



# IUCN in Oceania

Annual Report 2014



## Our Vision

A just world that values and conserves nature.

## Our Mission

To influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable.

IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature, helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges.

IUCN's work focuses on valuing and conserving nature, ensuring effective and equitable governance of its use, and deploying nature-based solutions to global challenges in climate, food and development. IUCN supports scientific research, manages field projects all over the world, and brings governments, Non Government Organisations (NGOs), the United Nations (UN) and companies together to develop policy, laws and best practice.

IUCN is the world's oldest and largest global environmental organization, with almost 1,300 government and NGO Members and more than 15,000 volunteer experts in 185 countries. IUCN's work is supported by almost 1,000 staff in 45 offices and hundreds of partners in public, NGO and private sectors around the world. [www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org)

IUCN's Oceania Regional Office is located in Suva, Fiji. The IUCN Oceania Regional Secretariat has close to 50 staff located in-country and in Papua New Guinea.

## Contents

<b>Acronyms</b> .....	2
<b>Acknowledgement</b> .....	3
<b>Foreword</b> .....	4
<b>IUCN Global Programme</b> .....	5
<b>IUCN Oceania</b> .....	6
Our Members .....	7
Map: Members of IUCN in the Oceania Region .....	8
Our Commissions .....	9
<b>Valuing and Conserving Nature</b> .....	
Species .....	10
Marine .....	12
Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOFAMA) .....	14
<b>Effective and Equitable Governance of Nature's Use</b> .....	
Environmental Law .....	15
<b>Deploying Nature-Based Solutions to Global Challenges in Climate, Food and Development</b> .....	
Water and Wetlands .....	17
Energy .....	20
<b>National Strategy for Responsible Development for Papua New Guinea</b> .....	22
<b>MUA Voyage</b> .....	23
<b>Our Staff</b> .....	25
<b>IUCN Secretariat Functional Structure and Business Line</b> .....	28

# Acronyms

ACIUCN	Australian Committee of the International Union for Conservation of Nature
ADB	Asian Development Bank
BIOPAMA	Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEC	Commission on Education and Communication
CEESP	Commission on Environmental Economic and Social Policy
CEM	Commission on Ecosystem Management
CEPF	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CORAL	Coral Reef Alliance
CROP	Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific
CTI	Coral Triangle Initiatives
EESLI	Energy, Ecosystems and Sustainable Livelihoods Initiatives
EGLP	Environmental Governance and Law Programme
ELA	Environment Law Associations
ELP	Environmental Law Programme
EU	European Union
FELA	Fiji Environment Law Association
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IBIS	Island Biodiversity and Invasive Species
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LEGASSI	Leadership, Green Growth and Sustainability Initiative
MACBIO	Marine and Coastal Biodiversity Management
MARSH	Mangrove Rehabilitation for Sustainably-Managed Healthy Forests
MESCAL	Mangroves Ecosystems for Climate Change Adaptation and Livelihoods Projects
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NZAID	New Zealand Aid Programme
NZIUCN	New Zealand Committee of the International Union for Conservation of Nature
ORO	Oceania Regional Office
PAWG	PIRT Action Working Group
PCEG	Pacific Centre for Environmental Governance
PIP	Pacific Invasive Partnerships
PIPA	Phoenix Islands Protected Area
PLP	Pacific Leadership Program
PIRT	Pacific Islands Round Table
PMI	Pacific Mangroves Initiatives
PRIMNM	Pacific Islands Marine National Monument
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
SSC	Species Survival Commission
TEEB	The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commissions for Asia and the Pacific
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WCEL	World Commission on Environmental Law
WCPA	World Commission on Protected Areas
WPC	World Parks Congress

# Acknowledgement

## Our Donors and Partners

IUCN Oceania Regional Office (ORO) acknowledges the support of a large network of partners who help fund its activities, implement the IUCN Programme or offer their knowledge and expertise to support the Union's work.

This work is made possible through the generous contributions of a growing number of donors and partners, including governments, multilateral institutions, intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations and companies.



## Foreword

In November 2014, four traditional voyaging canoes from the Cook Islands, New Zealand, Samoa and Fiji embarked on the Mua voyage, sailing more than 5,000 nautical miles from their island nations to Sydney, Australia for the World Parks Congress. Mua (or Mu'a) means forward or "front". The Mua voyagers of the Pacific, whose islands and atolls are dotted across the ocean are at the front line of the battle on climate change and its impacts, sailed to the IUCN Worlds Parks Congress with a call for action to protect the world's oceans and natural spaces... a call for extraordinary action as personified by the courageous voyagers.

We recognize that we are on the frontline with climate change but we also are part of the solution. A climate challenged planet needs the large relatively healthy spaces with comparatively low populations of the Oceania region. We are doing our part with the largest marine protected and managed areas in history coming from Kiribati, Palau, Cook Islands, Australia, New Zealand and growing. We need these efforts to be supported with management capacity and for the world to take similar actions.

Our work programme in the Oceania region has largely focused on the Pacific Islands. Mangrove management and coastal communities in six countries (MARSH and MESCAL) building protected areas capacity (BIOPAMA),

Green Growth and Leadership in four countries (LEGASSI), Environmental Law capacity building and establishing Environmental Law Associations (five CTI countries), Small Grants in Eastern Melanesia (CEPF) and implementing renewable energy initiatives across the Pacific, have provided an impetus for convening partnerships with stakeholders and leaders as well as ensuring impact at both national and regional level.

We have a great team of experienced people who know the region and continue to build strong partnerships with existing regional organizations and members. In Australia and New Zealand, our IUCN membership is strengthened by Australia Committee of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (ACIUCN) and New Zealand International Union for Conservation of Nature (NZIUCN) and we hope to continue to get better with engaging our membership and building effective relationships as we move to 2015. We look forward to continuing the voyage together in 2015 – MUA!

Malo 'aupito



**Taholo Kami**  
Regional Director



## IUCN Global Programme

The IUCN Programme provides the framework for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the conservation work undertaken by the Commissions and the Secretariat with and on behalf of IUCN Members.

The IUCN Programme 2013-2016 was approved by IUCN Members at the World Conservation Congress in Jeju, South Korea in September 2012. It was developed as a result of a five-month consultation process across IUCN Members and Commissions.

### Working for people and nature

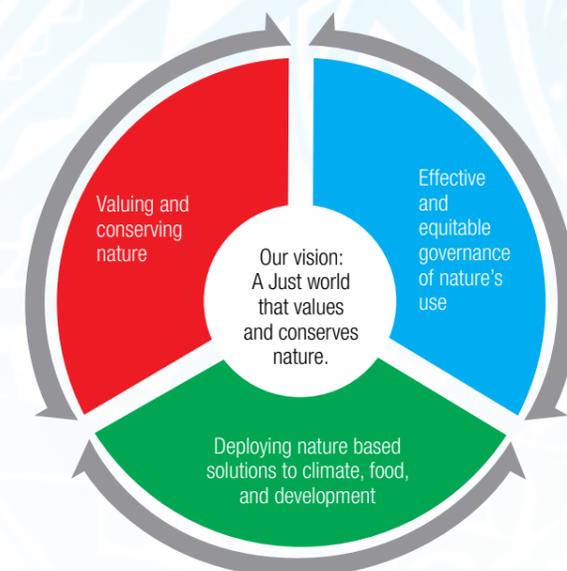
The IUCN Programme 2013-2016 aims to mobilize communities working for biodiversity conservation, sustainable development and poverty reduction in common efforts to halt biodiversity loss and apply nature-based solutions to conserve biodiversity, enhance resilience, strengthen equity, reduce poverty and so improve the wellbeing of people on this planet.

The Programme builds upon IUCN's niche as the world's authority on biodiversity conservation, nature-based solutions and related environmental governance. It has three Programme Areas:

**Valuing and Conserving Nature** enhances IUCN's heartland work on biodiversity conservation, emphasizing both tangible and intangible values of nature.

**Effective and Equitable Governance of Nature's Use** consolidates IUCN's work on people-nature relations, rights and responsibilities, and the political economy of nature.

**Deploying Nature-Based Solutions to Global Challenges in Climate, Food and Development** expands IUCN's work on nature's contribution to tackling problems of sustainable development, particularly in climate change, food security and social and economic development.



The Programme is implemented through the combined force of the Secretariat (1,000 staff in global thematic programmes and nine regional programmes) working together with six IUCN Commissions with more than 15,000 members who provide critical knowledge for Programme implementation.

Under the One Programme Charter adopted by Council in May 2011, the 1,200 State, government and NGO Members of IUCN contribute where there is alignment with the IUCN Programme. The Programme relies on impact indicators for biodiversity, people and nature, and nature and development.

## IUCN Oceania

Oceania is geographically one of IUCN's largest regional programmes, covering over 100 million square kilometres of the Pacific Ocean. Our work in the Oceania region covers Australia, New Zealand and the 22 countries and territories of the Pacific Islands making up Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia.

### Biodiversity

Oceania's ecosystems are diverse, ranging from the offshore marine realms, coral reefs, shoreline atolls, mangroves, coastal plains, lowland forests and wetlands of Pacific Island nations, to the mountains, fjords and glaciers of New Zealand and the grasslands and inland deserts of Australia.

Oceania's species diversity is extremely high: flora and fauna of the region are often unique, with endemism as high as 90% for certain groups. Australia is an incredibly megadiverse country, with an enormous number of endemic plants and animals. In the Pacific Islands, the size and ecological diversity of the islands decreases from southwest to northeast, tapering from the high, forested islands of Melanesia to scores of tiny, sparsely vegetated atolls scattered across the central Pacific. High islands are characterized by their endemic families and genera; raised coral islands by endemic species, and atolls have widespread indigenous species. Often, these rare and endemic species are adapted to specialized habitats and limited to small areas of only a few islands.

### People and nature

Throughout Oceania, food security is underpinned by nature. Many cultures throughout the region attach spiritual and religious values to ecosystems and their components – e.g. landscapes, trees, hills, rivers or particular species. This high economic and cultural dependence on the natural environment, along with a rapidly expanding human population (especially in the Pacific Island countries and territories) bring increasing demands on the region's natural resources.

### Threats

Many threats exist to the flora and fauna of countries and territories in the region. For example, native animal and plant species found on island countries are particularly susceptible to invasive species. Impacts such as habitat destruction, over-harvesting of species, pollution, mining

and agricultural activities and human-induced climate change are also identified as major threats to the region's biodiversity and well-being.

### Our work in the region

Increasing awareness about the importance of species and the threats they are facing is crucial. The concept of "Investing in Nature" is central to this approach: too often, humans take other species and their day-to-day uses for granted. It is vital that investments in natural resources promote sustainable long-term use, management and conservation of the species we utilise in our everyday lives.

IUCN is working with like-minded organizations to contribute to the conservation of species and ecosystems in the Oceania region.

### Priority Areas of Work

**Contributing to conserving Oceania's biodiversity** through IUCN's work on

- Species
- Marine
- Protected areas

**Enhancing governance arrangements** through IUCN's work on

- Environmental law and policy
- Environmental economics

**Offering nature-based solutions** through IUCN's work on

- Water and wetlands
- Pacific Mangroves Initiative
- Climate change

**Promoting green economy solutions** in the areas of

- Energy
- Leadership, green growth and sustainability
- Food security

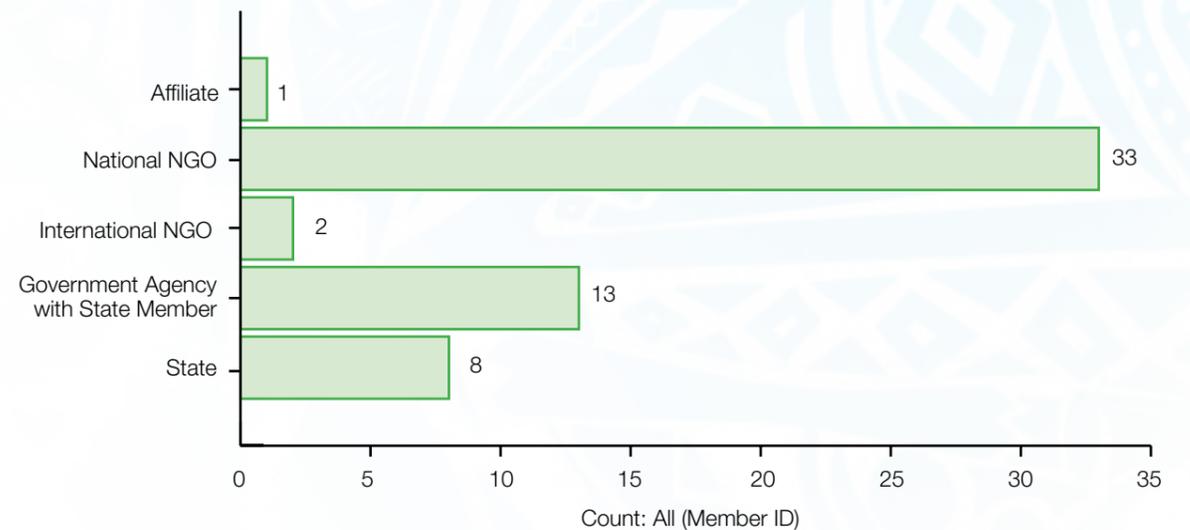
## Our Members

With its special structure, IUCN provides a space and a place where governments, civil society organisations and government agencies are able to gather and convene to address how they can collectively deal with the challenges to the environment and conservation.

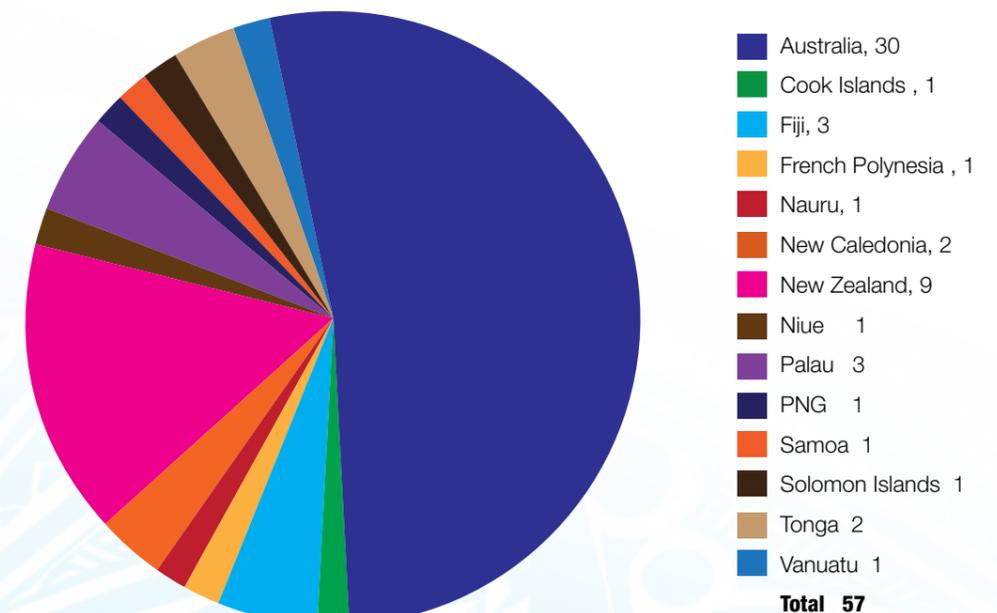
In 2014, partnerships, engagements and collaboration with members grew. We participated in the ordinary meeting and the annual general meeting of the Australian Committee for IUCN.

Members were also involved in the World Parks Congress in Sydney, Australia.

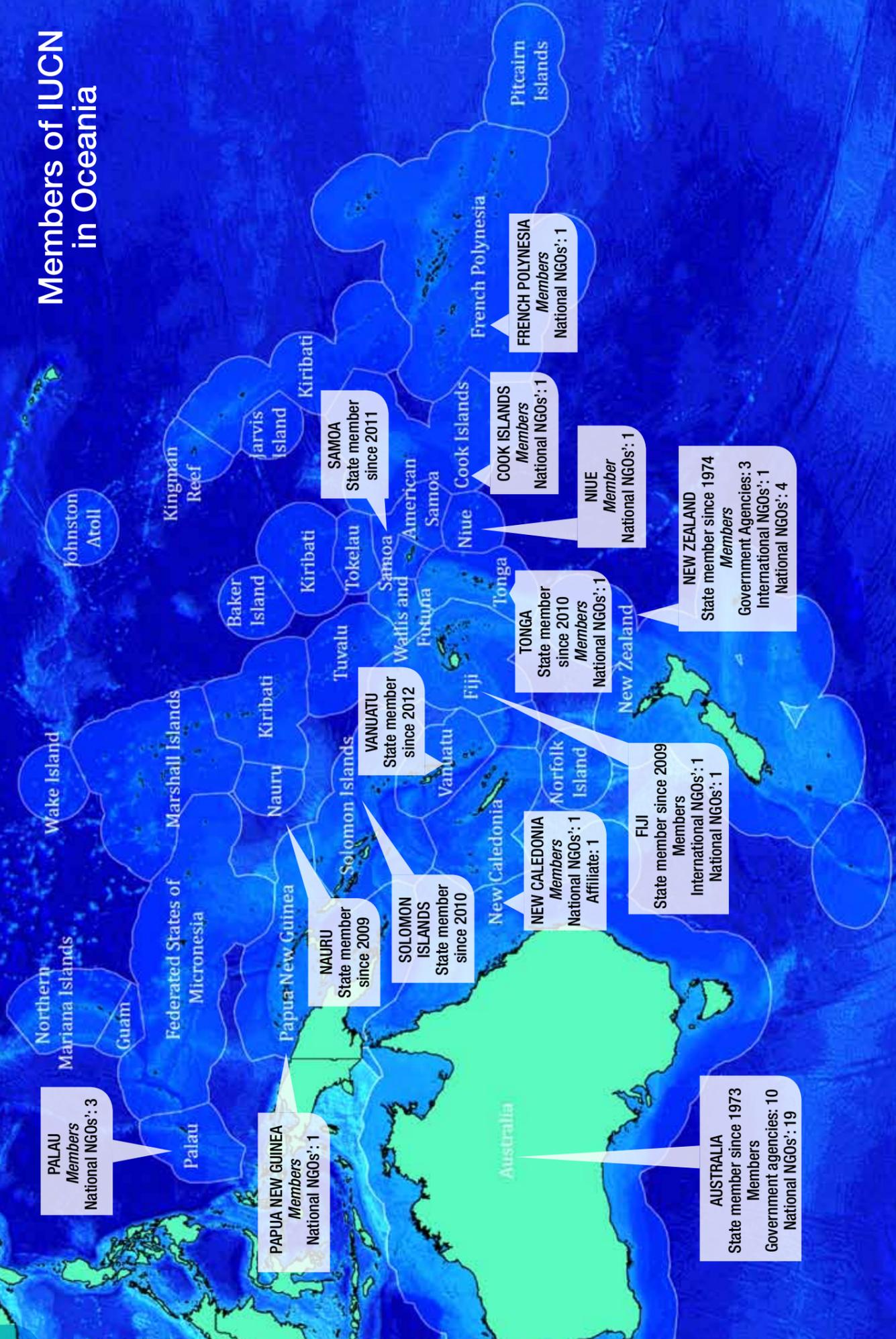
By 2014 IUCN members in Oceania totalled 57. The categories are captured in the diagram below.



Members are in Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. The breakdown is reflected in the diagram below.



# Members of IUCN in Oceania



## Our Commissions

The six Commissions unite 15,000 volunteer experts from a range of disciplines. They assess the state of the world's natural resources and provide the Union with sound know-how and policy advice on conservation issues.



**Commission on Education and Communication (CEC)**  
CEC champions the strategic use of communication and education to empower and educate stakeholders for the sustainable use of natural resources.



**Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP)**  
CEESP provides expertise and policy advice on economic and social factors for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.



**World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL)**  
WCEL advances environmental law by developing new legal concepts and instruments, and by building the capacity of societies to employ environmental law for conservation and sustainable development.



**Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM)**  
CEM provides expert guidance on integrated ecosystem approaches to the management of natural and modified ecosystems.



**Species Survival Commission (SSC)**  
SSC advises the Union on the technical aspects of species conservation and mobilizes action for those species that are threatened with extinction.



**World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA)**  
WCPA promotes the establishment and effective management of a worldwide representative network of terrestrial and marine protected areas.

# Valuing and Conserving Nature

## Species

The IUCN Oceania Species Programme seeks to increase and share knowledge regarding species found in the Pacific Islands. Through the IUCN Red List process, support is provided to strengthen our understanding of the status of species in Oceania and promote actions towards conservation and management of threatened species and ecosystems. Increasing awareness on species issues is a central component of IUCN OROs work on species. This work is also achieved through the Species Working Group of the Pacific Islands Round Table for Nature Conservation in collaboration with regional partners.

IUCN ORO works to support the implementation of Multi-lateral Environment Agreements in the Pacific, with a focus on the implementation of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and providing technical assistance for Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Parties. Through the IUCN Invasive Species Specialist Group's Pacific Office based in Auckland, New Zealand, IUCN ORO supports initiatives that address invasive species management in the region.



## Highlights

### CITES Implementation

In 2014, IUCN ORO continued to be involved in providing assistance to governments for CITES implementation, especially related to marine species.

In February, the Fiji government, Pew and the Coral Reef Alliance, hosted the Oceania Follow-up Regional Workshop on the Implementation of Appendix II Shark Listings. IUCN ORO was one of the partners invited to assist regional governments in ensuring that the best available data are available for making necessary assessments and putting in place processes to regulate any trade in these threatened species.

In March, IUCN ORO worked with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the government of the Solomon Islands to begin the process of developing a coral fishery management plan, by focusing on the provision of assistance to make non-detriment findings for corals to ensure that the plan would be in line with CITES requirements. The workshop provided an opportunity to allow the provision of general assistance regarding CITES issues within the Solomon Islands.

### Species Symposium

In July, a symposium was held as part of the Society for Conservation Biology conference in Suva, Fiji, linking to the main conference theme of Vulnerable Ecosystems, Communities and Species. The species symposium was led by the University of the South Pacific and IUCN ORO in partnership with the Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation's Species Working Group. It brought together a mix of established, young and emerging scientists, researchers and conservation practitioners to share scientific knowledge relating to their species research and conservation in the Pacific, and allowed for discussions for planning future actions in a collaborative manner.

### SPREP Commissioned Report on the State of Conservation in Oceania

Also related to the generation and sharing of knowledge, IUCN and its consortium of partners completed the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) commissioned report on the State of Conservation in Oceania. The report highlights our current knowledge on the state of conservation in the twenty-two Pacific Island countries and territories. The report also indicates that the state of most of the region's species and ecosystems is deteriorating and that better management of the region's invaluable and irreplaceable species is urgent. The data collated will be useful to governments for guiding conservation action and management, as well as contributing to the achievement of the Aichi Targets under the CBD.

### Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) Conservation Grants Mechanism – East Melanesian Islands Hotspot

The CEPF is a unique global investment programme that focuses on safeguarding prioritized biodiversity hotspots. Its conservation action for East Melanesia extends for eight years from 2013 and is guided by a region-specific investment strategy. IUCN ORO serves as the Regional Implementation Team (RIT) providing strategic leadership to convert the investment programme into cohesive portfolios of grants. The programme consists of a large grants mechanism (USD \$20,000 or less) managed solely by the RIT. CEPF's strategy recognizes local communities as the ultimate custodians of biodiversity, and a range of approaches have been explicitly employed to empower communities, create partnerships, mentor and build supportive networks of civil society organizations at local, national and regional levels.

### Way Forward

Moving into 2015, work will continue on Red Listing in the Pacific, and on promoting collaborative action for species conservation in the region, through the hosting of the second Pacific Islands Species Forum.

# Valuing and Conserving Nature

## Marine

The Marine Programme focuses upon supporting and facilitating countries to implement improvements in marine resource management, especially those that have nation-wide benefits.

### Projects

#### Enhancing US-Kiribati Engagement on Large Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the Eastern Pacific (Big MPAs)

The project involved IUCN facilitating two meetings between the management of Phoenix Islands Protected Area (PIPA) and the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument (PRIMNM) – two of the world's largest MPAs. It was facilitated by a grant from the US Embassy.

#### Cook Islands Marine Park

The project aims to support the Cook Islands Government in the establishment of the world's largest marine park – the Cook Islands Marine Park (or the Cook Islands Marae Moana). The project provides funding and technical advice. It is funded by Global Blue.

#### MACBIO

This project aims to strengthen sustainable management of coastal and marine biodiversity in Fiji, Kiribati, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu. The MACBIO project is being implemented by the German Agency for International Cooperation (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit – GIZ), with technical support from IUCN, in close collaboration with SPREP and in partnership with countries.

#### Coastal Fisheries and Bêche-de-Mer Summit

This was a regional Ministerial-level Summit to discuss the importance of and issues to do with coastal and Bêche-de-Mer fisheries. The meeting was initiated, hosted, and facilitated by IUCN Oceania and funded by New Zealand Aid (NZ Aid) and MACBIO.

### Highlights

#### Big MPAs

A Cooperative Arrangement was signed by His Excellency President Anote Tong of Kiribati and US Secretary of the Interior, Ms. Sally Jewell at the World Parks Congress in Sydney in November 2014. The Arrangement is to jointly coordinate and support research and conservation activities in the two MPAs. This was a significant achievement for both countries, and provides a model of cooperation for other regional countries with large MPAs that have a common boundary. IUCN strengthened its reputation as a convener.

#### Cook Islands Marine Park

In 2014, the project successfully completed a legal review and produced a report titled "The Cook Islands Marine Park: A Legal Review Preparatory to its Establishment". The review was conducted by Dr J. Rose, a World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL) member and the report analysed the legal issues and options for the formal designation, establishment, design, and management of the Cook Islands Marine Park. The review contributes towards the Cook Islands Marine Park Steering Committee's responsibility to developing and operationalising the legal and institutional aspects of the Marine Park. In March 2014, IUCN, in collaboration with the Cook Islands Marine Park Steering Committee, conducted the National Workshop on Legal Analysis where the draft Legal Review Report and the draft Traditional Management of Ra'ui's were discussed.

The second report (by Ms. J. Maki) focused on the review of traditional management systems including *ra'ui* and *atinga* and identifying options for integrating these within the Cook Islands Marine Park framework. The workshop discussions used recommendations made in these reports regarding the operationalisation of the marine park. Participants at the workshop included members of the Steering Committee and other stakeholders from Government, the private sector, and civil society.

In March 2014, IUCN signed a Grant Agreement with the Office of the Prime Minister of Cook Islands for the implementation of two project further objectives: a national stocktake of marine biodiversity and physical oceanography data as a baseline for associated marine spatial planning (implemented by the National Environment Services), and strengthening of existing traditional MPAs (*ra'ui*) as specific entities under a Park zoning concept (by the *Are Ariki and Koutu Nui*).

#### MACBIO

In 2014, IUCN delivered for this project four draft national marine ecosystem service evaluation reports and support to in-country initiatives to begin large-scale ocean planning.

Achieving more sustainable use of the marine resources of the Pacific through MACBIO aligns with IUCN Global Programme objectives to do with valuing nature, more effective governance, and nature-based solutions. More importantly, better information and planning can deliver

greater food security and more sustainable livelihoods to the people of the Pacific.

#### Coastal Fisheries and Bêche-de-Mer Summit

The Summit raised the profile of in-shore fisheries to such a degree that a Ministerial level "Call to Action" arose from the Summit – signed by Ministers from seven Pacific Island countries; Vanuatu is now preparing its inaugural Coastal Fisheries Policy; Tonga will be hosting a regional meeting dedicated to finding solutions to the boom-and-bust cycle of Bêche-de-Mer fisheries in the Pacific; and Papua New Guinea will be hosting a follow-up Summit to review progress by Pacific Island countries regarding coastal fisheries and identifying next steps to take. These efforts also contribute to IUCN's main programme areas of conserving nature, effective governance, and nature-based solutions as well as Pacific Island Countries' efforts to improve marine resource management for the future of their people.

### Challenges

#### Big MPAs

The challenge was in getting the Arrangement officially endorsed by the highest office of both countries and it called for strong coordination by IUCN.

#### Cook Islands Marine Park

Senior staff responsible for the project left IUCN in 2014 leaving no one to manage it. Activities were delayed but the IUCN Environmental Legal Officer, responsible for the legal component of the project, stepped in to manage the whole project.

#### MACBIO

The project lost its senior staff member in late 2013 which had trickle-down effects to the rest of the team and the project's ability to deliver. This person was replaced in

April 2014 and the resources accessed to implement the work have since been increasing – as reflected by the project results.

#### Coastal Fisheries and Bêche-de-Mer Summit

Coastal fisheries, whilst the most important fisheries to the people of the Pacific, attract little attention and funding and this was also a challenge in convening this Summit. In-house resources needed to be applied for the Summit to succeed.

### Way Forward

#### Big MPAs

To get a similar arrangement developed between the Marae Moana Marine Park in the Cook Islands and the Natural Park of the Coral Sea in New Caledonia.

#### Cook Islands Marine Park

To get a new partner or donor that will be interested in funding activities relating to the governance of big MPAs that include the Cook Islands and other similar national initiatives in the region.

#### MACBIO

The draft national marine ecosystem service valuation reports will be finalised; a regional marine ecosystem service valuation report will be drafted. MACBIO will facilitate government efforts to improve development and conservation planning within countries' oceans. The project will support partner efforts to look at lessons learned and to test new concepts at a site level.

#### Coastal Fisheries and Bêche-de-Mer Summit

Whilst this project is now complete, IUCN Oceania Office will be supporting countries' efforts to maintain management efforts and attention upon coastal fisheries and Bêche-de-Mer.



## Valuing and Conserving Nature

### Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA)

BIOPAMA is a programme aimed at improving the long-term conservation of biodiversity in Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) by promoting the use of the best available science and knowledge and building capacity to strengthen policy and decision-making on biodiversity conservation and protected areas management (terrestrial and marine). The Protected Areas component of BIOPAMA is implemented jointly by IUCN and the European Commission Joint Research Centre and is an initiative of the ACP Secretariat funded by the European Union under the 10th European Development Fund.



#### Strengthened capacity for Protected Area Management

With a full time Coordinator in place in 2014, the activity profile of the BIOPAMA Programme was heightened through a number of initiatives that engaged with key stakeholders in the conservation sector. A grant partnership was put in place between IUCN and (SPREP) to employ a Technical Officer to establish and manage a Regional Reference Information System for Protected Areas and Biodiversity that will be housed within SPREP's Pacific Islands Protected Area Portal. Two regional training workshops were held on environmental compliance and enforcement and a draft Action Plan for Regional Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Capacity Development was developed. The [www.biopama.org](http://www.biopama.org) website began presenting a variety of news items from the Pacific and a regional programme brochure was published.

#### Building knowledge on invasive alien species in the region

BIOPAMA supported the efforts of the Species Survival Commission Invasive Species Specialist Group to collect, compile and structure regional data on invasive alien species. Decision makers and protected areas managers can use this for more effective invasive species management. The resulting information tool, called the Island Biodiversity and Invasive Species (IBIS) database provides easily accessible information to assist prioritization and inform decision making in invasive alien species management, ultimately improving the response to invasions in islands ecosystems. The IBIS will become an important information product available at the BIOPAMA Regional Reference Information System at SPREP.

#### Ensuring a promising future for the Pacific

Of significant note was the effort and investment from the BIOPAMA programme in leading regional involvement at the IUCN World Parks Congress 2014 in Sydney, Australia. The 'Mua: Guided by Nature' canoe voyage across the Pacific to Sydney for the IUCN World Parks Congress 2014 was a compelling way of conveying and advocating the importance of the Pacific's protected areas. It demonstrated that traditional and indigenous approaches and knowledge can combine with modern science to help solve the complex problems facing the globe. This Pacific voice spoke about the importance of the region's large oceans and unique island spaces, and their global value in a changing climate. The voyage also drew attention to the stand made by many Pacific Island leaders who have pledged millions of square kilometers toward protecting marine areas, while Pacific Island communities drive local action to secure and sustain livelihoods.

The Pacific and World Indigenous Network Community Dialogue Pavilion at the Congress created a strong Pacific atmosphere and placed the region clearly on the world stage in terms of protected areas values and issues. Having a focal destination and meeting place for regional people to assemble and mix enabled a variety of informal discussions, events and planning meetings to take place. The pavilion, also supported by the IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP) and SPREP, provided a platform for indigenous people and local communities to share knowledge among peers, experts, policymakers and the media, and strategize for the future.

## Effective and Equitable Governance of Nature's Use

### Environmental Law

In Oceania, millions of people are directly dependent upon nature's bounties for their daily food, housing and medicine. Good environmental governance will ensure the environment continues to provide goods and services for the prosperity of human societies. Sharing power, responsibility and benefits in natural resource management, as well as strengthening governance arrangements including legal entitlements, making decisions more transparent, inclusive and equitable, are good for both people and biodiversity.

The ELP focuses on providing environmental legal technical assistance and support to Pacific Islands Countries. Our service is divided into three categories:

- Implementing and managing projects that aim to strengthen environmental law and policy in the region on a provider-client basis;
- Supporting programmes/projects that have environmental law and policy components within their objectives and goals;
- Legal support for IUCN ORO corporate services including internal contracts management for IUCN ORO programmes and projects.

IUCN ORO's Contracts Review and Clearance Procedure to ensure appropriate oversight is maintained and draft Contracts are reviewed by relevant Staff (as required by the IUCN Global Contracts Review Procedure) before approval by the Regional Director.

#### Environmental Legal Services

In 2014, the ELP was reviewed by a member of the WCEL (and Partner of New Zealand law firm Anderson Lloyd), Mr. Mark Christensen. The objective of the review was "to make an assessment of the ELP's current operations to report to the ORO Regional Director and make recommendations regarding the ELP's future strategic directions and what would be required to achieve the defined objectives".

### Projects

The ELP managed the following projects in 2014:

- Strengthening Environmental Law component under the ADB TA 7753 (REG) Strengthening Coastal and Marine Resources Management in the Coral Triangle of the Pacific (Phase 2) (ADB-CTI) Pacific Project); and
- Cook Islands Marine Park Project.

#### ADB-CTI Pacific Project

The ADB-CTI Pacific Project is implemented in the Coral Triangle countries of Timor Leste, Papua New Guinea, and Solomon Islands, and includes the two non-CTI countries of Fiji and Vanuatu. The Project focuses on strengthening of environmental laws through capacity building and institutional strengthening in the five countries.

#### Cook Islands Marine Park Project

The Cook Islands Marine Park Project is implemented in the Cook Islands. The Project aims to support the Cook Islands Government in the establishment of the World's largest marine park – the Cook Islands Marine Park (Marae Moana). The project is funded by Global Blue, a company that operates one of the world's biggest and most trusted Tax-Free shopping networks.

### Highlights

#### Corporate Legal Services

The ELP created a new template for Consultancy Agreements, reviewed by the Office of the Legal Advisor in Gland, Switzerland and IUCN ORO's local lawyers, Munro Leys. The ELP also reviewed, updated, and formalized

The Preliminary Report aimed to consider the fundamental question about the structural position of the ELP within the wider work of ORO. It identified two issues:

- ELP is not regarded as being well integrated into the wider work of ORO, but is often regarded as an adjunct to the other work; and
- ELP itself does not have a high profile, either within the ORO, or seemingly externally with donors, governments, and NGOs.

Having made this assessment, the report made a primary recommendation on both issues to consider making the ELP part of a broader Oceania Regional Office Environmental Governance and Law Programme (EGLP). Through this recommendation, the idea of an IUCN Pacific Centre for Environmental Governance (PECG) was revived. A draft proposal was developed and will be considered for approval and for implementation in 2015.

#### ADB-CTI Pacific Project

Achievements for this Project include:

- **Timor Leste**  
In September 2014, IUCN and the Legal Training Centre under the Ministerio Da Justica of Timor Leste collaborated by providing technical expertise in developing the capacity of the legal profession in Timor Leste. This collaboration saw the development of training materials and conducting of training on international law and Timorese environmental legislation. The training was delivered over three days, 22-24 September 2014. Two days of training targeted the Legal Training Center's trainees, who

had completed their 18 months of classroom training in addition to their practical training/internships in October 2014. One day of training targeted Judges, Prosecutors and Public Defenders.

- Through this Project, the Environmental Law Associations of Solomon Islands (Solomon Islands Environmental Law Association - SIELA) and Vanuatu (Vanuatu Environmental Law Association - VELA) were established.

#### Cook Islands Marine Park Project

Achievements for this project include:

- In 2014, the project successfully completed a legal review and produced a report titled, "The Cook Islands Marine Park: A Legal Review Preparatory to its Establishment". The review was conducted by Dr Justin Rose, a WCEL member, and the report outlined a legal analysis of the issues and options for the legal designation, establishment, design, and management of the Cook Islands Marine Park. The review is intended to contribute towards defining the Cook Islands Marine Park Steering Committee's responsibility in developing and operationalising the legal and institutional aspects of the Marine Park.
- In March 2014, IUCN, in collaboration with the Cook Islands Marine Park Steering Committee, conducted the National Workshop on Legal Analysis where the draft Legal Review Report and draft Traditional Management of Ra'ui's were discussed. The discussions focused on the recommendations made in these report regarding the operationalisation of the marine park. The second report produced by Ms Janet Maki focused on the review of traditional management systems including *ra'ui* and *atinga* and identifying options for integrating these within the Cook Islands Marine Park framework. Participants at the workshop included members of the Steering Committee and other stakeholders from Government, the private sector, and civil society.
- In March 2014, IUCN signed a Grant Agreement with the Office of the Prime Minister of Cook Islands for the implementation of two project objectives. Activities under these project objectives are currently being implemented by the National Environment Services (national stocktake of marine biodiversity and physical oceanography data as a baseline for associated marine spatial planning) and the *Are Ariki* and *Koutu Nui* (strengthening of existing traditional Marine Protected Areas (*ra'ui*) as specific entities under a park zoning concept).

## Challenges

The challenges faced in providing effective corporate legal service and environmental legal services have been due to the lack of human resources. Two ELP staff; the Senior Environmental Legal Officer and Junior Environmental Legal Officer left IUCN in May and October, respectively. This left the Environmental Legal Officer to handle all activities relating to the three categories of service for the ELP, including Corporate Legal Services. There is currently one staff that manages operation of the ELP.

#### Specific challenges faced by the two projects include the following:

##### Cook Islands Marine Park Project

The major challenge that the project faced in 2014 was when the senior staff responsible for the project left IUCN, leaving no one to manage the project. Activities were delayed, but the Environmental Legal Officer responsible for the legal component of the project stepped in to manage the whole project.

##### ADB-CTI Pacific Project

The project was delayed for one year. In December 2013, IUCN requested a no-cost extension, which was granted in 2014 with a new end date of 31 August 2015. However, the project had to go through another delay when the Senior Legal Expert for the project (Senior Environmental Legal Officer) left IUCN in May 2014. The change in personnel for the Senior Legal expert required approval from the donor, ADB, which was granted in November 2014. However, the new Senior Legal Expert was already on maternity leave and returned to work in January 2015. The biggest challenge has been ensuring that all activities are completely implemented by 31 August 2015 with only seven months given to wrap up the project. Hence, planning has played a key role in keeping to the deadline of the project activities.

## Way Forward

The establishment of the IUCN PCEG is the primary initiative that the ELP will be spearheading. We hope it will raise the profile of the ELP to be the pre-eminent agency in the Pacific providing environmental legal and governance advice and support to Pacific Island countries, as well as expert support to IUCN ORO.

# Deploying Nature-Based Solutions to Global Challenges in Climate, Food and Development

## Water and Wetlands

**Nature-based solutions valuing nature's capital in investing in our long-term future will be deployed to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster risk reduction and ensuring food security. Apart from providing effective solutions to major global challenges, nature-based solutions also deliver clear biodiversity benefits in terms of diverse, well-managed and functioning ecosystems.**

Protecting and managing freshwater and coastal resources is of great significance to the Pacific region's health and wealth.

However, many Pacific Islands are experiencing increasing pressures on water and wetland resources due to the increase in population, infrastructure development, and climatic fluctuations.

The Water and Wetlands Programme is focused on integrating environmental concerns into water and wetland resource management, including environmental economics and enhancing sustainable mangrove management. It also aims to increase awareness about the role of nature-based solutions in climate change adaptation and the value of coastal ecosystems in the context of disaster risk reduction.

## Projects

In Oceania, the Water & Wetlands Programme strives to address the underlying issues affecting water and wetland resources through the three projects – namely the:

- Mangrove Ecosystems for Climate Change Adaptation & Livelihoods (MESCAL) project
- Mangrove Rehabilitation for Sustainably-Managed Healthy Forests (MARSH) project,
- Fiji freshwater mussels fishery project titled Improving Livelihoods of Rural Communities in Fiji by increasing economic benefits from Fiji's kai fishery by addressing food safety issues.

The MESCAL project has been implemented in Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu and the MARSH project was implemented in Papua New Guinea. The kai fishery project, which was implemented at a local scale, was focused in Fiji in the province of Rewa.



## Highlights

### Development of the Pacific Mangroves Charter

The Charter encompasses a commitment to increase the resilience of Pacific Island communities to the impacts of climate change through the sustainable management of mangroves. It was officially launched at the 2014 United Nations Small Islands Developing States conference in Apia, Samoa, to which Ministers of Environment from Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, and Vanuatu gave their official endorsement. By signing the charter, the five countries

have agreed to mobilise engagement with relevant Government stakeholders, regional and global partners, development partners, communities, and civil society organisations by promoting the importance of mangrove forests and implementing sound approaches that will encourage conservation, sustainable management, and the wise use of mangroves at all levels (community, national, regional, and global).

### Successful Completion of the MESCAL Project

The baseline biodiversity and mapping surveys at the demonstration sites of the five MESCAL countries



generated much new data. These surveys have led to the discovery of new floral and faunal species including new mangrove areas which had previously gone unrecorded. In Solomon Islands, as a result of the floristic surveys, two mangrove species were new records, bringing the country's total number of known mangrove species to 30. Tonga also increased its number of known mangrove species to 10 with two new records.

Vanuatu recorded the greatest increase in number of known mangrove species with an addition of eight new mangrove species records, taking the total from 16 to 24.

As a result of the mangrove mapping surveys, Tonga was able to produce Vava'u Island's first maps and GIS database for the mangroves of Tonga. Vava'u currently hosts 20% of Tonga's mangroves, covering 381 hectares of land, which increased the total mangrove cover of Tonga from 1450ha to 1831ha. For Samoa, 60 new mangrove sites were recorded (26 mangrove sites for Savaii and 34 mangrove sites for Upolu) taking the total number of mangrove sites to 65 from the five previously documented. Vanuatu also produced its first ever mangrove maps.

This serves to remind Pacific Island governments of the rich biodiversity found throughout the region, particularly in Fiji, Vanuatu, and Solomon Islands, and the need to conserve them. As part of baseline surveys, a preliminary assessment of above-ground biomass and carbon content of mangrove soil was also conducted. This was one of the first baseline assessments for this scope of work in mangroves in the five countries. Each of the five countries' data have been collected for seven dominant vegetation assemblages of mangrove stands, and it was determined that all measured and derived estimates of stand biomass, density, height, and basal area compare

exceptionally well with literature values for similar mangrove stands in Asia and elsewhere in the world. An even more significant study was done for Fiji alone, determining the carbon content of mangrove soil in intact forest and at different stages of mangrove conversion, which allowed the calculation of carbon emissions due to mangrove conversion.

#### **First Economic Valuation of Mangroves Goods and Services for Vanuatu**

The economic value of mangroves in Vanuatu ranges from approximately US\$ 4,300 per hectare per year in Crab Bay to approximately US\$8,500 per hectare per year in Eratap.

#### **Revival and the Re-establishment of the Fiji National Mangroves Management Committee**

A committee which now acts as a technical advisory committee under Fiji's National Environment Council (NEC) was another highlight. MESCAL Fiji was able to review and revise the 1985/86 National Mangrove Management Plan. To date, the plan is pending approval from Cabinet to be passed as a national policy. MESCAL Fiji also developed a co-management plan of Nasoata Island (situated at the mouth of Rewa delta). At community level, the co-management plan will be used to guide the sustainable management of marine and coastal resources of Nakorovou and neighbouring villages, Dreketi district in Rewa province. At national level, it will be a component of the Fiji Government's submission for Nasoata Island being nominated a global Ramsar site, which furthermore supports Fiji's commitment and obligation under the Ramsar Convention.

The success of the MESCAL project and the Pacific Mangroves Charter has certainly raised ORO's profile as the leading agency in the region in mangrove-related work.

#### **Enhancing US-Kiribati Engagement on Large MPAs**

The outstanding achievement of the small US Embassy grant secured for enhancing collaboration between the PIPA and the PRIMNM was another highlight of the programme. Through a series of facilitated meetings between the management of two of the world's largest MPAs, a Cooperation Arrangement was signed by His Excellency President Anote Tong of Kiribati and Sally Jewel, US Secretary of the Interior at the World Parks Congress in Sydney, Australia. The Cooperation Arrangement was to coordinate research and support conservation activities in the two MPAs. The outcome of this small grant has cemented IUCN's role as a convenor and a partner in the development process of large MPAs that have been declared in the region.

#### **Challenges**

- High turnover of the MESCAL project management unit staff. Having staff leave mid-way through a project can severely affect progress and this was one of the reasons why implementation of project activities commenced in year 3 of MESCAL.
- The length of time it took to formalise Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) with the Governments, formulate work plans, and appoint in-country Project Coordinators.
- Get community buy-in. It required regular consultations and clarity on expected deliverables. Donors need to understand and consider that projects in the Pacific invariably require a one-year start-up period. Many of the Environment departments in the region are recipients of significant Climate Change funds and yet are nearly always under-resourced in terms of manpower. This must be taken into account when estimating project lifespans. The MARSH project had its own set of challenges, again related to personnel issues.

Implementing a project in five provinces in Papua New Guinea (PNG) with six partners was always expected to be a challenge due to the difference in scale, political complexity, bureaucratic process, and capacities of local NGOs. The rigorous scrutiny of IUCN policies and processes by USAID was an enormous challenge. The decision to terminate MARSH at the end of year 3 rather than year 5 was a major blow to all partners but IUCN ORO learnt many lessons, particularly the importance of following one's own procurement policies. The recruitment of suitably qualified personnel must be done in a fair and transparent manner with appropriate reference checks. The reputational harm to IUCN because of not doing this in the recruitment of the MARSH Programme Management Unit (PMU) was an expensive lesson indeed.

#### **Way Forward**

The programme, having a focus on nature-based solutions, has realigned its primary goal to develop the livelihoods of Pacific Island communities through the sustainable management of healthy ecosystems by 2020.

The extension of the MARSH project till September 2015 will allow the proper winding down of the project and a dignified exit from the five provinces in PNG.

There will be a new Climate Change Adaptation project commencing in Republic of Marshall Islands allowing the Water & Wetlands Programme the opportunity to gain additional experience in Micronesia. This is a welcome challenge after working extensively in Melanesia and Polynesia.

There is also the opportunity to expand the work successfully achieved with Large MPAs perhaps including new countries in a new proposal.



# Deploying Nature-Based Solutions to Global Challenges in Climate, Food and Development

## Energy

The Energy, Ecosystems and Sustainable Livelihoods Initiative (EESLI) is ORO's flagship energy programme. EESLI aims to promote energy systems that are ecologically efficient, sustainable, and socially equitable through fostering energy security in the Oceania region.



## Projects

Current project work has involved nine Pacific Island Countries; under EESLI Phase 1: Tonga, Samoa, Vanuatu, Tuvalu, Republic of Marshall Islands, and Palau were involved in a variety of initiatives, with Phase 2 including Kiribati, Fiji, and Papua New Guinea. The Energy Programme also implements the Global Environment Facility Pacific Alliance for Sustainability (GEFPAS) Low Carbon Islands (LCI) Project in three small economies in Oceania – Nauru, Niue, and Tuvalu.

The LCI is a private-sector driven mechanism to promote widespread use of renewable energy and energy efficiency measures to assist in meeting national targets for energy independence. Projects implemented under both components of the Programme include a range of solar photovoltaic installations at various scales, wind resource monitoring, small hydro installations and assessments, energy efficiency loan structure development, biofuel feedstock development for transport, and a range of publications to promote the knowledge shared and developed throughout the implementation process with all the involved stakeholder nations.

## Highlights

In partnership with the Arizona State University Vocational Training and Education for Clean Energy Programme, a series of training workshops on wind and hydro were organised targeting practitioners and policymakers. This training was linked to the in-country activities and was geared to inform future decision making for renewable energy interventions on the national scale.

Vanuatu Talise Hydro project Phase 1 was completed & commissioned, providing a power source to three rural communities in Vanuatu. The development and assessment process has set a precedent for high quality environmental impact assessments and mitigation of environmental damages when planning and implementing hydro projects, particularly in the volcanic islands of the Melanesian countries (Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Fiji).

Kiribati, PNG, and Fiji all joined the original six EESLI countries by adding approved projects to the programme. This addition of three of the largest nations in the region has bred further momentum to ORO's efforts in promoting energy systems that are ecologically efficient, sustainable, and socially equitable.

## Challenges

Building reliable workflows with the in-country representatives presents an ongoing challenge. This is mainly due to the relatively low capacity in key strategic technical areas of the projects. It is further exacerbated by the relatively poor communication infrastructure in the countries that are separated by vast ocean space making monitoring from a distance challenging.

The Energy Programme delivered a level of oversight and direction for in-country focal points to help expedite strategy development, work planning, and project implementation as it pertains to renewable energy. Mobilising workflows has also been facilitated by significant interaction between various levels of government departments and other sectors through a broad communicative & consultative approach.

## Way Forward

The Energy Programme has committed to expanding its human resource base to better manage the increasing number of countries participating in the programme. It is also solidifying principles of efficiency and conservation as they apply to national development projects through influencing internal IUCN operations. It will be taking a comprehensive approach to introducing best practices in environmental and social impact assessment to provide national planning stakeholders with a feasible course of action toward sustainable development of their energy, transportation, and waste management sectors to emphasize greater regional green growth priorities.

ORO's energy programme is working to develop country-specific projects whilst taking a regional programmatic approach to fulfilling the multiple needs of climate change adaptation & mitigation, biodiversity conservation, and prevention of land degradation.





What it means to be Papua New Guinean  
**“Love, respect  
 na care blong  
 environment...”**  
 Let us embrace our shared values as  
 we build the nation we want - together!



Mr. John Aini  
 Marine Management Areas Advocate, Kavieng

**“PNG... EM MI YAH!”**  
 National Strategy for Responsible Sustainable Development  
 www.PNGStaRS.org • Department of National Planning and Monitoring

Since 2013, IUCN ORO has been involved in PNG with the development of the National Strategy for Responsible Sustainable Development for PNG or StaRS.

Headed by the Department of Planning and Monitoring, StaRS was launched in Alotau, Milne Bay Province in April 2014.

StaRS provide a set of guiding principles that will be embedded into the country's short and long-term development plans. These principles are drawn from their constitution, cultural values and local and international lessons learned from past experiences.

“This is a development revolution that is build on innovative, responsible and sustainable use of our rich natural resources, our culture, our people and

our PNG Way”, said Hon. Charles Abel, Minister for National Planning and Monitoring.

A StaRS national multimedia awareness and education campaign, “PNG... Em Mi Yah!” (I am PNG, PNG is me) has been developed with the aim to inspire every citizen to play his or her role in building Papua New Guinea in a smart, responsible and sustainable way.

‘StaRS Champions’ who has already been practicing the principles of StaRS from all over the country has been selected to feature in the campaign commercials and promotion material.



## MUA Voyage – A Pacific Call, Global Action

**Across the Pacific, the voyaging canoe is said to represent genealogy. The canoe is origin and possibility, heritage and story, and a poetic, powerful metaphor of planet Earth, reminding us that we are an island of finite resources, floating in the sea of space. As she voyages, the canoe embodies harmony, teamwork, respect and the seeking of new horizons. Our vakas are symbols of our communities who have lived as one with nature. We have adapted to the vast expanses of the Pacific – harnessing the energy of the wind, the sun and the currents and guided by nature we travel with our message to the world.**

The Mua Voyage was a journey taken by four traditional voyaging canoes that sailed more than 5,000 nautical miles from the Pacific Islands to Australia. Four vaka from New Zealand, Cook Islands, Samoa and Fiji arrived on the opening day of the 6th World Parks Congress, bringing a unified voice on behalf of the thousands of islands and communities connected as guardians of the great Pacific Ocean. The Congress – the landmark global forum on protected areas, held only once a decade – brought together more than 6000 delegates from over 160 countries. There, the goal of the Mua Voyage was to deliver a powerful message to the international community: an amplified call for the world to follow the Pacific's lead in extraordinary commitments to ocean protection, and a demand for greater action in the face of climate change.

### One Pacific Voice: Bringing the Pacific Message to the 6th World Parks Congress

On September 25th, 2014, the Mua Voyage began in the Cook Islands. The journey took the vaka to Samoa, Fiji, Vanuatu, the Gold Coast of Australia and finally to Sydney. On November 11th, the voyaging canoes embarked on their final leg. Joined by Prime Minister Henry Puna of the Cook Islands, President Tommy Remengesau of Palau and President Anote Tong of Kiribati, the canoes sailed beneath the iconic Sydney Harbour Bridge, past the Opera House, and into Darling Harbour. The vaka were met by an ecstatic welcome party of dancing, drumming, waving crowds hundreds strong gathered at the Sydney Maritime Museum. The fleet had the world's attention. As

Hon. Henry Puna declared, "Today is history. This moment is history." The overwhelming sentiment at the arrival was one of hope and unity. "We are not divided by the ocean, we are indeed connected by the ocean," said

Tommy Remengesau, "And the ocean is our lifeline. We call for global action."

Over the course of the Congress, the Mua Voyage's message spread quickly and powerfully, capturing the heart of and imagination of the rest of the world. At the Pacific Pavilion, island leaders, community members and

voyagers gathered over the course of the week-long event to share their stories. They brought a poignant message of the threats facing their island homes, and called for extraordinary global partnerships and commitments from the rest of the world to help sustain the Pacific Islands for future generations. They spoke of our changing climate and rising seas; of warming and acidifying oceans; of dwindling fish stocks and threats to food security, of intensifying storms and eroding coasts. As young Fijian crew member Drue Slatter said, "Pacific Islanders stand to lose their land, their resources, their identity and sovereignty."



*"We think of the Pacific Ocean as our own vaka. For centuries, the Pacific Ocean has looked after us. Now that the mother vaka is at risk it's our duty to give back a fraction of what she's done for us. We need to protect our ocean. It sustains us – our people, not just with resources. It hasn't just shaped our coastlines... it's shaped our culture, brought the beat to our drums, the song to our lips. We're losing our homes. We hope to touch the lives and hearts of people who have decision-making power...we can't do it on our own. While we stand here because our Pacific Ocean is vast, we ask for your help – she is not limitless."*

Yet the vaka also brought a message of hope, highlighting the actions of Pacific Island leaders and local communities to secure sustainable livelihoods and biodiversity conservation in harmony with their cultures. As IUCN Oceania Director Taholo Kami said, "While we are the frontline of these issues, we are also the frontline of the solutions." As the storms get stronger, the Pacific remains resilient, bravely adapting with the traditional knowledge of their ancestors working in synergy with modern approaches.

The vaka perspective is about revitalization of traditions that offer powerful contributions to conservation, human health and sustainable development through a renewed connection with nature. As Cook Islands voyager Teina Mackenzie said, "We're bringing a piece of our home, our heart to this conference...It's about remembering the past so that we can step into the future." The Pacific Islands

are also at the cutting edge of the future of conservation, showcased by the unprecedented stand made by many Pacific Island leaders to protect millions of square kilometres of marine areas. In a climate-challenged world, our hope lies in protecting and managing large natural spaces that provide life sustaining ecosystem services. "It's our message – that the Pacific Islands and our vast ocean resources are an important natural asset...and we need to take extraordinary measures to manage and protect what we have left," said Taholo Kami.

Moving forward, our next steps must be bold and swift, as embodied by the vaka as they sail towards new horizons. As the President of Palau so eloquently said: "Our sails are flags of hope—harnessing the power of wind, sun, and currents. We're all in this together. We're all in the same canoe. Now we need all hands on deck."

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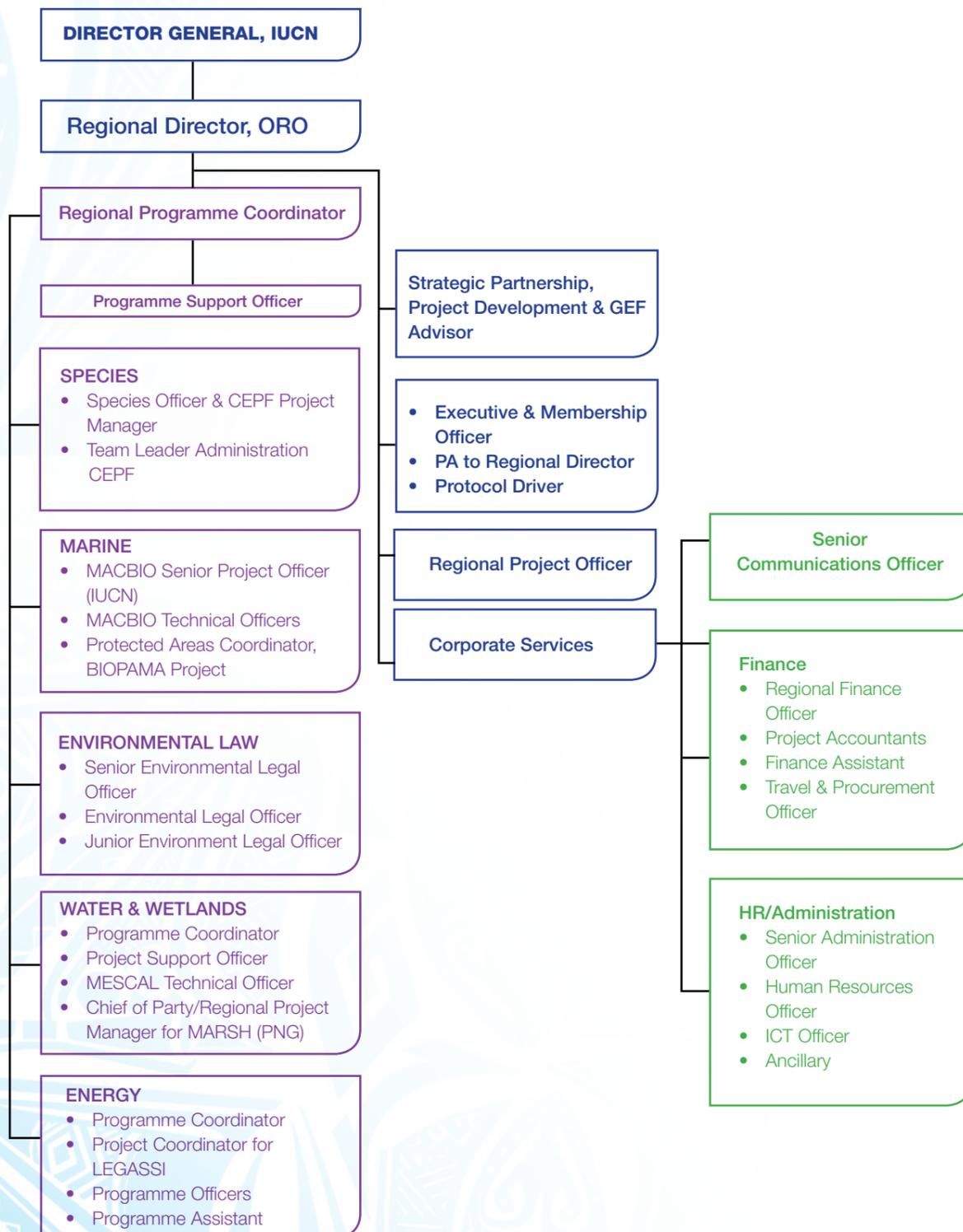


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# IUCN Oceania Secretariat Functional Structure and Business Line



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