



The importance of Coral Reefs to the future of people in the Pacific

**ICRI Side Event:
Ocean Health, Human Wealth: The importance of coral reefs**

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1993 SPREP Treaty: Move to Samoa

26 Members: 21 Pacific island countries and territories + 5 Metropolitan countries

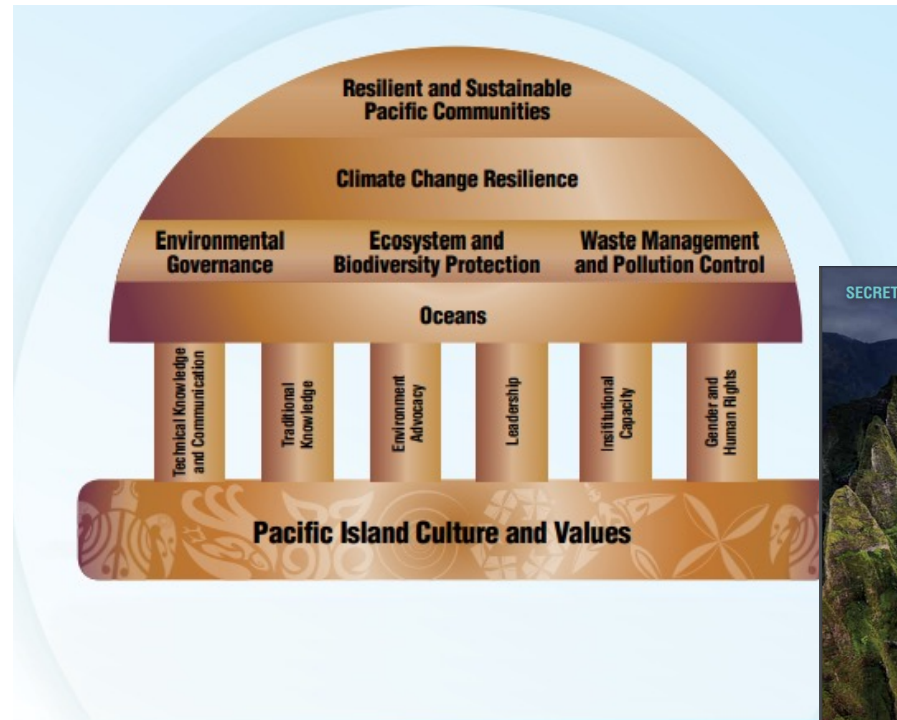
SPREP Vision: A resilient Pacific environment sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.

Cross cutting theme: Ocean

Regional Priorities:

- Climate Change Resilience
- Ecosystem and Biodiversity Protection
- Waste Management and Pollution Control
- Environmental Monitoring and Governance

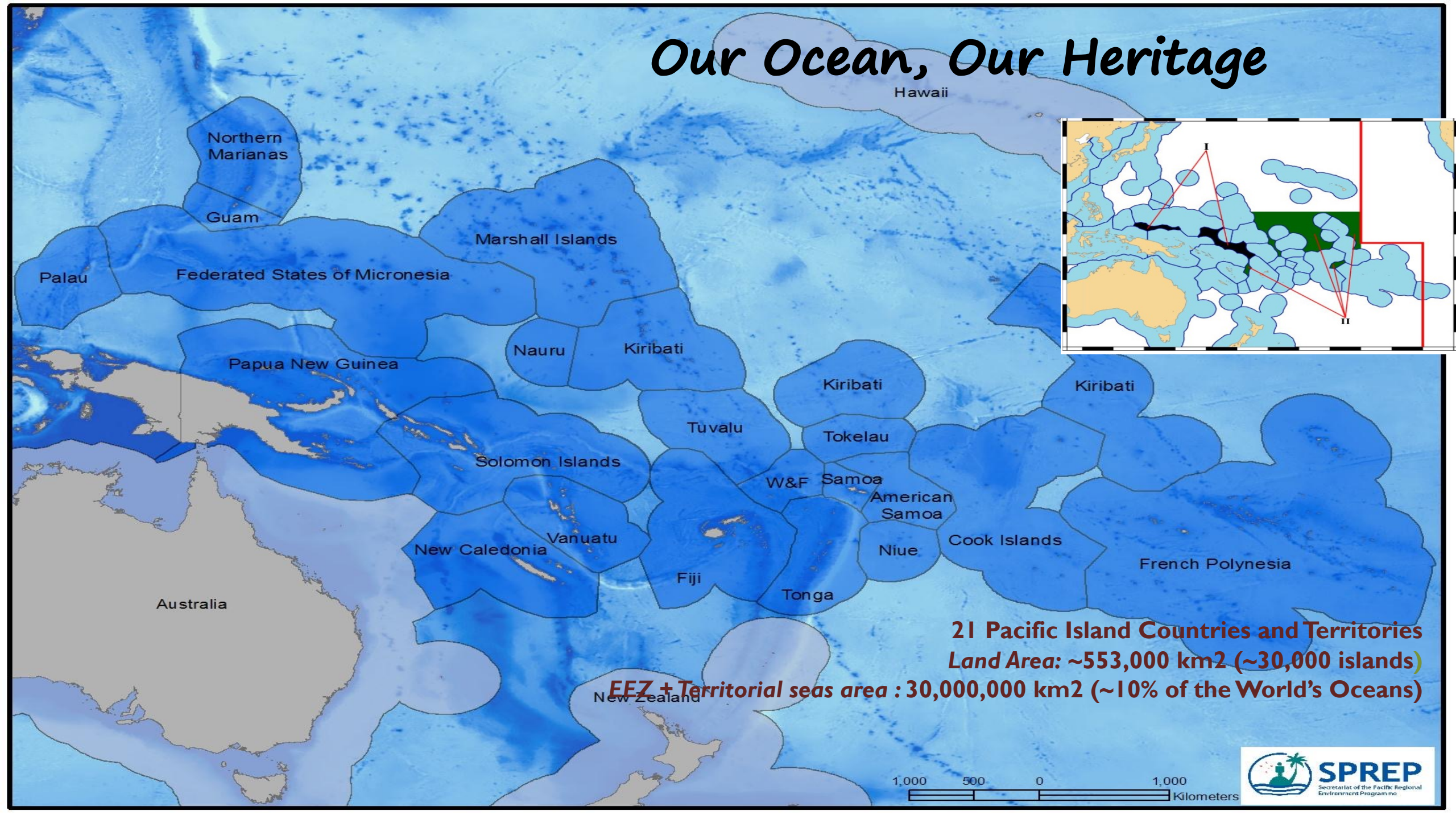
Member of CROP



SPREP Campus Hosts

- WMO Pacific Sub-regional Office
- UNEP Pacific Sub-regional Office
- JICA Waste Programme Advisers
- Noumea and Waigani Convention Secretariats
- Pacific Learning Regional Node – Uni of Newcastle

Our Ocean, Our Heritage



21 Pacific Island Countries and Territories
Land Area: ~553,000 km² (~30,000 islands)
EEZ + Territorial seas area : 30,000,000 km² (~10% of the World's Oceans)

THE 2050 STRATEGY FOR THE BLUE PACIFIC CONTINENT

Climate Change and Disasters

All Pacific Peoples remain resilient to the impacts of climate change and disasters and are able to lead safe, secure and prosperous lives. The region continues to play a leadership role in global climate action.

People Centered Development

All Pacific Peoples continue to draw deep cultural and spiritual attachment to their land and the ocean, and all are assured safety, security, gender equality and access to education, health, sport and other services so that no one is left behind.

Ocean and Environment

All Pacific people live in a sustainably managed Blue Pacific Continent, while steadfastly maintaining resilience to threats to its environment.

As Pacific Leaders, our vision is for a resilient Pacific Region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion and prosperity, that ensures all Pacific peoples can lead free, healthy and productive lives

Peace and Security

A peaceful, safe, and secure Blue Pacific region which respects national sovereignty, and where people can realise their full potentials as individuals, communities and nations, and where the region delivers Pacific-coordinated responses to security challenges and contributes to building global peace and security.

Technology and Connectivity

All Pacific Peoples benefit from access to affordable, safe and reliable land, air and sea transport and ICT infrastructure, systems and operations, while ensuring culturally sensitive user-protection and cyber security.

Resource and Economic Development

All Pacific peoples benefit from a sustainable and resilient model of economic development, including enabling public policy and a vibrant private sector and others, that brings improved socio-economic wellbeing by ensuring access to employment, entrepreneurship, trade and investment in the region.

Political Leadership and Regionalism

All Pacific Peoples will benefit for our Forum Leaders working together to safeguard, secure and progress the Blue Pacific Continent, achieving regional priorities through a united and cohesive political leadership supported by the Pacific Islands Forum and a responsive regional architecture that aligns to the region's priorities and values. Partners recognise and respect our collective approach as the Blue Pacific Continent.



Importance of coral reefs in the Pacific

- 27% of coral reefs found in the Pacific
- Provides primary protein for the majority of Pacific people
- Source of income, tourism,
- Protection against storm surges
- Cultural values and identity
- Diversity of coral species and types of reefs

Severely threatened by:

- Habitat destruction
- Coastal developments
- Pollution
- Destructive fishing and overfishing
- Storms & Cyclones
- Climate Change and coral bleaching
- Outbreak of crown of thorn starfish
- Human population growth



Pacific Coral Reef Action Plan
2021–2030



Pacific Coral Reef Action Plan

Developed in consultation with Members, CROP agencies, civil society, and the scientific community and endorsed in Sept 2021

Promotes a **cross sectoral, and collaborative approach** to managing coral reefs which taps into global expertise and financial resources and builds upon existing efforts

United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030)

➤ *scientific and indigenous knowledge components of Coral Action Plan has been endorsed by UNDOS*



www.sprep.org/corals



Pacific Coral Reef Action Plan

Coral reef action plan allows:

1. Framework for coordinated action and funding
2. Regional cooperation
3. Optimise Synergies and outcomes
4. Build capacity & share knowledge

Key Focus

1. conservation of habitats and biodiversity
2. sustainable fisheries and food security
3. resilience and adaptation to climate change
4. sustainable tourism.

The Plan Identifies 8 Action Areas for which regional and international cooperation can benefit Pacific Island Countries to build resilient reefs in the future

Traditional Knowledge + Science

ACTION



Implementation of the Coral Reef Action Plan

Pacific Coral Reef Monitoring project - ReefCloud

- Develop coral reef monitoring framework for Samoa
- Innovative AI ReefCloud technology
- Implemented in Samoa by AIMS & DFAT funded
- Collect and analyse coral reef data
- Improve decision-making
- Brings together TEK with cutting edge science



Brings together TEK with cutting edge science



Fostering traditional knowledge and practices

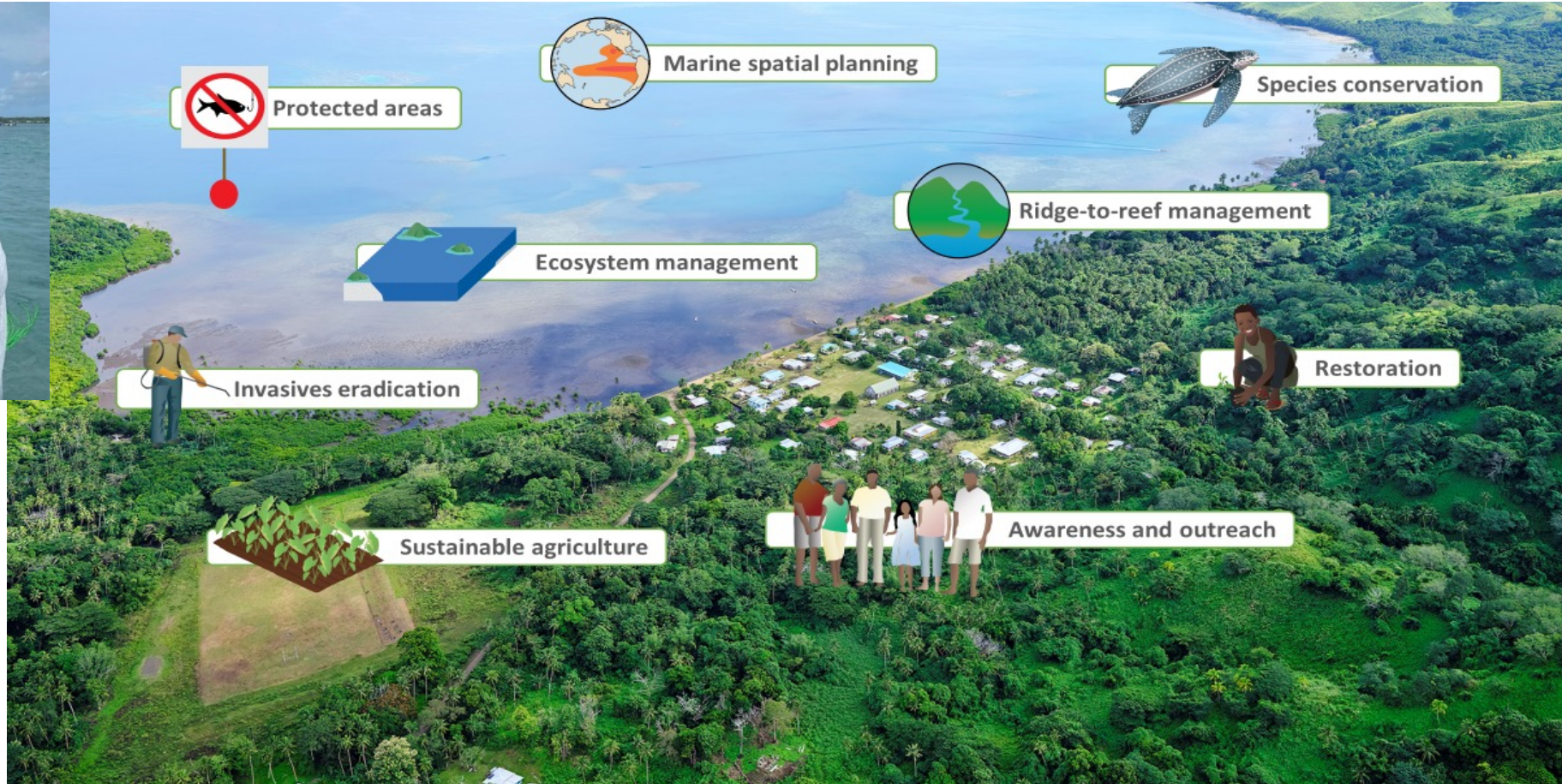
ReefCloud Samoa Knowledge Sharing, TEK & Capacity building



- Communities from Samoa – Aleipata district
- Gidarjil Development Corporation
- Sea Women of Melanesia, Papua New Guinea



Projects and initiatives to Protect and Restore Reefs


















**Pacific Invasive Species
Battler Series**

**REMOVING RODENTS FROM
SMALL TROPICAL ISLANDS
WITH SUCCESS**



Pacific Coral Reef Collective

Investment opportunity mapping (capacity building and/or knowledge sharing)

 PACIFIC CORAL REEF COLLECTIVE	 American Samoa	 Cook Islands	 Federated States of Micronesia	 Fiji	 Kiribati	 Marshall Islands	 Nauru	 New Caledonia	 Palau	 Papua New Guinea	 Samoa	 Tonga	 Tuvalu	 Vanuatu
Reef Knowledge System		●		●				● ●		●		●	●	
Reef Rehabilitation Projects (Site-scale)	●		●		● ●	● ●			●		●	●	●	●
Joint Field Management Program, protected area compliance		●	●	●		● ● ●		● ●		●	●	●	●	●
COTS Control Program														
Reef Guardian Councils • environmentally sustainable practices local governments undertake in the catchment							●			●				
Reef Guardian Schools			●				● ●				●	●		●
Reef monitoring technologies Reef Cloud	●	●	●	●	●			●	●	●	●	●	●	
High Standard Tourism Operator Program: • Eye on the Reef • Site Stewardship Framework and Plans • Master Reef Guides	● ●	●	●	● ●	● ●		● ●		●		●			●
Traditional Use of Marine Resource Agreements - Land and Sea Ranger Programs	●	●							● ●	●			●	●

Through Talanoa, delegates identified the programs/initiatives they would like to explore the opportunity for further **knowledge sharing, capacity building and investment.**

The areas of most significant interest identified by delegates were:

- Standardised approach to reef health monitoring and a Pacific-wide reef knowledge system that enables easy access to data
- Protected area compliance
- Site-scale reef rehabilitation projects/techniques
- High standard tourism operations – site stewardship framework and plans.



Look Ahead

Continue to build collaboration and partnerships to support the implementation of the Pacific Coral Reef Action Plan and support Pacific's priorities on:

- Knowledge sharing and capacity building
- Local actions to protect, restore and sustainably manage coral reef species and ecosystems
- Education and awareness raising
- Pacific-wide coral reef research and monitoring
- Facilitate alternative livelihoods and the blue economy



An aerial photograph of a tropical island, likely in the South Pacific, showcasing a stunning coral reef. The water transitions from deep blue to vibrant turquoise and light green, indicating shallow depths and diverse coral formations. The island is lush with green vegetation and has a small, sandy beach area. In the background, other islands and a range of mountains are visible under a bright, cloudy sky.

VINAKA