

COASTAL FISHERY REPORT CARD 2016



Photo: Quentin Hanich

Introduction

The Coastal Fishery Report Card provides annual high-level reporting on the current status of Pacific coastal fisheries in relation to the goals, indicators and strategies adopted by Pacific Islands Forum Leaders in the Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries.

The Report Card, which was initiated in 2015, provides a snapshot to enable fisheries stakeholders and political leaders to monitor progress on implementing the Roadmap. This Report Card for 2016 is the first to report against key indicators for each of the Roadmap result areas. As such, it provides a baseline to track future progress against the ten-year timeframe for the Roadmap.

Context

There are over 30,000 islands scattered across the Pacific Ocean. These islands are divided among 22 Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs) characterised by vast areas of ocean that are much greater than their land area. The islands are inhabited by over 10 million people. Coastal fisheries are fundamental

to food security and livelihoods across the region, representing significant economic, social and cultural benefits for communities. The region has extensive coral reefs, consisting of 70 coral genera supporting over 4,000 fish/invertebrate species and 30 mangrove species. These coastal resources are under increasing threat and in many countries coastal resources are either fully- or over-exploited.

Method used to compile card information

This Report Card reports on status as at May 2016. Given the nature of coastal fisheries, reporting on progress is itself a key challenge in implementing the Roadmap. For most countries, there is a lack of available data on all areas under each of the three goals. As such this Report Card, is based on information available to the Pacific Community (SPC) at the time of reporting. It also identifies key information gaps for coastal fisheries to address going forward. The Report Card, however, does not assess the effectiveness of measures in place as this is also the first time such information has been aggregated at a regional level, and some indicators may undergo slight variation in future. Information was compiled by staff of the Coastal Fisheries Programme at SPC, with senior coastal fisheries staff from national fisheries offices being contacted for validation.

Goal 1 - Empowerment

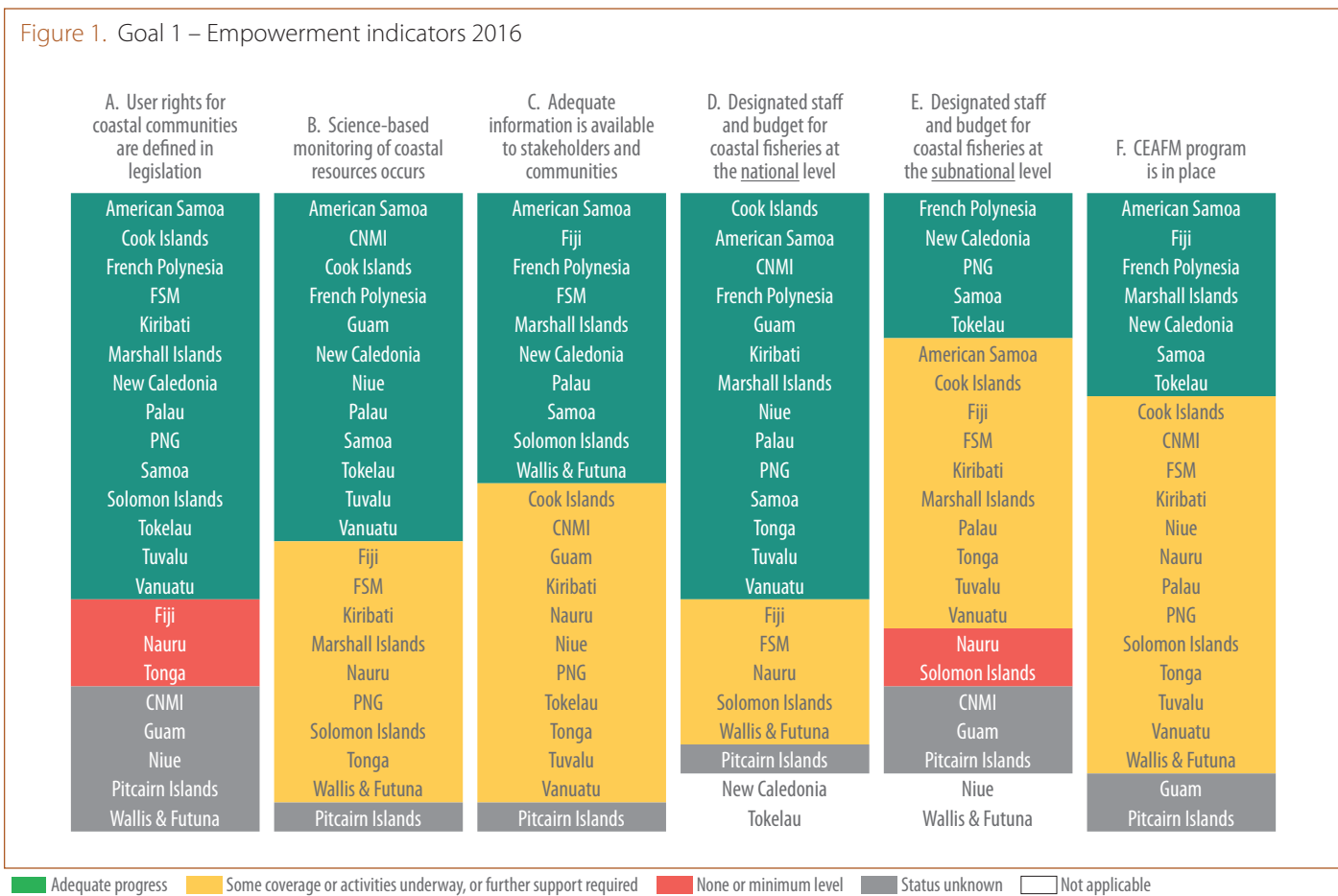
Within 10 years, all Forum Island Countries (FICs) will have put in place policies and legislation that provide for the involvement of coastal communities in the management of their fisheries resources. Supported by national controls on export commodities, communities will drive local management regimes with clear user rights.

Result areas

- i. Informed, empowered coastal communities with clearly defined user rights (Fig. 1: A)

Across PICTs, user rights and tenure systems are most commonly recognised through constitutional arrangements, or national or subnational legislation such as Island / Village Councils Acts, Provincial Acts or Island State Acts.

Figure 1. Goal 1 – Empowerment indicators 2016



ii. Adequate and relevant information to inform management and policy (Fig. 1: B & C)

The availability of adequate and relevant information to inform management and policy involves both the existence of science-based monitoring programs to provide the information, and then making this information available to communities and stakeholders through leaflets, factsheets, posters, radio and other social media. A challenge for most countries has been limited budgets and prioritising finance to undertake monitoring. The geographic spread of islands adds to the significant cost of scientific monitoring, while upskilling of staff to undertake monitoring is also needed.

iii. Recognition of, and strong political commitment and support for, coastal fisheries management on a national and subnational scale (Fig. 1: D & E)

Government spending is often a key indicator for political commitment and support. Most PICTs have a specific section responsible for coastal fisheries at the national level, including staff and budget although some have very limited resources. These generally cover coastal fisheries management, development and

aquaculture at the national and subnational level. One area with a lower level of budgetary support is coastal fisheries management in general and more significantly in remote communities.

iv. Re-focused fisheries agencies that are transparent, accountable and adequately resourced, supporting coastal fisheries management and sustainable development, underpinned by CEAFM (Fig. 1: F)

Community, district, whole of island or provincial management plans are a key element of this result area. However, the number of these plans that are operational across the region is currently difficult to ascertain.

In many PICTs CEAFM is co-managed by communities and a range of partners, including NGOs, through various donor projects and across a broad range of sites and communities. Current fisheries extension and advisory work seems to have a greater focus on sustainable development, rather than on fisheries management. Increasing the focus on fisheries management being underpinned by CEAFM is a challenge given low prioritisation and the need for commitment from a diverse range of stakeholders and sectors.

¹ There are many terms used by countries that encompass CEAFM (community-based ecosystem approach to fisheries management) including, but not limited to; community-based natural resource management (CBNRM), community-based fisheries management (CBFM), community-based resource management (CERM), community-based adaptive management (CBAM), locally-managed marine areas (LMMAs), ecosystem based resource management (EBRM) and Ridge to Reef (R2R).

Goal 2 – Resilience

Within 10 years, all FICs will be implementing strategies to manage the various threats to coastal ecosystems. Only by conserving fisheries habitats, controlling pollution and addressing damage from outside the fishing sector can we develop resilience to the impacts of climate change and ocean acidification.

Result areas

- i. Strong and up-to-date management policy, legislation and planning (Fig. 2: A to E)

All countries have overarching national legislation covering the marine environment and/or fisheries. However, comprehensiveness varies especially in regard to coastal fisheries. Some countries have fisheries legislation that identifies that subnational governments have responsibility for the conservation, management, development and sustainable use of fisheries resources within their area of governance.

Some National Fisheries Policies make reference to coastal fisheries and aquaculture where others have specific coastal fisheries or aquaculture policies in place.

Management plans generally cover sites (geographic areas) or specific species or fisheries, with no PICTs having management plans that comprehensively cover their range of coastal fisheries species and geographic areas. However, most PICTs do have some management plans in place, with these covering some geographic sites, commercial export or priority species and/or community management.

- ii. Effective collaboration and coordination among stakeholders and key sectors of influence (Fig. 2: F)

The effectiveness of collaboration between fisheries and other stakeholders and sectors of influence is difficult to assess at the regional level. As such, the information included in this report card is limited to whether or not collaboration and coordination are occurring between national fisheries offices and other sectors or stakeholders.

- iii. More equitable access to benefits and decision-making within communities, including for women, youth and marginalised groups (Fig. 2: G)

This result area was particularly difficult to report at the regional level given current data availability. Some PICTs were identified as having included women and young people in the formulation of management arrangements and decision-making for coastal fisheries activities. Further data is needed on access to benefits in order to monitor ongoing progress in this area as this is a key information gap.

Figure 2. Goal 2 – Resilience indicators 2016

A. Legislation identifies that coastal fisheries comes under subnational responsibility	B. Regulations, including by-laws and ordinances, are up-to-date	C. Coastal fisheries & aquaculture are included in overarching national fisheries policies	D. Specific coastal fisheries policies exist	E. Specific aquaculture policies exist	F. Collaboration occurs between fisheries and other sectors	G. Women and young people are specifically included in decision-making and formulating management arrangements
Cook Islands	American Samoa	American Samoa	Cook Islands	CNMI	American Samoa	American Samoa
FSM	French Polynesia	French Polynesia	French Polynesia	Cook Islands	Cook Islands	Cook Islands
New Caledonia	New Caledonia	Kiribati	New Caledonia	French Polynesia	Fiji	Nauru
Palau	Niue	Marshall Islands	Samoa	New Caledonia	FSM	Niue
PNG	Samoa	Nauru	Fiji	Palau	Marshall Islands	Palau
Samoa	Tokelau	New Caledonia	Kiribati	Samoa	Nauru	Samoa
Tokelau	Cook Islands	Palau	Marshall Islands	Vanuatu	New Caledonia	Solomon Islands
Tuvalu	Fiji	Samoa	Nauru	Fiji	Niue	Tokelau
Vanuatu	FSM	Tokelau	Niue	FSM	Palau	Tonga
Marshall Islands	Guam	Fiji	Solomon Islands	Nauru	Samoa	Vanuatu
Fiji	Kiribati	Guam	Tokelau	PNG	Solomon Islands	New Caledonia
Kiribati	Marshall Islands	Solomon Islands	Vanuatu	Solomon Islands	Tokelau	French Polynesia
Nauru	Nauru	Vanuatu	American Samoa	Tonga	Guam	FSM
Solomon Islands	Palau	Wallis & Futuna	FSM	American Samoa	Kiribati	Kiribati
Tonga	PNG	FSM	Palau	Kiribati	PNG	Marshall Islands
American Samoa	Solomon Islands	Niue	PNG	Marshall Islands	Tonga	PNG
CNMI	Tonga	PNG	Tonga	Wallis & Futuna	Tuvalu	Tuvalu
Guam	Tuvalu	Tonga	Tuvalu	Guam	Vanuatu	Wallis & Futuna
Niue	Vanuatu	Tuvalu	CNMI	Pitcairn Islands	CNMI	CNMI
Pitcairn Islands	Wallis & Futuna	Cook Islands	Guam	Niue	French Polynesia	Fiji
French Polynesia	CNMI	CNMI	Pitcairn Islands	Tokelau	Pitcairn Islands	Guam
Wallis & Futuna	Pitcairn Islands	Pitcairn Islands	Wallis & Futuna	Tuvalu	Wallis & Futuna	Pitcairn Islands

Goal 3 – Livelihoods

Within 10 years, all FICs will have adopted policies to develop alternative livelihoods for coastal communities that are impacted by declining fisheries resources. In most cases, overfishing occurs because coastal communities have no alternative. Aquaculture, water-based tourism and small-scale fishing for tuna provide options, but many solutions will lie outside the fisheries sector.

Result areas

- i. Maintaining the contribution of coastal fisheries to food security – monitoring catches to keep harvests within sustainable limits and to ensure coastal developments do not damage fish habitats (Fig. 3: A)

Some level of monitoring and reporting is occurring in most PICTs, but the overall coverage and the availability of data remain limited. Therefore, it is difficult to determine the quality of monitoring programs, the contribution of coastal fisheries to food security and the sustainability of catch levels.

- ii. Using more of the national tuna catch to supplement coastal fisheries production for food security (Fig. 3: B)

There is no data currently available on the quantity of national tuna catch used for local consumption. All PICTs use national tuna catch for local consumption. However, information on volume and frequency of availability is only emerging.

- iii. Expanding the national infrastructure for food security by installing low-cost nearshore fish aggregating devices (FADs) to assist rural subsistence fishers to catch inshore pelagic fish (Fig. 3: C)

Some PICTs have sustainable nearshore FAD programmes (i.e. including recurrent budgets, staff capacity, deployment and some monitoring). Limitations exist in relation to ongoing monitoring and data collection. For larger countries, ongoing budgeting is a challenge for maintaining FAD programmes and national coverage.

- iv. Introducing regulations for landing 'discards' and 'bycatch' from commercial tuna vessels at urban centres to provide low-cost fish in good condition / quality for local sales / consumption (Fig. 3: D)

There is no data readily available for most countries on whether regulations exist to report against this indicator.

- v. Diversifying the supply of fish in rural and urban areas by developing sustainable small-pond aquaculture for freshwater fish such as Nile tilapia and milkfish (Fig. 3: E)

Some PICTs have developed small-pond aquaculture for freshwater fish, with others in the process of developing their small-pond aquaculture sector.

Figure 3. Goal 3 - Livelihoods indicators 2016

