



**Pacific SIDS Regional Preparatory Meeting
16-18 August 2023
Nuku'alofa, Tonga**

**Roundtable 7: Regionalism for impactful results for sustainable
development in Pacific SIDS**

18 August 2023, 9:00am – 10:45am

Background Note

Introduction

The Pacific has a strong regional architecture that has for many decades supported governments and economies in their development efforts and work on common challenges. The Pacific has long realised the value of regionalism. This is reflected in both the number of regional agencies and the regional instruments, declarations and programmes that cover vast areas of development. Over the years the regional architecture has been active with all the development partners.

In particular, the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) have been working with a large number of UN agencies, along with other stakeholders, in the Pacific. These engagements have witnessed improvements in the way regional organisations work together and also in the way they work with other development partners. The architecture has also witnessed improvements in donor coordination. There are calls for making these interactions, where they already happen, more meaningful, as well as, improving interactions between Pacific SIDS and those from the other SIDS regions.

The 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent (2050 Strategy), adopted in 2022, provides an important opportunity to collectively work together to achieve the long-term vision and aspirations of the 2050 Strategy, through seven key thematic areas: political leadership and regionalism, people-centred development, peace and security, resource and economic development, climate change and disasters, ocean and natural environment, technology and connectivity.



Pacific SIDS Regional Preparatory Meeting 16-18 August 2023 Nuku'alofa, Tonga

The development of the 2050 Strategy coincided with the development of the 2023 – 2027 Pacific UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). UN Country Teams in the Pacific together with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and CROP agencies collaborated to ensure strong alignment of the two strategies in terms of the vision and priority focus areas. In early August 2023, the United Nations established the Inter-Agency Working Group on the 2050 Strategy, at the global level, to: (i). ensure coordinated action at the global level to support the 2050 Strategy and complement the work of the UN Multi-Country Offices and Pacific Islands Forum agencies at the regional and national levels; (ii). integrate the 2050 Strategy in respective work programmes related to Pacific Small Island Developing States; (iii) ensure systematic and timely information exchange among UN system entities regarding existing and planned activities in support of the 2050 Strategy; and (iv), develop shared messaging and advocacy plans aimed at mobilizing international support for the implementation of the 2050 Strategy.

This session will discuss the challenges and successes of regional partnership and the way this experience could be used to enhance partnership with Pacific SIDS. This session will further explore ways that the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent could support further cooperation and improve implementation of sustainable development efforts through improved Pacific leadership.

Challenges and perspectives

Regional organisations have been working with Pacific SIDS, to implement the SAMOA Pathway and address challenges to achieve sustainable development for all. These programmes and activities, both at regional and country levels, are supporting to improve economic development, social inclusion and environmental action. There is scope for the Pacific SIDS, in partnership with other development partners, to continue to improve their performance against the SAMOA Pathway indicators by systematically working to improve data collection, sharing experience, learning, for example in areas such as digital transformation, from each other and by combining efforts to jointly advocate for increased and improved quality support to meet the needs of their citizens.



Pacific SIDS Regional Preparatory Meeting 16-18 August 2023 Nuku'alofa, Tonga

There are several encouraging policy approaches in Asia and the Pacific, from “Green New Deal” to carbon neutrality, along with the Blue Pacific Continent 2050 Strategy, are promoting citizens’ aspirations for transformative change.

Under the 2050 Strategy, each thematic area is guided by its own ‘2050 ambition’ which serves as an agreed long-term objective for each thematic area, in support of the vision. It also includes Leaders Commitments and numerous strategic pathways to guide the region’s broad trajectory over the short, medium, and long term. The five strategic pathways to achieve its objectives are governance; inclusion and equity; education, research and technology; resilience and wellbeing; and partnership and cooperation.

Several initiatives in the Pacific are further strengthening the regional actions in areas of economics and trade such as:

- The Pacific Intra-Regional and International Trade (SPIRIT) project.
- The Pacific Aid for Trade Strategy.
- The Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Cooperation (PARTEC) project

Recommendations for Action:

- Focus on improving complementarities between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent to shape aspirations in the Pacific and identify ways to connect with the other internationally agreed development agendas and other initiatives.
- Identify ways to scale up regionalism through enhanced coordination between CROP and UN agencies need to make continued efforts to ensure assistance to member countries by coordinating efforts and strategic planning.



**Pacific SIDS Regional Preparatory Meeting
16-18 August 2023
Nuku'alofa, Tonga**

- Scope for enhancing joint resource mobilization and capacity building, and policy advice and advocacy for member States and stakeholders.
- Focus on facilitation of information and knowledge sharing to improve capacities of policymakers and stakeholders, including through technical assistance programmes.
- Focus on ways to improve coordination to enhance capacities for scaling up monitoring and evaluation practices.
- Enhance collaboration to improve engagements for the participation of the private sector, civil society and academia in these UN-CROP mechanisms.

Guiding questions

- How can we effectively leverage UN and CROP coordination to advance sustainable development and the 2050 Strategy; noting ongoing collaboration between UNCT Pacific and CROP, and the recent establishment of the UN Inter-Agency Working Group on the 2050 Strategy to support implementation of the 2050 Strategy at the global level?.
- What are the enabling factors and policies that will help scale up collaborations between UN and CROP for the national level results?
- What capacity development and technical assistance efforts are needed to develop, implement, and sustain effective multi-stakeholder partnerships between UN, CROP and other development partners?