

# Chapter 11

## Coastal Fisheries Governance in the Pacific Islands: The Evolution of Policy and the Progress of Management-at-Scale



Hugh Govan, Watisoni Lalavanua, and Dirk J. Steenbergen

**Abstract** For Pacific Island people, coastal fisheries are fundamental for supporting livelihoods, nutrition and health, cultures, and economies. However, only in the last 30 years has the region’s fisheries policy come to recognize the significant contributions of coastal fisheries and the need for national management strategies. This chapter tracks the evolving regional policy on coastal fisheries, including the challenges and opportunities for prospective regional and national policy formation and implementation. Regional policy first recognized the importance of management across coastal waters in 2003; since then, this recognition has increased through a series of directives and strategic frameworks. The need to accelerate the national implementation of coastal fisheries management has led fisheries agency staff and other science and civil society stakeholders to collectively develop, under the auspices of the Pacific Community (SPC), the “Pacific Framework for Action on Scaling up Community-based Fisheries Management: 2021–2025.” Regional policies are specifically targeted and prioritized for national needs and provide the most effective means of support delivery. The SSF Guidelines are supplementary, particularly in the areas of human rights, and their further integration through joint delivery at the national level will be important. Over 600 community-based fisheries management sites have been documented across the Pacific Islands, which in some countries includes most fishing communities. These sites represent almost the entirety of coastal marine protected areas, which are significant for achieving international conservation targets. However, in highly populated countries, substantial

---

H. Govan (✉)

School of Law and Social Sciences (SoLaSS), University of the South Pacific (USP),  
Suva, Fiji

e-mail: [hugh.govan@usp.ac.fj](mailto:hugh.govan@usp.ac.fj)

W. Lalavanua

Pacific Community (SPC), Noumea, New Caledonia

D. J. Steenbergen

University of Wollongong, Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources  
and Security (ANCORS), Wollongong, Australia

© The Author(s) 2024

J. Nakamura et al. (eds.), *Implementation of the Small-Scale Fisheries  
Guidelines*, MARE Publication Series 28,

[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-56716-2\\_11](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-56716-2_11)

207

community coverage remains unlikely, suggesting that other aspects of the enabling environment need to be addressed. More crucially, implementation is challenged by limitations to national staffing and recurrent budgets. With increasing philanthropic interest in funding locally governed marine and coastal areas, it will be crucial that these efforts build on the substantial progress made and are guided by regional and national public policy. A critical consideration is ensuring substantially increased management budgets and administrative capacity of fisheries agencies.

**Keywords** Comanagement · Scaling-up · Community-based management · Marine protected areas · SSF guidelines · Conservation

## 11.1 Introduction

### 11.1.1 *The Significance of Coastal Fisheries in the Pacific*

The Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) have jurisdiction over approximately 28 million square kilometers of ocean in their combined exclusive economic zones (EEZs). This area constitutes 8% of the global ocean, 20% of the global EEZs, and 25% of the world's coral reefs (Burke et al. 2011). This vast ocean domain is starkly contrasted by the small combined land mass of these countries (just over half a million square kilometers), which has earned these “Small Island Developing States” the sobriquet of *Large Ocean States*. The 22 PICTs are extremely diverse in terms of size, population, culture, development status, and economy (Govan 2015a, b). About 84% of the land area belongs to just one country—Papua New Guinea (PNG)—which, together with Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Fiji, account for 98% of the PICTs' land mass and 88% of the population in 2020 (Pacific Data Hub 2022). While much of the Pacific's land mass and people concentrate in the Melanesian region, Polynesia and Micronesia exhibit a very different seascape often characterized by an extensive spread of small (usually low-lying atoll) islands with dispersed populations. The comparatively immense ocean space belies the fact that the ocean area most people interact with and rely on for daily food are the coastal waters comprising less than 1.25% of the total ocean area (Photos 11.1 and 11.2).<sup>1</sup>

The volume of fisheries production across all PICTs was estimated in 2014 to be around two million tons, with a value of US\$3.2 billion dollars to the producer<sup>2</sup> (Gillett 2016). PICT fisheries can be broadly categorized as coastal (commercial or subsistence), offshore (domestic or foreign-based), freshwater, and aquaculture. The largest portion both by value and volume is comprised of offshore tuna

<sup>1</sup> Inshore Fishing Areas are defined as the area up to 50 km from shore or 200 m in depth, whichever comes first (Chuenpagdee et al., 2006). Sea Around Us 2015. Data provided by Sea Around Us (2015), SPC Statistics for Development Division and Govan (2017).

<sup>2</sup> Dockside, farm gate, or (for offshore fisheries) in-zone prices (Gillett 2016).



**Photo 11.1** Fisherwomen at the Nausori fish market, Fiji © Tom Vierus



**Photo 11.2** Fisherman cleaning his gillnet in the Solomon Islands © Zahyid

fisheries, which is harvested mainly by foreign-owned vessels, particularly in Kiribati and PNG.

However, the dominance of offshore fisheries by volume and value obscures the importance of coastal fisheries in the PICTs. Only a small proportion of the value of the offshore fisheries remains in the regional economy as access fees or levies paid to governments (though this can be a large proportion of fisheries-related government revenue). Vitrally, coastal fisheries provide most of the seafood industry's contribution to nutrition and nearly half of the fisheries-related contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) (SPC 2021a).

77% of the region's population lives in rural areas with a high dependency on fish, along with other natural resources, and except for PNG, 90% of Pacific Islanders live within 5 km of the coast (Andrew et al. 2019). A median of 26% of households participate in fishing, although this figure is as high as 75% in some countries. Regionally, 87% of households consume fish or seafood weekly, with national average consumption per person per year ranging between 16 and 102 kg (SPC 2021a, 2022); most are well above the global average of 20.5 kg (FAO 2022).

In addition to some of the highest rates of seafood consumption in the world, the importance of coastal fisheries for PICTs intensifies when considering the emerging crisis posed by the triple burden of malnutrition, micronutrient deficiency, and non-communicable diseases (NCDs) as island diets shift toward processed and nutrient-poor foods (Farmery et al. 2020). Eight of the world's ten most obese nations are PICTs (Andersen et al. 2013). NCDs are responsible for around 70% of all deaths in PICTs, with falling life expectancy in some countries (Hawley and McGarvey 2015). Coastal fisheries proved their importance as a vital safety net for many remote communities during the COVID-19 restrictions to mobility (Steenbergen et al. 2020; Ferguson et al. 2022).

The production of coastal fisheries is increasingly threatened by the emerging pressures of ocean warming and acidification, which are likely to exacerbate previously identified challenges related to coastal urban development and population growth. Coastal pollution, overfishing, erosion, and siltation of coastal ecosystems from logging and mangrove clearing all contribute to declines in catch potential (Bell et al. 2018).

Commercially valuable coastal fishery resources such as sea cucumbers, live aquarium species (Gillett et al. 2020a), trochus (Gillett et al. 2020b), green snail, and pearl oysters have been heavily overfished (SPC 2022). The most valuable coastal fishery in most countries is sea cucumbers which, when processed into *bêche-de-mer*, are second only to the offshore tuna fishery in terms of commercial value (Coastal Fisheries Working Group 2019).

This chapter outlines the evolution of coastal fisheries policy in the region, including the emerging role of community-based fisheries management (CBFM). First, we provide a background on the institutional structures through which policy has developed across the Pacific in the last 30 years. This includes both international policy developments and formative regional steps that led to the most recent endorsement of a Pacific framework dedicated to assisting and guiding national agencies for scaling up CBFM. The chapter proceeds by examining the current

status of coastal fisheries management in the region in terms of national legislation, policy, tenure arrangements and rights, capacity for support, and the extent of active management across PICTs. We reflect on the position of the FAO SSF Guidelines (FAO 2015) in relation to the interplay of national and regional policies. Finally, we reflect on this regional policy evolution and highlight both challenges ahead and important lessons learnt that can assist regional actors.

## 11.2 Institutional Governance of Coastal Fisheries in the Pacific

A noticeable feature of the Pacific region is its reliance on regional intergovernmental organizations, most of which have technical roles and one which plays a political role. These agencies are members of the Council of Regional Organizations of the Pacific (CROP). The two main bodies involved in fisheries include: (i) the Pacific Community's (SPC) Division of Fisheries, Aquaculture, and Marine Ecosystems (FAME), which provides the 22 member PICTs with information for science, management, and development of their aquatic resources (Pacific Community 2022) and (ii) the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), which assists its 17 member countries and territories in matters dealing with the management of their offshore fishery resources, including economics, surveillance, and legal aspects (Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency 2020). The Regional Fisheries Management Organization—the Western and Central Pacific Commission—implements the Provisions of the UN Straddling Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA), which includes PICTs as well as distant water fishing nations (Govan 2017).

In contrast to regional collaboration for the management of the major offshore tuna fisheries (Gillett and Tauati 2018), management of coastal fisheries rests almost exclusively in the national or local community domains, despite occasional subregional calls for cooperation on *bêche-de-mer* (Govan 2017). The major contribution of coastal communities to the governance of coastal resources has long been documented (Johannes 1978), and the emergence of a variety of community-based management approaches is a hallmark of coastal fisheries management in the Pacific (Johannes 2002; Govan et al. 2009).

National fisheries agencies are generally government departments or ministries dependent on national government budget allocations and priorities. As exceptions, PNG, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) have statutory authorities with some of their revenue generated from fisheries levies. Operational (as opposed to project or development) budgets are an indication of the long-term commitment by governments to fisheries agencies. Data from 2012–2013 suggest that fisheries agencies of the independent Pacific Island Countries are underfunded compared to global averages and those of more affluent Pacific Island Territories, particularly in relation to coastal fisheries management and associated regulatory or enforcement functions (Govan 2015a). Where fisheries departments exist at the subnational scale (i.e., through decentralized governance

in larger countries), they are usually severely underfunded and understaffed (Govan 2015b).

National environmental agencies often have functional roles relating to fisheries, including environmental impact assessment, endangered species, and implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). However, they face similar staffing and budget challenges and are often more centralized, as are the environmental sections that some other ministries may have (e.g., Forestry, Mineral Resources) (Govan 2015b; SPREP 2016).

### 11.3 International Policy: FAO Voluntary Guidelines on for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries

In the global arena, PICTs are signatories to several international instruments (Table 11.1). Most significantly, an extensive global consultation process which concluded in 2014 led to the development of the *Voluntary Guidelines on for*

**Table 11.1** International instruments relevant to coastal fisheries management (including food security) in the Pacific region, in chronological order by signature date (instruments in bold are mentioned in the text)

Year	International instruments
1973	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
1982	Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) - entered into force 1994
1992	Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
	Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)
1995	FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF)
	Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (UNFSA)
2005	Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security
2010	Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 of the CBD: Aichi Biodiversity Targets
2012	<b>Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forestry in the Context of National Food Security (Tenure Guidelines)</b>
2013	World Health Organisation Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases 2013–2020
2014	SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action [S.A.M.O.A.] Pathway
	<b>Voluntary Guidelines on for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication</b>
2015	<b>2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b>
	Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition (GSF). UN Committee on World Food Security



*Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication* (FAO 2015 hereafter referred to as the SSF Guidelines). In 2016, FAO and SPC commissioned a report to identify the links between the various regional and international instruments, the competitive advantages and roles of SPC and FAO, and synergies with other agencies and sectors to support regional and national priorities (Govan [in press](#)).

## 11.4 Regional Coastal Fisheries Policy Developments

PICTs have seen a remarkable evolution of regional policies from control to comanagement (Adams 2022; Table 11.2). Fisheries administrations have historically focused on fisheries development through increasing production, improvement of technical capacity, and improvements in fish marketing. Reef fisheries were deemed fully utilized, and management should be integral to fisheries development (Fakahau and Shepard 1986; Munro and Fakahau 1993), as well as important to ensuring sustainable development (Gibson 1978; Anon 1990). Emphasis tended to be on passive management tools such as size limits for commercially valuable species (e.g., trochus), gear restrictions, or protection of customary fishing rights (Anon 1983; Sims 1988; Nash 1992). By 2003, increasing concerns over coastal overfishing led to the first regional policy, the *Strategic Plan for Fisheries Management and Sustainable Coastal Fisheries in Pacific Islands* (Strategic Plan), endorsed by the PICT Heads of Fisheries (King et al. 2003). Concerns reached the level of the Pacific Island Forum Leaders who, in 2007, placed a high priority on “the development and management of coastal/inshore fisheries and aquaculture to support food security, sustainable livelihoods and economic growth for current and future generations of Pacific people” (PIF 38th Forum Communiqués 2007, p. 9), in the “Vava’u Declaration on Pacific Fisheries Resources.”

The Vava’u Declaration led to a review of the Strategic Plan to harmonize national policies and activities, resulting in the “Pacific Islands Regional Coastal Fisheries Management Policy and Strategic Actions 2008–2013” (known as the Apia Policy). The Apia Policy was based on input from fisheries agencies through surveys and regional workshops and was endorsed by the PICT Heads of Fisheries and, subsequently, ministers in 2008 (Anon 2008).

Leaders of the Melanesian countries at the Special Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) Leaders’ Summit, held in March 2012, called for the development of a roadmap for the protection of coastal fisheries. A subregional review (Govan 2013) provided background materials for MSG member countries (Fiji, New Caledonia, PNG, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu) to develop a policy in three meetings involving senior national fisheries officers and NGO observers. Though completed in October 2013 with draft national implementation plans, the *MSG Roadmap for Inshore Fisheries Management and Sustainable Development 2015–2024* was formally endorsed by Heads of Governments in July 2015, who committed to adopt and implement the Roadmap by 2024 (Photos 11.3 and 11.4).



**Photo 11.3** Young small-scale fishers enjoying their wooden canoe in Vanuatu © Tom Vierus



**Photo 11.4** Tabwena of Buariki, Kiribati collecting edible sea worms © James Karianako



**Table 11.2** Regional instruments relevant for coastal fisheries management (including food security) in the Pacific, in chronological order by signature date (instruments mentioned in the text in bold)

Year	Regional policy
1976	Apia Convention on Conservation of Nature in the South Pacific (in force since 1990)
1979	South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency Convention—Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) and subsidiary agreements
1986	Noumea Convention—Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific—Secretariat of the Pacific Region Environmental Programme (SPREP)
	Protocol Concerning Co-operation in Combating Pollution Emergencies in the South Pacific Region (into force 1990)
	Protocol for the Prevention of Pollution of the South Pacific Region by Dumping (in force since 1990)
2000	Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPFC) (in force since 2004)
2002	Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy (PIROP)
2003	<b>Strategic Plan for Fisheries Management and Sustainable Coastal Fisheries in Pacific Islands (Strategic Plan)</b>
2006	Pacific Islands Framework for Action to Climate Change (PIFACC) 2006–2015
2007	<b>Vava’u Declaration on Pacific Fisheries Resources</b>
2008	<b>Pacific Islands Regional Coastal Fisheries Management Policy and Strategic Actions 2008–2013 (Apia Policy)</b>
2009	Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean—South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) (in force since 2012)
2010	Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape Our Sea of Islands, Our Livelihoods, Our Oceania (FPO)
2011	Pacific Regional Environment Program Strategic Plan, 2011–2015
2013	Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the Pacific Islands 2014–2020 (Action Strategy)
	Western Pacific Regional Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases, 2014–2020
2014	Pacific Forum Economic Ministers and Pacific Health Ministers—NCD Roadmap for the Pacific
2015	Pacific Community Strategic Plan 2016–2020
	<b>Melanesian Spearhead Group Roadmap for inshore fisheries management and sustainable development 2015–2024</b>
	<b>A new song for coastal fisheries—pathways to change: The Noumea strategy</b>
	<b>Future of Fisheries: A Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries 2015–2025</b>
2017	Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP). 2017–2030
2021	Pacific Islands Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas 2021–2025
	<b>Pacific Framework for Action on Scaling up Community-based Fisheries Management: 2021–2025</b>

A major review of the “Future of Fisheries” in the PICTs (Gillet and Cartwright 2010), combined with a subregional (Govan 2013) and regional review (Govan 2015a), prepared the way for a regional workshop involving over 100 participants including PICT fisheries and environment department representatives, coastal communities, staff from four CROP agencies and NGOs, and resource people from regional academic institutions. This led to *A New Song for coastal fisheries—pathways to change: The Noumea strategy* (also known as the New Song—SPC 2015). The New Song was approved by Heads of Fisheries and endorsed by the 11th Ministerial Forum Fisheries Committee Ministerial Meeting in July 2015. At the same meeting, a “Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries” was drafted covering offshore fisheries, with a summary of the Noumea Strategy serving as the basis of the coastal fisheries section. The *Future of Fisheries: A Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries 2015* (FFA and SPC 2015) was endorsed by PIF Leaders in 2015. In this way, the inputs of non-state actors to the Noumea Strategy informed the higher-level policies, at least related to coastal fisheries.

The PIF Leaders, following a submission from NGOs and SPC (PIF 2016, Forum Communique, para. 10), noted that: “coastal fisheries management continues to receive inadequate attention at the national level” and strengthened their commitment “agreed to expand the broad heading of fisheries to include coastal fisheries, noting links to communities, food security, health issues, in particular non-communicable diseases.” Leaders also noted the need to ensure ecosystem integrity to address issues such as ciguatera outbreaks, as well as the need to sustainably manage sea cucumber stocks. To that end, PIF Leaders tasked the SPC “to coordinate with National Fisheries Agencies, other CROP agencies and regional and national community groups, to strengthen support and resourcing for coastal fisheries management” (PIF 2016, Forum Communique, para. 10) and further endorsed fisheries and climate change to be standing agenda items for leaders that require a whole-of-government approach (PIF 2017, Forum Communique, para. 41). Coastal fisheries management understood as CBFM and the inclusion of ‘community groups’ had been endorsed at the highest regional level. This reflects an incremental and evolutionary trajectory of regional policy, which has evolved from 2003 when only one of six goals referred to CBFM (King et al. 2003), to 2008 when CBFM and participation of women and youth made up two of six principles (Anon 2008), and to 2015 when the need to “empower coastal communities to manage and use their fisheries resources sustainably” (FFA and SPC 2015, p. 1) was acknowledged and addressed, which centered CBFM, user rights, and the inclusion of women, youth, and marginalized groups in these strategies.

Historically, regional ocean-related policies have lacked major impetus for implementation, although policies such as the previous Apia policy, and now the Noumea Strategy, guide the work programs of SPC (Chapman 2015). Increasingly, major regional donors—particularly Australia and New Zealand—have provided funding to implement segments of these recent policies.

There is scarce evidence to date that national coastal fisheries planning processes have considered international or regional policies. However, the MSG Roadmap was explicitly used to frame coastal fisheries development of PNG, Solomon

Islands, and Vanuatu (Govan, H. Pers Obs.; Anon 2017; VFD 2019; Steenbergen et al. 2022), and the Noumea Strategy was referenced in the case of Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

## **11.5 Pacific Framework for Action on Scaling Up Community-Based Fisheries Management: 2021–2025**

The Future of Fisheries Roadmap and the Noumea Strategy provide the regional context for managing coastal resources in ways that are underpinned by CBFM. The Heads of Fisheries, in May 2020, requested the SPC FAME to assist member countries with the scaling up of CBFM (FAME Secretariat 2020), in recognition of the challenge of ensuring that sustainable management is practiced across the vast coastal fishing areas of the 22 PICTs.

Framed as the development of more specific national guidance for moving the regional policies toward implementation on the ground, the process built on the lessons learned over the previous decades of policy development. Appropriate participation of national staff in a process of analysis and planning was essential for ensuring relevance and ownership by staff at the national level. Wide participation of other stakeholders (e.g., communities and civil society organizations) improved access to lessons learned and strengthened partnerships. The process also presented the opportunity for PICTs to consider increased emphasis on issues raised by the SSF Guidelines.

Regional consultation workshops were held virtually due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, bringing together over 200 participants from 18 PICTs including fisheries officers, community members, NGOs, CROP agencies, and other stakeholders. An information paper (SPC 2021b) framed principles of scaling-up CBFM that intended to be regionally appropriate but also nationally useful and applicable given the diversity of contexts. Subregional workshops (Melanesia, Polynesia, Micronesia) enabled countries from similar regional and cultural contexts to assess the current status of CBFM and share accomplishments and challenges for scaling up local fisheries management initiatives.

Iterations of dialogue, consultation, and draft development culminated in a regional workshop to consolidate findings (Anon 2021), as well as a codeveloped regional framework (Lalavanua et al. 2021). The resulting *Pacific Framework for Action on Scaling up Community-based Fisheries Management* (SPC 2021b, referred to as the Framework for Action) was endorsed by Ministers in August 2021 (FFA 2021). It aims to support and enable diverse PICTs, which may be at very different stages of implementation, to scale up CBFM by providing (i) a common planning and assessment tool to identify CBFM status, gaps, and priorities; (ii) strategic guidance to governments, partners, donors, and SPC on how and where to assist; and (iii) an overarching structure for evaluating progress in scaling-up CBFM.

In the Pacific context, scaling-up CBFM is understood to be the result of priorities, actions, and investments that are geared toward ensuring widespread community-based management capacity. These span multiple governance levels and engage multiple stakeholder groups and are linked under a common, coherent framework. Strategic objectives and outcomes were clustered in two main streams, namely, actions toward establishing “direct support to communities” and “enabling conditions for CBFM.”

Direct CBFM actions:

- Objective 1: Information, awareness, and communications—Coastal communities and relevant stakeholders regularly receive information that supports resource management and are able to provide feedback and raise concerns through appropriate and effective communication mechanisms.
- Objective 2: Joint action at site level—Prioritized communities are supported in fisheries management planning, implementation, monitoring, and/or enforcement, as appropriate.

Enabling CBFM actions:

- Objective 3: Strong and up-to-date management policy, legislation, planning, and operational guidance—CBFM scaling-up is adequately supported in policy and legislation.
- Objective 4: Organizational and individual capacity—Fisheries agencies develop the organizational and individual capacity to adequately support CBFM at both national and subnational levels, as appropriate.
- Objective 5: Ecosystem and inclusive approaches—Cross-agency and multi-stakeholder collaboration helps reduce threats to the environment, enhance adaptation to climate change, improve human well-being, strengthen disaster risk management, and ensure equitable access to benefits.

Notably, the Framework for Action identified crucial high-level engagement and concerted support required for addressing two major challenges in most, if not all, PICTs. Firstly, inadequate budgets and staffing of fisheries agencies for coastal fisheries management were identified, especially for CBFM, compared to the size of the challenges faced and the importance of sustaining coastal fisheries. Secondly, poorly supported subnational approaches to CBFM were highlighted, particularly in the larger countries. Strengthening subnational approaches, including direct support to communities, is required to overcome the challenges of logistics and distances involved by ensuring that assistance is more accessible and targeted to support communities.

The Framework for Action also included emerging elements not adequately captured in previous regional policy but identified in the SSF Guidelines. Examples included improved avenues for fisher representation, identification of potentially marginalized groups, and enhanced inclusive processes (People Centered Approaches), as well as strengthening disaster risk management and improved ecosystem approaches by enhancing interagency collaboration.

## 11.6 Current Status of Support for Scaling CBFM

The implementation of the Framework for Action envisions an update to the baseline data on management in each implementing country, which has just been completed (Govan and Lalavanua 2023). Other useful data collection for assessing the status of CBFM includes the SPC Coastal Fisheries Report Card (CFRC), which was instituted to support the Noumea Strategy and Future of Fisheries Roadmap as a single monitoring mechanism for both commitments. The CFRC is the first reporting mechanism adopted for coastal fisheries in the region, produced yearly since 2017, although attempts to disaggregate data by country started in 2021.<sup>3</sup> Regional studies now include further assessments of budgetary and staffing capacity (Marre et al. 2021), gender and human rights (Graham and D’Andrea 2021), legal frameworks (O’Connor et al. 2023), as well as a study on linkages between the SSF Guidelines and regional policy (Govan *in press*). Furthermore, SPC maintains several online databases (e.g., policy and legislation—Reeflex 2022). This chapter draws heavily on the regional survey and analysis (Govan and Lalavanua 2022, 2023) and the above information sources.

### 11.6.1 National Legislation

The regional policies call for strong, appropriate, and up-to-date supporting legislation (Future of Fisheries, 2015). Table 11.3 presents an overview of national fisheries legislation in the Pacific. In 14 of the 22 PICTs, primary fisheries legislation has been updated since 2000, with 5 updating primary legislation and other supportive legislation produced in an additional 5 since 2015. These updates and the progressions of policy presented in Table indicate a steady growth and recognition of coastal fisheries and comanagement in the region.

18 PICTs already have CBFM arrangements in practice, but at least five require clearer or improved legislation to be CBFM-supportive (Govan and Lalavanua 2023; O’Connor et al. 2023). A previous regional review of fisheries legislation in 14 PICTs (Davis et al. 2017; Gourlie et al. 2017) found high variability in the extent to which PICTs’ legislation met benchmarks derived from the Noumea Strategy. While the majority met benchmarks for “adequate enforcement mechanisms” (11 out of 14) and “Recognition and support for local communities and traditional management” (9 of 14), only five met benchmarks for “Equity for all stakeholders (gender and age focus),” and three met benchmarks for “recognition and protection of tenure” and “transparent, accountable, and adequately resourced management structures.” Even fewer met benchmarks for “Monitoring and evaluation,” “Protection for local workers and immigrants,” and “Climate change.” This highlights that where the presence of legislation is used as an indicator, more in-depth

---

<sup>3</sup>Fisheries Report Cards. *Future of Fisheries: Roadmap and Report Cards*. [online]. Available from: <https://fame-archive.spc.int/en/publications/roadmap-a-report-cards>

**Table 11.3** National fisheries legislation in PICTs supportive of coastal fisheries comanagement and agencies in charge of coastal fisheries

Country or territory Agency in charge of coastal fisheries and implementing fisheries management	Main legislation supporting coastal fisheries comanagement	Year
1. American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources (DMWR)	Regulations Title 24 - Chapter 10 (CBFM Program)	2008
2. Cook Islands Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR)	Marine Resources Act 2005	2005
	Environment (Atiu and Takutea) Regulations 2008	2008
	Island Government Act 2012–2013	2013
3. Fiji Ministry of Fisheries	Fisheries Act 1942	1941
	iTaukei Lands Act 1905	1905
4. French Polynesia La Direction des Ressources Marines (DRM)	Deliberation n° 88-183 on fisheries (ZPR)	1988
	Deliberation n° 2004–2034 on public domain	2004
	Code de l'environnement, art.LP.2122-1 (Rahui)	2017
	Arrêté n° 410 CM du 21 octobre 2004 (PGEM)	2004
5. FSM State level: DMR, DFMR, KIRMA, KCSO, OFA, MRMD	Chuuk State Constitution	
	Chuuk State PAN Act 2017	2017
	Kosrae State Protected Area Act 2010	2010
	Kosrae State Resource Royalty Act 2016	2016
	Pohnpei State constitution,	
	Pohnpei State Marine Sanctuary Act 1999	1999
	Yap State Constitution	
	Yap State Code, Title 18	
	Unknown	
6. Guam Department of Agriculture (DA—Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources (DAWR))	Local Government Act 1984	1984
	Fisheries Act 2010	2010
7. Kiribati Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resource Development (MFMRD)	Fisheries (Conservation and Management of Coastal of Marine Resources) Regulations 2019	2019



8. Marshall Islands Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority (MIMRA)	Constitution of the Republic of Marshall Islands Protected Areas Network (PAN) Act 2015 Management and Development of Local Fisheries Act 1997 Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture Act 2020	2015 1997 2020
9. Nauru Nauru Fisheries and Marine Resources Authority (NFMRA)	Organic Law n° 99-209 North Province Deliberation n° 2014-316/APN (Kan-Gunu) Loyalty Islands Province Environment Code Domestic Fishing Act 1995 Village Council Act 2016	1999 2014 2016 1995 2016
10. New Caledonia Direction des affaires maritimes de Nouvelle-Calédonie (DAM NC) and Provincial authorities	Commonwealth Code. Title 2 The Fair Fishing Act of 2000 and amendments Constitution of the Republic of Palau Palau National Code 27 (fishing) Palau National Code 24 (Environmental Protection) Fisheries Management Act 1998	2000 1981 1990 2017 2004
11. Niue Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), Fisheries Division	Fisheries Management (Amendment) Act 2015 Organic Laws: on Provincial Boundaries 1998/on Provincial Governments and Local-level Governments 1995 Local Government Ordinance 1964	2015 1998 1964
12. Northern Mariana Islands Department of Lands and Natural Resources (DLNR).I.	Pitcairn Islands Marine Protected Area Ordinance 2016 Fisheries Management Act 2016 Village Fono Act 1990	2016 2016 1990
13. Palau Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and the Environment, Bureau of Fisheries, Bureau of Environment—Protected Areas Network (PAN).I.	Fisheries Management Act 2015 Fisheries Management Act 2015 Provincial Government Act 1997 Local Government Act 1964	2015 1998 1997 1964
14. PNG National Fisheries Agency (NFA), provincial fisheries departments		
15. Pitcairn Government of Pitcairn Islands, Environmental, Conservation & Natural Resources Division (ECNRD)		
16. Samoa Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries—Fisheries Division		
17. Solomon Islands Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) and Provincial Fisheries Departments		

(continued)

**Table 11.3** (continued)

Country or territory	Agency in charge of coastal fisheries and implementing fisheries management	Main legislation supporting coastal fisheries comangement	Year
18. Tokelau	Fisheries Management Agency (FMA)	Tokelau Village Incorporation Regulations 1986	1986
19. Tonga	Ministry of Fisheries, Community Development and Advisory Section (CDAS)	Atafu Village Rules 2009	2009
20. Tuvalu	Tuvalu Fisheries Department	Fisheries Management Act 2002	2002
		Fisheries (Coastal Community) Regulations 2009	2009
		Falekaupule Act 1997 (up to 12 nm)	1997
		Conservation Area Act 1999	1999
		Marine Resources Act 2006; revised 2008; amended 2012, 2017	2006
21. Vanuatu	Vanuatu Fisheries Department	Decentralization Act 1994	1994
		Environmental Management and Conservation Act 2002	2002
		Fisheries Act 2014	2014
22. Wallis and Futuna	Direction des Services de l'Agriculture, de la foret et de la Peche. DSA	Law n° 61-814 of 29 July 1961	1961
		Deliberation n°73/AT/05 on marine fisheries	

Source: Govan and Lalavanua (2023)

<sup>a</sup>All laws mentioned may be found at <https://www.spc.int/CoastalFisheries/Legislation/countries>

examination is required against agreed-upon standards. The Framework for Action provides guidance on the priority areas that legislation should address to ensure support for scaling-up CBFM.

### ***11.6.2 National Policy***

The Noumea Strategy calls for the development and enforcement of strong policies for coastal fisheries that support community rights and management. SPC's regional CFRC states that nine PICTs have current coastal fisheries management policies, while ten have policies in need of drafting or revision. The most recently adopted relevant national policies are presented in Table 11.4.

Eight of the 10 PICTs that have developed coastal fisheries strategic policies supportive of CBFM have done so since 2015. The content of these policies is highly variable, and their support for CBFM cannot be assessed on the basis of name or how recently they have been developed. For instance, comparison (Tuxson 2018) with the guidance provided in the Framework for Action shows some to be inadequate (e.g., Fiji's of 2019), while some older policies may be adequate as they stand (e.g., American Samoa's of 2008).

There are numerous other policies and plans for different fisheries and specific issues. For instance, all the major bêche-de-mer exporting PICTs have recent management plans (except Fiji), noting that the major challenges with these and other plans tend to relate to implementation and enforcement rather than drafting (Barclay et al. 2017; Davis et al. 2017; Govan 2018; Lee et al. 2020).

Nevertheless, the emergence of coastal fisheries policy at the national level is a notable achievement. The major challenge is in reflecting policy in detailed implementation plans, staff terms of reference and operating procedures, and the allocation of resources. The call for the development of short-term implementation strategies for scaling up of operations and allocation of resources is very timely, as detailed in the Framework for Action.

### ***11.6.3 Tenure and Human Rights***

For many of the independent countries in the Pacific, customary tenure systems provide de facto access rights to the tenure holders and are a generally respected basis for negotiation with non-rights holders seeking access (Pulea 1993; Kuemlangan 2004; Govan et al. 2009). The development of national environmental and fisheries legislation in the newly independent states and the dependent territories, which have been introduced on top of traditional tenure systems, has often led to a legally pluralistic situation (Rohe et al. 2019). Each PICT has taken a different approach toward affording a suitable basis for coastal fisheries governance. Coastal fishing in PICTs is undertaken almost exclusively by Pacific Islanders (unlike

**Table 11.4** Coastal fisheries policies and instruments of PICTs, with those supportive of CBFM in italics

Country or territory	Main fisheries policy	Years
	Coastal fisheries policy	
1. American Samoa	<i>Regulations Title 24—Chapter 10 (CBFM Program)*</i>	2008
2. Cook Islands	Policy for Coastal Fisheries Resources	2014
3. Fiji	Ministry of Fisheries Strategic Development Plan	2019–2029
4. French Polynesia	None	
5. FSM	None	
6. Guam	None	
7. Kiribati	<i>Kiribati National Fisheries Policy</i> <i>Kiribati National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap*</i>	2013–2025 2019–2036
8. Marshall Islands	RMI Fisheries Policy PAN Strategic Action Plan <i>Reimaanlok: Looking to the Future. National Conservation Area Plan</i> <i>Nauru Fisheries and Marine Resources Authority Corporate Plan</i>	2020–2025 2008 2015–2020
9. Nauru	Unknown—by Province	
10. New Caledonia	National Coastal Fisheries Management and Development Plan	2017–2022
11. Niue	<i>Marine Conservation Plan (draft?)</i>	2020
12. Northern Mariana Islands	MAFE Strategic Plan	2021–2024
13. Palau	Fisheries Strategic Plan <i>A Roadmap for coastal fisheries and marine aquaculture for Papua New Guinea</i>	2021–2030 2017–2026
14. PNG	The Pitcairn Islands Marine Protected Area Management Plan <i>Coastal Fisheries and Development Plan</i>	2021–2026 2013–2016
15. Pitcairn	Solomon Islands National Fisheries Policy <i>Solomon Islands Community Based Coastal and Marine Resource Management Strategy</i> <i>Standard Operating Procedures (CBRM SOP)</i>	2019–2029 2021–2025
16. Samoa		
17. Solomon Islands		

18. Tokelau	None	
19. Tonga	Tonga Fisheries Sector Plan <i>Tonga National Fisheries Policy</i>	2016–2024 2018
20. Tuvalu	3rd Corporate Plan <i>Funafuti Reef Fisheries Stewardship Plan (main island)</i>	(2020–2022) 2018–2022
21. Vanuatu	Vanuatu National Fisheries Sector Policy <i>Vanuatu National Roadmap for Coastal Fisheries</i> <i>National strategy for scaling up CBFM in Vanuatu</i>	2016–2030 2019–2030 2022–2030
22. Wallis and Futuna	None	

\*specific or supports CBFM

offshore industrial fishing), and almost all is considered small-scale commercial or subsistence (Gillett and Tauati 2018). The complex interplay of these features means that small-scale fishers often benefit from preferential or exclusive access to all or part of inshore waters.

The Framework for Action calls for support of clear user and management rights of communities. Some countries have established mechanisms to ensure that coastal fishing communities have legal mechanisms to strengthen management control over the marine resources upon which they depend (e.g., Samoa, Tonga), or specifically for commercial fishing (e.g., Solomon Islands, Fiji). More in-depth review is needed to assess how robust the access, user, and management rights are in the present-day context (Graham and D'Andrea 2021; Govan and Lalavanua 2023).

Graham and D'Andrea (2021) provide initial considerations regarding the human rights elements requiring further exploration in each PICT. These include nationals who are not Indigenous to the particular rights-holding community, such as migrants or land-locked communities (cf. Crosman et al. 2022).

### ***11.6.4 Coverage or Reach of CBFM***

In the Pacific context, CBFM has been defined as “*Encouraging, motivating and empowering communities to sustainably manage their own coastal resources*” (MSG 2015, page 2). Consequently, regional policies emphasize the enabling legal and information conditions that are considered prerequisite (SPC 2015). However, the emphasis in most countries has been at the site level, in which communities have been supported to develop local fisheries management rules in sites. These range from undocumented local agreements to formally documented, even legal, management plans. These approaches have fisheries management objectives but may include many others including, frequently, biodiversity conservation objectives (Jupiter et al. 2014). Many countries do not keep up-to-date records of current sites, which make regional estimates challenging. To further complicate matters, some sites may be reported that are in fact conservation protected areas with no explicit fisheries management objectives (Govan et al. 2009). Govan and Lalavanua (2023) recently estimated the coverage of CBFM using communities that have been documented to be involved in fisheries management planning as a primary metric of coverage, and secondarily the numbers of sites (Table 11.5). CBFM sites were considered equivalent to a defined managed area (which may or may not contain closed areas, tabus, or reserves) that have community or local agreement, traditional rules, or management plan that are locally considered valid and legitimate. It should be noted that these sites have been considered by most Pacific Island countries as equivalent to Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) when reporting toward global biodiversity targets and constitute the majority captured in the World Database of Protected Areas (Govan and Lalavanua 2022).

It must be recognized that there are potentially many more communities that are carrying out CBFM based on the above criteria, but they have not been documented.



**Table 11.5** Inventory of sites recorded to be actively practicing CBFM within the last 3 years and their estimated community coverage across PICTs (Govan and Lalavanua 2022; <https://cbfm.spic.int/>). PICTs not appearing in this table did not exhibit active CBFM sites or had no data

	Number of sites active	Communities covered by sites	Estimated total coastal communities	Coverage	Community unit
<b>Melanesia</b>					
Fiji Islands <sup>a</sup>	89	437	850	51%	Villages
Papua New Guinea <sup>a</sup>	32	37	4000	1%	Villages
Solomon Islands	158	158	3000	5%	Villages
Vanuatu	65	65	1400	5%	Communities/ settlements
<b>Micronesia</b>					
Federated States of Micronesia	20	21	75	28%	Municipalities
Kiribati	27	29	184	16%	Villages
Marshall Islands	14	14	27	52%	Atolls
Palau	1	2	16	13%	States
<b>Polynesia</b>					
Cook Islands	23	40	41	98%	Districts
French Polynesia	36	20	116	17%	Communes and commune associée
Samoa	111	123	253	49%	Villages
Tokelau	3	3	3	100%	Villages
Tonga	59	54	111	49%	Villages
Tuvalu	9	9	9	100%	Councils
Totals	644	1009	10,096	10%	

<sup>a</sup>No government data, relies on nongovernment organization information

In some countries (e.g., Solomon Islands (Brewer 2013)), the numbers of undocumented sites may surpass those documented.

Comparisons with previous surveys (Govan et al. 2009; Govan 2015a, b) suggest that the countries with largest numbers of coastal communities (Melanesia) have not been able to reach and maintain a significant coverage of CBFM sites after more than two decades (Solomon Islands and Vanuatu), have lost coverage (PNG), or stagnated over the last decade (Fiji).<sup>4</sup> Conversely, smaller and/or better resourced countries and territories have achieved high community coverage with site-based approaches (Tuvalu, Samoa, Tonga, Cook Islands) or could potentially achieve this (French Polynesia, Marshall Islands).

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Govan 2011.

### ***11.6.5 Capacity: Budgets, Staff, and Implementation***

Data from 2012 to 2013 suggest that fisheries agencies across 14 countries (excluding PNG) had 836 staff and USD 15 million budgeted for operations (Govan 2015a). For the most populous PICTs, government investment in fisheries measured as a proportion of the estimated value of the fisheries ranges between 0.1 and 2.6%, compared to global estimates around 6% and those of the more affluent Pacific Island Territories (3–12%). Support for coastal fisheries, specifically resource management, was even lower in these same countries with few dedicated staff, and an estimated yearly operational budget of only USD 3.5 million for all countries combined (Govan 2015a).

Recent indications are that budgets remain low (Marre et al. 2021), though there are strong indications (Govan and Lalavanua 2022) that staffing has increased in support for coastal fisheries management and explicitly CBFM in at least six countries since 2015.

## **11.7 Discussion**

### ***11.7.1 Regional Policy Evolution***

Coastal fishing in the PICTs occurs mainly at local, small, nonindustrial scales. Institutional challenges in PICTs (e.g., limited resourcing and dispersed geographies) pose major obstacles to supporting improvements in national coastal fisheries development and management through regional or international policy. Nevertheless, in recent decades, coastal fisheries discourses have shifted from *development of fisheries* toward *sustainable inclusive management* as a significant priority, including recognition of the key role of fishing communities.

Regional policy has evolved both in content and formulation. Although these have been informed primarily by the priorities of fisheries agency staff and the social, economic, and institutional realities of their PICTs (often supplemented by specifically commissioned reviews and studies), civil society has become increasingly involved. Regional policy comprises lists of priorities and relatively feasible actions for PICTs, making them far easier to implement than directives proposed through international policies.

At the national level, the high diversity of PICTs in size, economic status, and cultural factors is reflected in the different approaches and progress made in achieving coastal fisheries management to suit context. This diversity required the approach taken in the Framework for Action aimed at assisting PICTs in identifying and addressing their specific needs with more context-specificity provided by sub-regional fora. Improvements in monitoring and reporting, and the development of the regional annual Coastal Fisheries Report Cards disaggregated to country level data, provide a further basis for evaluating and refining subsequent policy iterations (Photos 11.5 and 11.6).



**Photo 11.5** Fishermen in the Marshall Islands © Chewy Lin



**Photo 11.6** Malia, fisherwoman and coastal community management committee member of Kolonga Special Management Area, Tonga © Sia Angila & Joshua Savieti

The SSF Guidelines were developed in parallel to the regional policies, and despite an unprecedented global participative process (Nakamura 2022), relatively few Pacific Island governments, small-scale fishers, and regional and national civil-society organizations or representatives participated (Nisa 2014; Govan *in press*). Few representatives were involved who are active in development of the regional policies.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, stakeholders in Pacific Island fisheries are far more familiar with the regionally developed policies (e.g., MSG Roadmap, Noumea Strategy) and exhibit stronger ownership over them (Song et al. 2019) by using them as a frame for national policies, as highlighted above (1.4).

FAO and SPC recognized the need to mesh the policies, developing a joint strategy document aiming to lay out the basis for collaborative support for a shared regional vision and outlining pathways at the national and subnational level (Govan *in press*). This document recognized the broad high-level coherence of the policies and the compatibility of envisaged outcomes, acknowledging that the regional policy was more strategically and contextually positioned to support implementation at the PICT level. Recommendations included that FAO base its regional action plan for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines on the structure of regional policy, seeking to support its implementation, capacity-building, and monitoring led by SPC. Another important conclusion was that FAO should consider supplementing some key areas more strongly emphasized in the SSF Guidelines, in particular gender, safety at sea, disaster risk management, transparency and climate change adaptation, and, a notable omission in regional policies, the need to build and strengthen existing and new forms of organizations and representation of fishers and related stakeholders at all levels of decision-making, as well as in the market chain and geographical scale. Some of these conclusions were similar to those in a concurrent study (Song et al. 2017). The Framework for Action strengthens the relatively weaker elements in existing regional policy compared to the SSF Guidelines, including aspects of fisher representation mechanisms, inclusivity, and human rights. This strengthens the case for integrated collaboration rather than risking distracting from the priorities of implementation through overzealous and independent promotion of the SSF Guidelines.

### ***11.7.2 Progress and Challenges for Implementation***

PICTs have made significant progress in updating legislation and coastal fisheries policies, in some cases through several iterations. However, the legislation and policies merit deeper analysis on a case-by-case basis as they reflect widely varying levels of detail and relevance to the broad aims of scaling-up CBFM (cf. Gourlie et al. 2017). More crucially, the extent to which policy translates to implementation

---

<sup>5</sup>NB: Apia Policy [three from territories, two from countries, none from SPC], the MSG Roadmap or Noumea Strategy [two from SPC and five from PICTs].

is already challenged by limited national staffing and budgets. Increasing commitment by regional agencies to monitor the national implementation of ocean-related policies may support more political oversight in general and momentum on national coastal fisheries management in particular (Govan 2017).

Support by (largely) national government programs has shown significant progress in one subset of PICTs where a majority of coastal communities are directly engaged in local management. However, in the most populous countries, only a small proportion of communities receive significant site support—justifying the calls in the Noumea Strategy (SPC 2015) to move from “small pockets of effective coastal fisheries management [...] to meaningful proportions of the coastal environment” (p. 7). For the larger countries, the Framework for Action suggests that other more cost-effective or strategic approaches should be prioritized, such as ensuring that enabling legislation, information availability, and rights regimes are in place. In many PICTs, conservation agendas focusing on a site-based approach are potentially distracting from achieving comprehensive systems of fisheries management, which is of serious concern where poverty levels and resource dependency are particularly high.

The rights to access, exclude, or manage fisheries resources are often based on customary tenure. However, experiences from across the Pacific provide valuable avenues to move forward, including innovative approaches to fisher rights developed in Tonga (FAO 2017), recognition of tenure for fisheries management purposes through village by-law systems in Samoa (Quimby and Levine 2021), and coastal commercial fisheries management based on customary tenure in Solomon Islands (Schwarz et al. 2020). In a majority of cases, access rights are more or less taken for granted locally, operating as the *de facto*; however, these are potentially being undermined or overlaid by emerging layers of legislation in other sectors. In-depth and cross-sectoral national assessments are therefore warranted and timely.

The Framework for Action and the SSF Guidelines highlight some areas that particularly deserve special or increased attention in PICTs:

- **Inclusivity:** Ensuring the equitable benefits envisaged in regional policy depends on accounting for the imbalances and inequalities that exist between individuals or groups due to varying social characteristics such as gender, age, ethnicity, social status, disabilities, or level of education. Potential examples of such groups raised by country representatives (SPC 2021b) include foreign workers, immigrants, untitled men,<sup>6</sup> youth, widows, women married into the village, and different ethnic groups. The Framework for Action recommends that PICTs carry out assessments as a first step.
- **Fishers’ representation:** In part due to the geographies and lack of organization of coastal fishers, there are few if any subnational or national representative bodies. Ensuring fisher concerns and proposals are adequately considered in national

---

<sup>6</sup>The *aumaga* or untitled men is a Samoan social class of men, mostly young, who perform most of the heavy labor and have ceremonial responsibilities whose activities are organized by the middle-level chiefs (King and Fa’asili 2001).

or regional policies is a huge challenge. The Framework for Action proposes government attention to developing functioning consultation and feedback mechanisms. Special attention will be needed to integrate independent verification processes that ensure that legitimate fisher voices are heard.

- **Civil society concerns:** Civil society and fishers have contributed to and generally support regional policies, but their specific concerns do not receive adequate consideration. Independent civil society declarations and policies highlight important issues otherwise de-emphasized in government-led processes at national and regional levels such as frustration with the lack of political will and accountability and the need to increase budgetary support or address wider ecosystem threats to fisheries.
- **Transparency and accountability:** Political interference and lack of transparency and accountability sometimes severely undermine management of the more valuable coastal fisheries (Munro and Fakahau 1993; Naqali et al. 2008; CCIF 2013; Coastal Fisheries Working Group 2019). Policy processes dominated by government staff or reliant on political oversight are compromised at the national or regional level. Improving transparency and accountability in resource management could reverse the decline and increase the value of key coastal fisheries to rural communities, requiring strategies to ensure transparency and accountability (Tuxson 2018; Coastal Fisheries Working Group 2019).

### *11.7.3 Lessons Learned in Regional Policy Development*

The history of development of regional policies has shown an important evolution and iterative improvement over the last 20 years. Moving from the general regional policy to implementation at the national level is a challenge for other regional coastal fisheries policies globally, and there may be benefits to sharing some lessons with these processes (e.g., Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa (AUC-NEPAD 2014) and the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (CRFM 2020)).

**Increasing inclusiveness:** The drafting of regional coastal fisheries policies has been led by national fisheries officers, which has given them a particular focus on national challenges and immediate actions necessary. There have been steady moves toward inclusiveness with the presence of NGOs and subsequently community members. Further moves to identifying and addressing marginalization may benefit from continued regional emphasis but will need to receive more attention at national levels.

**Building ownership:** It is apparent that fisheries officers and stakeholders feel more ownership of the regional policies by being involved in their development. Such ownership increases chances that the policies may be referred to or even used as a basis for developing national instruments.



**Relevance to PICT situations:** The main coastal fisheries policies, published in 2015, all benefitted from substantial review and analyses commissioned by the SPC. The Framework for Action took a slightly different approach, using an extended virtual workshop format to facilitate national self-assessments to better identify progress and obstacles toward widespread implementation of the 2015 policies. Subregional workshops ensured more targeted discussion, higher relevance, and more ownership.

**From regionally relevant to nationally useful:** The challenge posed to national relevance by overgeneralization in regional policies was met by the Framework for Action which provides a matrix against which PICTs can assess the main fisheries agency activities and enabling conditions considered important for the wide-scale application of CBFM. The Framework provides the opportunity for more detailed guidance in response to the specific national assessment, with greater chances of implementation through the development of work plans.

**Tracking progress:** Tracking the implementation of regional policies has been hindered by ad hoc monitoring and evaluation. The inclusion (since 2021) of disaggregated country data by SPC in an annual Coastal Fisheries Report Card is an elegant solution, though there is a need for finer resolution data and impartiality, as well as the potential inclusion of civil society data.

**Financing distractions:** The Framework for Action highlighted the two major challenges that require urgent and high-level engagement and concerted support in most, if not all, PICTs (SPC 2021b): inadequate national budgets and staffing of fisheries agencies for coastal fisheries management, and under-supported subnational approaches to CBFM, particularly in the larger countries.

Although the strategic approaches proposed by the Framework for Action to maximize the strengths of community rights and empowerment should increase cost-effectiveness, coastal fisheries management still does not receive anywhere near the budgetary support required. In addition, fisheries agencies are usually responsible for coastal MPAs, including those with conservation objectives, and the low government fisheries management budgets stand in stark contrast to the large budgets of many fisheries and conservation projects implemented by third parties (NGOs, consulting firms, academia), the majority of which do not integrate their funding mechanisms into national agency financing structures.

This funding reality challenges implementers to develop approaches that are appropriate and commensurate to the capabilities and recurrent budgets of the implementing government institutions. The commitment to substantially increase philanthropic funding for marine protection (e.g., Bezos Earth Fund 2022) risks distracting fisheries agencies and governments from consolidating the next steps in establishing coastal fisheries management systems and local management areas that aim to achieve both sustainable livelihoods and ecosystems. There is an urgent need to open the debate on the possibility that aid funding could supplement annual government operational budgets in the long term as well as secure the livelihood and conservation objectives of “scaling-up CBFM.” Trust funds or direct sector support could be starting points for discussion and the regional and subregional policies would be the logical frame for design.

## 11.8 Conclusion

The evolution of regional coastal fisheries-related policy shows a growing development trajectory of community-centered coastal fisheries comanagement practice. The progress of regional policy and the multiple national advances toward ensuring the enabling environment for such management practice strongly suggests that the region has reached a critical point of “readiness” to make the next steps toward institutionalization and implementation at national levels.

The Framework for Action and the broader increased harnessing of experience provide practical guidance to national actors and agencies (who ultimately must be the ones to operationalize it). It will be imperative that donors and other international partners strive to support and enhance the progress made. In doing so, ambitions must build on regional and national policies and advance regional and national actors as the prime coordinating agents for funding and resource distribution rather than being dictated by international (geopolitical) agendas. While some donors do indeed use these regional policies in development aid planning, large international conservation programs tend not to do so. This is of concern given the emerging momentum to leverage relatively large amounts of funding being channeled to global visions of marine protected areas. While these initiatives claim to support fisheries and livelihoods priorities, it is unclear how this would be achieved if not carefully aligned with regional and national efforts to support coastal fisheries management frameworks and achieve scaled-up CBFM, building on the most significant contribution to coastal protection in the region to date (Photo 11.7).



**Photo 11.7** Bermy Ariihee, young fisherwoman enjoying spearfishing in Rarotonga, Cook Islands  
© Johnny Beasley

**Acknowledgments** The authors would like to thank all staff from Pacific Island and Territory governments and other stakeholders who patiently provided responses to and clarifications around the surveys. The development of the survey benefitted from discussions with the following people: Ian Bertram, Aurelie Delisle, Stacy Jupiter, Patrick Smallhorn-West, and Alex Tilley. Financial support is gratefully acknowledged from the European Union and the Government of Sweden through the Pacific European Union Marine Partnership (PEUMP) Programme and from the Australian Government through the Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research (ACIAR project FIS-2020-172). Contents are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union or the Government of Sweden.

## References

- Adams T (2022) From control to community: a personal perspective on 30 years of change in Pacific Island artisanal fisheries and aquaculture. *SPC Fish Newsl* 168:30–44. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/zjk6x>
- Andersen AB, Thilsted SH, Schwarz AM (2013) Food and Nutrition Security in Solomon Islands. Working Paper, AAS-2013-06, WorldFish: Penang, Malaysia, p 15
- Andrew NL, Bright P, de la Rua L, Teoh SJ, Vickers M (2019) Coastal proximity of populations in 22 Pacific Island countries and territories. *PLoS One* 14(9):e0223249
- Anon (1983) Country statement—Fiji [WP 7]: summary. Noumea, New Caledonia: South Pacific Commission. Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries, Noumea, New Caledonia, 1–5 August 1983, 15th. 7 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/wn2c9>
- Anon (1990) Fiji fisheries division annual report 1989. Ministry of Primary Industries, Suva, Fiji. 37pp
- Anon (2008) Pacific islands regional coastal fisheries management policy and strategic actions: (Apia policy) (2008–2013). Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Noumea, 55 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/fmc3e>
- Anon (2017) A roadmap for coastal fisheries and marine aquaculture for Papua New Guinea: 2017–2026. Port Moresby, PNG: government of Papua New Guinea, and Noumea. Pacific Community, 20 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/23pnj>
- Anon (2021) Regional workshop report towards a Pacific framework for action on scaling up community-based fisheries management: 2021–2025. Noumea: Pacific Community. 24 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/vpn8u>
- AUC-NEPAD (2014) The policy framework and reform strategy for fisheries and aquaculture in Africa. African Union Commission and NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NEPAD Agency) [https://au.int/web/sites/default/files/documents/30266-doc-au-ibar\\_-\\_fisheries\\_policy\\_framework\\_and\\_reform\\_strategy.pdf](https://au.int/web/sites/default/files/documents/30266-doc-au-ibar_-_fisheries_policy_framework_and_reform_strategy.pdf)
- Barclay K, Fabinyi M, Kinch J (2017) Governance and the Papua New Guinea beche-de-mer value chain. *SPC Beche-de-mer Inform Bull* 37:3–8. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/bgidj>
- Bell JD, Cisneros-Montemayor A, Hanich Q, Johnson JE, Lehodey P, Moore BR, Pratchett MS, Reygondeau G, Senina I, Viridin J et al (2018) Adaptations to maintain the contributions of small-scale fisheries to food security in the Pacific Islands. *Mar Policy* 88:303–314
- Bezos Earth Fund (2022) Philanthropic Organizations Commit \$1B to Help Protect 30 Percent of the Ocean by 2030. <https://www.bezosearthfund.org/news-and-insights/philanthropic-organizations-commit-1b-to-help-protect-30-percent-of-the-ocean-by-2030>. Accessed 23 Aug 2022
- Brewer TD (2013) Social determinants of the exploitation and management of coral reef resources in Solomon Islands. PhD thesis. JCU, Townsville
- Burke L, Reyter K, Spalding M et al (2011) Reefs at risk revisited. World Resources Institute, Washington, DC. <http://www.wri.org/project/reefs-at-risk>

- CCIF (2013) Assessment of the enabling conditions for rights-based management of fisheries and coastal marine resources in the Western Pacific. Conservation and Community and Investment Forum. Trust for Conservation Innovation. Funded by the Packard Foundation 2013
- Chuenpagdee, R, Liguori, L, Palomares, ML, Pauly, D. (2006) Bottom-up, global estimates of small-scale marine fisheries catches. Fisheries Centre Research Reports 14(8). University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.
- Coastal Fisheries Working Group (2019) A call to leaders—most urgent actions required for sustaining or increasing the contribution of coastal fisheries to our communities. Noumea, New Caledonia: Coastal Fisheries Working Group. 4 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/t6zjq>
- CRFM (2020) Caribbean community common fisheries policy. CRFM special publication no 26. 27p
- Crosman KM, Allison EH, Ota Y, Cisneros-Montemayor AM, Singh GG, Swartz W, Bailey M, Barclay KM, Blume G, Colléter M, Fabinyi M (2022) Social equity is key to sustainable ocean governance. *NPI Ocean Sustain* 1(1):1–9
- Davis R, Gourlie D, Govan H, Marshman J, Hanich Q (2017) Legislating for a new Song: ensuring effective and up-to-date coastal fisheries laws in the Pacific region. *SPC Fisher Newsl* 153:36–39. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/9wzq3>
- Fakahau ST, Shepard MP (1986) Fisheries research needs in the South Pacific. In Forum Fisheries Agency, Honiara, Solomon Islands, and International Centre for Ocean Development, Halifax, Canada, vol 72, p 73
- FAME Secretariat (2020) HoF 12 outcomes (19 May 2020). 12th heads of fisheries meeting, 12–14 May 2020, virtual meeting. Pacific Community, Noumea, 7 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/z6e5q>
- FAO (2015) Voluntary guidelines for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries in the 802 context of food security and poverty eradication: at a glance. FAO, Rome
- FAO (2017) A review of special management areas in Tonga, by Robert Gillett. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular No. 1137. Apia, Samoa. <https://www.fao.org/3/i7278e/i7278e.pdf>
- FAO (2022) The state of world fisheries and aquaculture 2022. Towards Blue Transformation. FAO, Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc0461en>
- Farmery AK, Scott JM, Brewer TD, Eriksson H, Steenbergen DJ, Albert J, Raubani J, Tutuo J, Sharp MK, Andrew NL (2020) Aquatic foods and nutrition in the Pacific. *Nutrients* 12:3705
- Ferguson CE, Tuxton T, Mangubhai S, Jupiter S, Govan H, Bonito V, Alefaio S, Anjima M, Booth J, Boslogo T, Boso D, Brenier A, Caginitoba A, Ciriayawa A, Fahai'ono JB, Fox M, George A, Eriksson H, Hughes A, Joseph E, Kadannged S, Kubunavanua E, Loni S, Meo S, Micheli F, Nagombi E, Omaro R, Ride A, Sapul A, Singeo A, Stone K, Vakalalabure M, Tuivuna MC, Vitukawalu VB, Waide M (2022) Local practices and production confer resilience to rural Pacific food systems during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Mar Policy* 137:104954. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/.../abs/pii/S0308597X2200001X>
- FFA (2021) Statement of outcomes from the second regional fisheries ministers meeting (RFMM2) Honiara, Solomon Islands: . 3 p. [https://www.ffa.int/system/files/2021%20RFMM2%20Statement%20of%20Outcomes\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.ffa.int/system/files/2021%20RFMM2%20Statement%20of%20Outcomes_FINAL.pdf)
- FFA, SPC (2015) Future of fisheries: a regional roadmap for sustainable Pacific fisheries [leaflet]. Noumea: Secretariat of the Pacific Community. 4 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/xnc9f>
- Gibson D (1978) Country statement—Solomon Islands 1977 [WP 2]. South Pacific Commission. Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries, Noumea, New Caledonia, 13–17 March 1978, 10th, 8 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/dzugz>
- Gillet R, Cartwright I (2010) The future of Pacific Island fisheries. Noumea: Secretariat of the Pacific Community. 139 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/h5pca>
- Gillet RE (2016) Fisheries in the economies of Pacific Island countries and territories. Noumea: Pacific Community. 684 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/pvyuo>
- Gillet R, Tauati MI (2018) Fisheries in the Pacific. Regional and national information FAO fisheries and aquaculture technical paper no. 625. FAO, Apia. Retrieved from: <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/I9297EN/>

- Gillett R, McCoy MA, Bertram I, Kinch J, Desurmont A, Halford A (2020a) Aquarium products in the Pacific Islands: a review of the fisheries, management and trade. Report to Pacific Community (SPC)
- Gillett R, McCoy MA, Bertram I, Kinch J, Desurmont A (2020b) Trochus in the Pacific Islands: a review of the fisheries, management and trade. Report to Pacific Community (SPC)
- Gourlie D, Davis R, Govan H, Marshman J, Hanich Q (2017) Performing “a new Song”: suggested considerations for drafting effective coastal fisheries legislation under climate change, marine policy, [online]. ISSN 0308-597X. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2017.06.012>
- Govan H (2011) Good coastal management practices in the Pacific: experiences from the field. ICRI/SPREP, Apia, Samoa. 42 p ISBN: 978-982-04-0427-4 (print) 978-982-04-0428-1 (online). <https://bit.ly/ICRIGovan2011>
- Govan H (2015a) Preliminary review of public expenditure of the fisheries agencies of Pacific Island countries and territories: policy, operational budget and staffing support for coastal fisheries. [online]. Noumea. Report for secretariat of the Pacific community, FAME Division. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.4949.9363>. Available from: <http://bit.ly/budgetstudy2015>
- Govan H (2015b) Area-based management tools for coastal resources in Fiji, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Volume 1: status, capacity and prospects for collaborative resource management. Volume 2: country reports. [online]. Suva. Report for the marine and coastal biodiversity Management in Pacific Island Countries (MACBIO) project. Available from: <http://bit.ly/Govan20151n2zip>
- Govan H (2017) Ocean governance—our sea of islands. In: Katafono R (ed) A sustainable future for small states: Pacific 2050, commonwealth secretariat, London. ISBN (paperback): 978-1-84929-163-7 / (e-book): 978-1-84859-957-4 <http://bit.ly/Govan2017-OG>
- Govan H (2018) A review of sea cucumber fisheries and management in Melanesia. SPC Fisheries Newsletter #154 – September–December 2017. [online]. pp 31–42. <http://bit.ly/2E8UvYx>
- Govan (in press) Coastal fisheries policies: linkages between pacific islands and global policies (SSF Guidelines). FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture circular no. C1192. FAO, Apia
- Govan H, Lalavanua W (2022) Status of community-based fisheries Management in Pacific Islands Countries and Territories: survey report. Pacific Community, Noumea, 70 p. [https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/H\\_uNgzxUo7kB36r](https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/H_uNgzxUo7kB36r)
- Govan H, Lalavanua W (2023). The “Pacific way” of coastal fisheries management: status and progress of community-based fisheries management. SPC Fisher News169:33–47. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/svtsz>
- Govan H, Tawake A, Tabunakawai K, Jenkins A, Lasgorceix A, Schwarz A, Aalbersberg W, Manele B, Vieux C, Notere D, Afzal D, Techera E, Tulala E, Sykes H, Walton H, Tafea H, Korovolavula I, Comley J, Kinch J, Feehely J, Petit J, Heaps L, Anderson P, Cohen P, Ifopo P, Vave R, Hills R, Tawakelevu S, Alefaio S, Meo S, Troniak S, Malimali S, Kukuian, George S, Tauaefa T, Obed T (2009) Status and potential of locally-managed marine areas in the S.South Pacific: meeting nature conservation and sustainable livelihood targets through wide-spread implementation of LMMAs. SPREP/WWF/WorldFish-Reefbase/CRISP. 162 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/fpqsk>
- Graham A, D’Andrea A (2021) Gender and human rights in coastal fisheries and aquaculture: a comparative analysis of legislation in Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Pacific Community, Noumea, 108 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/zz6mn>
- Hawley NL, McGarvey ST (2015) Obesity and diabetes in Pacific islanders: the current burden and the need for urgent action. *Curr Diabetes Rep* 15:29
- Johannes RE (1978) Traditional marine conservation methods in Oceania and their demise. *Annu Rev Ecol Syst* 9:349–364
- Johannes RE (2002) The renaissance of community-based marine resource management in Oceania. *Annu Rev Ecol Syst* 33:317–340.
- Jupiter SD, Cohen PJ, Weeks R, Tawake A, Govan H (2014) Locally-managed marine areas: multiple objectives and diverse strategies. *Pac Conserv Biol* 20(2):165–179. <https://bit.ly/2T6Josj>

- King M, Fa'asili U (2001) Community-based fisheries management [WP 8]. Secretariat of the Pacific Community. Heads of fisheries meeting, Noumea, New Caledonia, 23–27 July 2001, 2nd. 9 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/7ejzy>
- King M, Fa'asili U, Fakahau S, Vunisea A (2003) Strategic plan for fisheries management and sustainable coastal fisheries in Pacific Islands [WP 7]. Secretariat of the Pacific Community. Heads of Fisheries Meeting, Noumea, New Caledonia, 18–23 August 2003, 3rd. 61 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/2ywgd>
- Kuemlangan (2004) Creating legal space for community-based fisheries and customary marine tenure in the Pacific: issues and opportunities. Fish Code Review no. 7 (En). FAO, Rome, 65p
- Lalavanua W, Govan H, Steenbergen DJ (2021) Scaling-up community-based fisheries management in the Pacific: key outcomes of subregional workshops. SPC Fisher Newsl 165:18–22. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/zxqzz>
- Lee S, Govan H, Bertram I, Kinch J (2020) A comparison of sea cucumber fishery management plans, and implications for governance in Pacific Island countries. SPC fisheries newsletter 161. Pacific Community, Noumea, 34–39. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/ow5fp>
- Marre JB, Lalavanua W, Govan H (2021) National investments allocated to coastal fisheries and community-based fisheries management in the Pacific: a review of past monitoring efforts and recommendations. SPC Fisher Newsl 165:72–75. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/bstvt>
- Munro JL, Fakahau ST, (1993) Management of coastal fishery resources. In: Nearshore marine resources of the South Pacific. Forum Fisheries Agency, Honiara, pp 55–72
- Nakamura JN (2022) Legal reflections on the small-scale fisheries guidelines: building a global safety net for small-scale fisheries. Int J Mar Coastal Law 37(1):31–72
- Naqali S, Ledua E, Gillett R (2008) Aspects of corruption in Fiji's fisheries sector. Report to the World Bank. January 2008
- Nash WJ (1992) Trochus. Honiara, Solomon Islands: forum Fisheries Agency. FFA report 92/62. 49 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/n5h3m>
- Nisa Z (2014) Sharing the responsibility of the implementation of new international voluntary guidelines for small-scale fisheries via regional and National Networks. The United Nations—Nippon Foundation of Japan Fellowship Programme
- O'Connor S, D'Andrea A, Recio-Blanco X, Deveze S (2023). Legal guide to enabling and strengthening coastal fisheries co-management in the Pacific. Noumea: Pacific Community. 212 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/s5b7j>
- Pacific Community (SPC) (2022) FAME home. [online]. Available from: <https://fame1.spc.int/>
- Pacific Data Hub (2022) Pacific Community, Noumea, New Caledonia. <https://stats.pacificdata.org/>. Accessed 26 Aug 2022
- Pacific islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA). (2020) Home. [online] Available from: <https://www.ffa.int/>
- PIF (2016) 47th Forum Communiqué at <http://www.forumsec.org/category/communiques/>. Accessed 23 Aug 2022
- PIF (2017) 48th Forum Communiqué at <http://www.forumsec.org/category/communiques/>. Accessed 23 Aug 2022
- Pulea M (1993) An overview of constitutional and legal provisions relevant to customary marine tenure and management systems in the South Pacific. FFA report 93/23. Forum Fisheries Agency, Honiara, Solomon Islands. 61 pp
- Quimby B, Levine A (2021) Adaptive capacity of marine comanagement: a comparative analysis of the influence of colonial legacies and integrated traditional governance on outcomes in the Pacific. Reg Environ Chang 21(1):1–14
- Reeflex (2022) Pacific law and policy database on coastal fisheries and aquaculture. Pacific Community, Noumea. <https://www.spc.int/CoastalFisheries/Legislation/main>. Accessed 23 Aug 2022
- Rohe JR, Govan H, Schlüter A, Ferse SC (2019) A legal pluralism perspective on coastal fisheries governance in two Pacific Island countries. Mar Policy 100:90–97. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0308597X17307601>



- Schwarz AM, Gordon J, Ramofafia C (2020) Nudging statutory law to make space for customary processes and community-based fisheries management in Solomon Islands. *Maritime Studies* 19(4):475–487
- Sea Around Us (2015) University of British Columbia, Vancouver. <https://www.seaaroundus.org/>. Accessed 15 Jan 2015
- Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) (2016) State of conservation in Oceania-regional report. Apia SPREP [online] Available from: <https://www.sprep.org/attachments/Publications/BEM/state-conservation-oceania-report.pdf>
- Sims NA (1988) Trochus research in The Cook Islands and its implications for the management [BP 37]. Noumea: SPC Workshop on Pacific Inshore Fishery Resources, Noumea, New Caledonia, 14–25 March 1988. 13 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/to8h6>
- Song AM, Cohen PJ, Morrison TH (2017) Policies in harmony? Does the new song agree with the small-scale fisheries guidelines? *SPC Trad Marine Resour Manage Knowl Inform Bull* 38:26–36. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/gnew4>
- Song AM, Cohen PJ, Hanich Q, Morrison TH, Andrew N (2019) Multi-scale policy diffusion and translation in Pacific Island coastal fisheries. *Ocean Coastal Manage* 168:139–149
- SPC (2015) A new song for coastal fisheries pathways to change: the Noumea strategy. Noumea: Secretariat of the Pacific Community. 16 p <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/b8hvs>
- SPC (2021a) Future of fisheries: coastal fishery report card 2021. Pacific Community, Noumea. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/rfxg6>
- SPC (2021b) Pacific framework for action on scaling up community-based fisheries management: 2021–2025. Noumea: Pacific Community. 22 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/yr5yv>
- SPC (2022) Future of fisheries: coastal fishery report card 2022 [leaflet]. Noumea: Pacific Community. 4 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/y4tx>
- Steenbergen DJ, Neihapi PT, Koran D, Sami A, Malverus V, Ephraim R, Andrew N (2020) COVID-19 restrictions amidst cyclones and volcanoes: a rapid assessment of early impacts on livelihoods and food security in coastal communities in Vanuatu. *Mar Policy* 121:104199
- Steenbergen DJ, Raubani J, Gereva S, Naviti W, Arthur C, Arudere A, Ham J, Joy L, Lalavanua W, Neihapi P, Seko A, Terashima H, Andrew NL (2022) Tracing innovation pathways behind fisheries co-management in Vanuatu. *Ambio* 51:2359
- Tuxson T (2018) ‘Sing Along’: presenting Non-State Actors’ perspectives on coastal fisheries policy implementation in Fiji, Solomon Islands & Vanuatu. Second SPC Regional Technical Meeting on Coastal Fisheries. (November 12 to November 14 2018—Pacific Community, Noumea, New Caledonia). [https://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/FAME/Meetings/2018/RTMCF\\_02/201\\_Session\\_2\\_Singalong\\_Worldfish\\_LMMA\\_Noumea\\_Presentation\\_v2.pptx](https://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/FAME/Meetings/2018/RTMCF_02/201_Session_2_Singalong_Worldfish_LMMA_Noumea_Presentation_v2.pptx)
- VFD (2019) Vanuatu national roadmap for coastal fisheries: 2019–2030. Vanuatu fisheries department. Noumea: Pacific Community. 24 p. <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/bhawm>

**Hugh Govan** is an Adjunct Senior Fellow at University of the South Pacific’s School of Law and Social Sciences and a key adviser to the Locally Managed Marine Area Network (LMMA) in Asia and the Pacific since its inception in 2000. He is a freelance and has worked for 25 years in the Pacific Islands and 10 years in Latin America and Europe supporting and facilitating community and Indigenous livelihoods including natural resource stewardship, promoting the respect of human rights and good governance as well as developing fisheries strategies and ocean governance at provincial, national, and Pacific Regional scales.

**Watisoni Lalavanua** serves as the Community-Based Fisheries Adviser at the Pacific Community (SPC). His interest is in fisheries management, especially on community-driven management approaches. Starting from his experience of working on community-based fisheries management initiative at community, national and regional level and with multiple stakeholders for more than 10 years, Soni spearheaded a regional initiative that leads to the endorsement of the Pacific Framework for Action on scaling-up CBFM.

**Dirk J. Steenbergen** is an Associate Professor at the Australian Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS) of the University of Wollongong (UOW). His research interests span human environment-interactions around rural development, small-scale fisheries, livelihoods, culture and custom, and comanagement, with particular focus and experience in the tropical Asia-Pacific region. With a background in rural development sociology and ethnography, his work employs transdisciplinary approaches to research-in-development, whereby research and practice co-inform and closely interact.

**Open Access** This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

