure the future sustainable use of our ocean and its resources by Pacific Island communities and external partners.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Improving our understanding of the ocean.
- Sustainably developing and managing the use of ocean resources.
- Maintaining the health of the ocean.
- Protecting the peaceful use of the ocean.
- Creating partnerships and promoting co-operation.
Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape

FRAMEWORK FOR A PACIFIC OCEANSCAPE

VISION
A secure future for Pacific Island Countries and Territories based on sustainable development, management and conservation of our ocean.

GOALS

- Integrated ocean management
- Adaptation to environmental and climate change
- Liasing, listening, learning and leading

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Jurisdictional rights and responsibilities
- Good ocean governance
- Sustainable development, management and conservation
- Liasing, listening, learning and leading
- Sustaining action
- Adapting to a rapidly changing environment
Timeline of regional policies

- 2002: Pacific Island Regional Ocean Policy
- 2004: Framework for Integrated Strategic Action
- 2005: Pacific Plan for Strengthening Regional Cooperation and Integration
- 2010: Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape
- 2014: Framework for Pacific Regionalism
- 2014: 2050 Strategy for a Blue Pacific Continent
- 2022: Regional Institutional Framework Reviews and Reforms

Source: Quirk (2023)
Coordination mechanisms

- CROP: new Charter improves transparency and accountability to Member States
- MSWG: revision of TORs can ensure decision making is accountable to Member States and restricts donor driven agendas
- OPOC: strong convening power can improve institutional harmonisation and strengthen unity as a diplomatic bloc
Multilevel governance

Source: Fanning and Mahon (2020)
Timeline coordination mechanisms

1988: Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP)

1998

2008

2010

2009

2014

2020

CROP Taskforce on International Engagement and Advocacy for Ocean Events
UN Pacific Small Island Developing States (UN PSIDS)
Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner (OPOC)
Marine Sector Working Group (MSWG)

Source: Quirk (2023)
# Regional/International

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<tr>
<th>Mandate</th>
<th>CROP</th>
<th>MSWG</th>
<th>OPOC</th>
<th>PSIDS</th>
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Source: Quirk (2023)
Maritime choke points

Source: Geopolitical Futures 2021
Regional/National

Source: Modified from Fanning and Mahon (2020)
Regional/National

Coordination mechanisms may be needed:

• for **oversight** to deal with overlaps in competence between ministries such as fisheries and environment

• recalibrate and **prioritise** governance with the available resources

• **connect** constituencies at the sub-national level in an accessible and accountable way

• connections between scales are **two way** – incorporate community innovations and knowledge systems
Ocean continent stewardship

- Continuous oversight to evaluate, recalibrate and harmonise institutional competences
- Coordination and coherence within each level of governance as well as across scales of governance
- Informed by science and indigenous knowledge systems
- Future proof the region by acting as one Blue Pacific Ocean Continent
INTERINSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIES

STAGE 1: Atomisation
STAGE 2: Competition
STAGE 3: Integration
STAGE 4: Specialisation

SYSTEM PROPERTIES
- Feedback loops
- Path dependence
- Deep equilibria
- Emergent order
- Stratification

COORDINATING STRUCTURES
- Bridging institutions
- Interinstitutional bridges

DIFFERENTIATE
- Strategic inconsistency

COOPERATE
- Create
- Contest
- Merge
- Suspend

COLLABORATE
- Intracomplex bridges

SOURCE: Quirk (2023)
Questions?

- Fa'afetai
- Māuruuru
- ko rab'a
- Meitaki
- Thank you
- Kommol

- Vinaka
- Kinisou
- Si Yu'us Må'åse'
- Merci
- Oue tulou Fakaauaue lahi

- Sulang
- Tenkyu
- Tank iu
- Mālō
- tangkyu
- Koutai

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