

Review of the Action Strategy for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Islands Region 2008 - 2012

Empowering local people, communities and Pacific institutions

DRAFT

Report Prepared for the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
(SPREP) and the Roundtable for Nature Conservation in the Pacific Islands.

November 2013

Disclaimer

This report has been commissioned by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) working with the Round Table for nature conservation in the Pacific with the aim of assessing the achievements and progress at regional national and local levels towards achieving the 30 year vision, mission, and goals of the Action Strategy since 2007. TierraMar Consulting Pty Ltd does not accept any responsibility to any other party to whom this report may be shown or into whose hands it may come. No representation or warranty (express or implied) is given as to the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in this report, and, to the extent permitted by law, TierraMar Consulting Pty Ltd, its members, employees and agents accept no liability, and disclaim all responsibility, for the consequences of you or anyone else acting, or refraining to act, in reliance on the information contained in this report or for any decision based on it. The information provided in this report is based on the best information and documentation available at the time of preparation. The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of SPREP or the Round Table for nature conservation in the Pacific.

Peter Thomas
TierraMar Consulting Pty Ltd
PO Box 1260
Sutherland, NSW 1499
AUSTRALIA
Mob: +61 (0)410 440 377
LLT: +61 (0)7 3310 4091
F: +61 2 9528 0176
E: peter@tierramar.com.au
ABN: 88 143 271 756
www.tierramar.com.au

Contents

1	Review of Progress with the Implementation of the Action Strategy.....	3
1.1	Process for the Review.....	3
2	Background to the Action Strategy	3
2.1	Introduction.....	3
2.2	The Action Strategy and the Conference on Protected Areas and Nature Conservation in the Pacific ..	3
2.3	The Action Strategy and the Roundtable for Nature Conservation in the Pacific.....	4
3	The Current Action Strategy for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Island region 2008 - 2012.....	5
3.1	Rationale for Change.....	5
3.2	The Structure and Scope of the 2008 - 2012 Action Strategy	6
3.2.1	Vision, Mission and Goals	6
3.3	Targets and Objectives.....	7
3.3.1	Lessons from the Past - Targets.....	7
3.3.2	Lessons from the past - 2008 - 2012 Objectives.....	8
3.4	Principles of Nature Conservation in the Pacific - a Code of Conduct.....	10
3.5	Guidelines for Implementing Community Conservation Programmes.....	10
4	Ownership, Scope and Utilisation of the Action Strategy	10
	Table 1 Utility of the Action Strategy	11
5	The Action Strategy Principles-Code of Conduct and how They Were Employed	12
6	Funding and Pacific Conservation	25
6.1	Funding Commitments over past 5 years	25
6.2	Trends in Funding	26
7	Linkages and Synergies with Regional and International Planning Frameworks.....	27
7.1	Current Action Strategy Alignment.....	27
	Table 2. Indication of how themes arising from the NBSAPs and elsewhere are reflected in the 2008 - 2012 Action Strategy	27
7.2	The Aichi Goals and Targets	28
	Table 3. Correlation of Action Strategy Objectives with CBD Aichi 2020 Targets for Biodiversity	29
7.3	SPREP Strategic Plan 2011 - 2015	30
8	Partnerships and Coordination for the Action Strategy and its Implementation.....	31
	Annex 1. Principles of Nature Conservation in the Pacific - a Code of Conduct.....	32
	Annex 2. Aichi Goals and Targets of the Convention on Biodiversity	35
	Annex 3. Pacific Islands Roundtable Self Assessment.....	37
	Annex 4. Country Consultation Questionnaire	41

1 Review of Progress with the Implementation of the Action Strategy.

1.1 Process for the Review

The review was initiated by SPREP and the Pacific Roundtable for Nature Conservation. The process of gathering and assessing information involved:

- i. desktop review of key literature, reports regional plans and strategies and relevant international frameworks including national, regional and international frameworks such as NBSAPs and the SPREP Strategic plan, also contributed the conclusions and recommendations of the review.
- ii. a self assessment survey questionnaire for each member of the Roundtable on their utilisation of the Action Strategy and progress with implementing the Principles and Code of Conduct in relation to their programmes.
- iii. a questionnaire for all SPREP member countries and territories seeking similar information.
- iv. direct liaison and consultation with representatives of organisations active in consultation in the Pacific.
- v. interim PICT consultation through side bar meeting at SPREP Meeting, Apia, Samoa, July 2013.
- vi. interim consultation with PIRT members at PIRT Annual Meeting, Suva, Fiji.

The information gathered was combined with information derived from previous studies, consultations with SPREP staff and other regional conservation organisations and practitioners and used for the preparation of this report.

The report and review process will be continued in the lead up to the 9th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas, Suva, Fiji, 2 - 6 December 2013 leading to the development of a further version of the Action Strategy for the 2014 - 2020 period.

2 Background to the Action Strategy

2.1 Introduction

The conservation and sustainable use of the abundant natural resources of the islands and waters of the Pacific has nurtured and supported the livelihoods and cultures of Pacific Islanders since time immemorial. This history is rooted in ancient traditions and cultural norms for nature conservation which have underpinned the protection of the unique ecosystems and species of the Pacific for generations. Today, in the face of increasing populations, commercial exploitation, consumerism and the impacts of global climate change, the limits of the Pacific's natural environment are being tested and the impacts of human behaviour are becoming severely obvious. More than ever before the need for wise and sustainable use of the natural environment is an imperative for Pacific islanders seeking to find the balance between economic growth, a healthy and productive environment and the maintenance of the natural heritage with which Pacific communities are so closely intertwined. This Action Strategy has been developed as a call to action for the governments, people and organisations committed to the conservation of the Pacific islands environment.

2.2 The Action Strategy and the Conference on Protected Areas and Nature Conservation in the Pacific

The Action Strategy for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas 2008 - 2012 is one of a number of formalized responses developed to assist communities and Governments in their quest for sustainable development and the maintenance of healthy Pacific environments and ecosystems. It is a reflection of the long history of international, regional, national and local partnerships between

governments, communities, institutions, and NGO's which have been dedicated to the conservation and protection of the Pacific.

These partnerships are reflected in the long running series of conferences which began in New Zealand in 1975 with the first South Pacific National Parks and Reserves Conference, hosted by the New Zealand Government. Since then there have been eight conferences. The first Action Strategy for Protected Areas in the South Pacific Region was developed in 1985 as an outcome of the Third South Pacific National Parks and Reserves Conference held in Apia, Samoa, the first of the conferences to be held in the Pacific Islands.

Each meeting has represented a milestone in the evolution of Pacific biodiversity and natural resource conservation and has contributed significantly to the development of the region's capacity to conserve its natural and cultural heritage. They have been instrumental in attracting donor support for protected area establishment and management in the region and improving capacity in biodiversity conservation at regional, national and community levels. The Conferences and related Action Strategies have:

- promoted and advocated the community based protected area management approaches common in the region today,
- led to valuable partnerships between governments, NGO's and communities,
- assisted the mainstreaming of environmental and nature conservation solutions,
- identified regionally appropriate tools for successful sustainable resource management and,
- most recently, at the 8th conference in Ala-Tau, PNG, 2008, promoted the linkage between healthy environments and strong socially, culturally and economically sustainable Pacific communities.

2.3 The Action Strategy and the Roundtable for Nature Conservation in the Pacific

The Roundtable for Nature Conservation in the Pacific Island Region was formed in 1997 at the request of Pacific Island countries and territories to serve as a forum whereby organizations working on nature conservation in the Pacific could improve their collaboration and coordination and increase effective conservation action. It comprises a coalition of conservation NGOs, regional organisations and donor agencies and is open to PICT representatives.

At the 7th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas, held in Rarotonga in the Cook Islands the Roundtable was confirmed "*as a mechanism for promoting, facilitating and monitoring the implementation of the Action Strategy.*" Since this 7th Conference the Roundtable has worked in close partnership with SPREP to serve as the coordination mechanism for the implementation of the Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the Pacific Island Region.

At the 8th Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas which was held in Alotau, Papua New Guinea, October 2007, the Roundtable reported on the implementation of the Action Strategy over the preceding 5 years. The report was based on an extensive review of progress and feedback from Round Table members and the delegates at the conference. It was used to strengthen the 2008-2012 Action Strategy and enhance its prospects of implementation. The Action Strategy has been subsequently adopted by a group of Roundtable members and endorsed by the member country representatives of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) at the SPREP Meeting in 2008?.

3 The Current Action Strategy for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Island region 2008 - 2012

3.1 Rationale for Change

Since 1985 the Action Strategies which have emerged from the Nature Conservation and Protected Areas Conferences have been aimed at guiding conservation practices, especially protected area establishment, in the Pacific. For many years these were a compendium of goals, strategies and related implementation actions and outcomes expressed at regional, national and local levels. They identified Pacific priorities (national, regional and international) and encouraged co-ordination and cooperation between stakeholders working to address these at multiple levels. They were developed and endorsed at the regional level with input from national delegates and other stakeholders. Before the advent of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans, the Action Strategies provided a useful ad hoc regional strategy for guiding and assessing conservation progress between conferences, measured in terms of achievement of goals, targets and outcomes could be undertaken.

The 8th Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas heralded a change in the approach and format of the Action Strategy. The conference reinforced the critical role of communities in achieving conservation goals in the Pacific and the importance of partnerships and cooperation in tackling the immensity of the conservation task across the region. It was also noted that based on the recommendations of the review of the 2002 - 2007 Action Strategy progress towards the 30 year Goals of the Action Strategy was overall, not satisfactory.

That review concluded that:

- an improved sense of ownership and commitment was required among those who signed up for the Action Strategy and that this would be helped if the Strategy had a clearer focus by reducing the number of hierarchical layers and targets.
- the Action Strategy should be linked more closely to NBSAPs to reflect more closely the scope and priorities of the PICTs
- it should have a focus on shared priorities where regional collaboration can make a difference
- similar linkages with regional and international initiatives like the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work were advocated
- efforts should be made to ensure the Action Strategy reflects what the PICTs are actually doing and Governments should feel a sense of ownership of the Strategy.
- finally, the Action Strategy should be useful to the donor community to guide and develop their programmes.

The overriding message to the conference was the need to ensure the Strategy reflected the goals and expectations of the Pacific Island countries and territories and was "owned" by the conservation stakeholders of the region..

This review of the current Action Strategy concludes that it too really does not achieve this goal of widespread ownership and utilisation, except in the broadest possible sense.

The discussions at the Alotau conference resulted in an Action Strategy which focused on the **WAY** conservation should be conducted in the region rather than on specific outcomes of and measurable targets at multiple levels. This was a major departure from the format of previous Strategies and was based on the lessons learned from the implementation of those documents.

At the heart of the 2008 -2012 Action Strategy are eight Principles for Nature Conservation in the Pacific which are essentially a Code of Conduct for all those engaged in the design and implementation of conservation programmes in the region. Also presented in the new Action Strategy were guidelines for implementing community conservation programmes, which are the cornerstones

for successful on the ground conservation outcomes in the region. These reflected the theme of the conference - empowering local people, communities and Pacific Institutions and the importance of engaging communities at all levels of conservation.

To align the Strategy with the priorities of the PICTS which were too numerous to be addressed specifically in the Strategy, summaries of the NBSAP's by country were annexed and were used to inform the review and updating of the Action Strategy's four 5 year Objectives. The Goals of the Islands Biodiversity Programme of Work and Pacific Plan were similarly considered.

3.2 The Structure and Scope of the 2008 - 2012 Action Strategy

3.2.1 Vision, Mission and Goals

The 2008 - 2012 Action Strategy retained the 30 year Vision, Mission and Goals of the previous Action Strategy which were endorsed by the members of the Roundtable for Nature Conservation and the delegates at the 7th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas, held in Rarotonga in the Cook Islands and by the Pacific island governments at the SPREP meeting in 2003. In 2013 it is now ten years since their endorsement but these statements remain as valid today as consensus of ideals and priority concerns and in the regional as they were when originally conceived.

It is recommended that the Vision and Mission the 2008 - 2012 Action Strategy be retained in the entirety for the 2014 - 2020 version of the Action Strategy.

VISION

Our people proudly honour our natural heritage and cultural identity; the waters of our streams, lagoons and oceans are bountiful and crystal-clear; our mountains are wild, our forests pristine and our beaches unspoiled; our societies are vibrant and diverse; we have equitable relationships with our global partners and our economies thrive; our cultures and traditions are widely appreciated; and the products of our creativity and labour are especially prized.

Islands of Life ... Pure Pacific

MISSION

To protect and preserve the rich natural and cultural heritage of the Pacific Islands forever for the benefit of the people of the Pacific and the world

<p style="text-align: center;">GOALS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Environment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The biodiversity and natural environment of the Pacific are conserved</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Economy</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Nature conservation and sustainable resource use are integral parts of all island economies</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Society</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pacific peoples are leading activities for the sustainable use of the natural resources and the preservation of cultural heritage for the benefit of present and future generations</p>
--

The 30 year goals represent the emergence of strengthened understanding within the region of the inter-dependencies between healthy environments , economic prosperity and social well being. These were adapted at the 8th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas to include the protection and conservation of cultural heritage and the benefits which must accrue for present and future generations This more holistic, integrated understanding of the role of conservation in achieving triple bottom line outcomes is a feature of the progress made in programme development and implementation over the past decade but especially over the past five years.

In this regard the 30 year Goals generally remain as valid today as they did at inception and should be retained in the next version of the Action Strategy. The one major issue which may not be adequately addressed in the Goals is the threat of global climate change to the future of the Pacific island environments. The vulnerability of the region to this threat may need to be accommodated more explicitly in the Goals.

It is recommended that the 30 Year Goals of the 2008 - 2012 Action Strategy be retained but reviewed with a view to their updating the 2014 - 2020 version of the Action Strategy to need to take into account the impact of global climate change on biodiversity, economic development and societies in the vulnerable Pacific at the 9th Conference in Suva, Fiji, 2 - 6 December 2013.

3.3 Targets and Objectives.

3.3.1 Lessons from the Past - Targets

Of more immediate relevance for this Review are the five year Objectives which were developed at the Alotau conference in 2007. The preceding 2002 - 2007 Action Strategy contained 18 separate Objectives (7 Environmental, 7 Economic and 4 Social), which were then elaborated on by a further cluster of 5 year Targets making a total of 77 targets in all.

The Roundtable Review of that Action Strategy noted that the targets and some objectives were:

- too numerous and overlapping
- targets were far too numerous and time frames too ambitious
- too specific to apply across the region
- some were unrealistic and unachievable within a 5 year timeframe;
- system for reporting not robust or comprehensive enough

As a result the Roundtable called for the current Action Strategy to do away with the Targets altogether as the reality was the focus on achieving targets was primarily a country level function for which a Regional Action Strategy was an inefficient strategic mechanism. Under this scenario the development /achievement of targets was seen as the responsibility of PICTs, NGO,s donor agencies and other implementers working with countries and guided by national frameworks such as NBSAPs. This focus on supporting the achievement of targets at the national level would be more effective in the long run. The role of the Action Strategy was to provide the regional context for setting and achieving those Targets which would, through this alignment, become the Strategy implementation process and measure of conservation success. The Action Strategy would be the catalyst for more efficient implementation of all programmes and projects through its articulation of the Guiding Principles -Code Of Conduct and the commitment of stakeholders to adopting and upholding these in the programme and project implementation.

It is recommended that in order to provide a more measurable context to the implementation of the Action Strategy, the Action Strategy Review Committee of the 9th Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas give consideration to again identifying appropriate Targets for inclusion in the 2014 -2020 version of the Action Strategy with particular emphasis on possible alignment with the 2020 Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the CBD and the regional strategies of the SPREP Strategic Plan. In doing so the Committee take into account the lessons learned from assessment of the utility of targets in previous Strategies.

There was also a conclusion that the economic and social goals diluted the effort of PICT's towards the environmental goal and the suggestion that it may be more effective to focus on the environment goal in the future. However, given the retention of the four goals in the current strategy, this was clearly not acted on by the Conference which endorsed the relationship between biodiversity conservation, sustainable economic development and human well being captured by the three Goals. This issue gets to the heart of the scope of the Action Strategy and may well be a subject for further review by the Action Strategy Drafting Committee at the 9th Conference.

It is recommended that as a starting point, the Action Strategy Review Committee of the 9th Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas obtain consensus on the functional scope of the next version of the Action Strategy, especially in relation to its treatment of the economic development context of biodiversity conservation.

3.3.2 Lessons from the past - 2008 - 2012 Objectives

As already mentioned, the review of the previous Action Strategy also called for the rationalisation of the 17 Objectives in the previous Strategy. This led to the development of the four Objectives in the current 2008 - 2012 Action Strategy. These are:

Objective 1

Ensure conservation has a development context that recognises, respects and supports sustainable livelihoods and community development aspirations

Objective 2

Identify, conserve and sustainably manage priority sites, habitats and ecosystems

Objective 3

Protect and recover threatened species and species of ecological, cultural and economic significance

Objective 4

Manage threats to biodiversity, especially climate change impacts and invasive species

These inter-related Objectives have been well designed to embrace the full range of Pacific conservation and sustainable development goals and strategic themes articulated in the NBSAPs of the Pacific Island countries and territories. They are the product of extensive review and consultation, and were debated, modified and eventually endorsed by the Alotau conference. They are intended to be used to align any conservation programme with the implementation of the Action Strategy and to establish five -year interim milestones towards achieving the 30 year Goals (See also Table 2 p29)

The Objectives¹ are elegant in their treatment of the relationship between the conservation of sites, habitats and ecosystems and species, sustainable development and the management of pervasive threats to healthy ecosystems and environments, including climate change.

This review concludes that while the Objectives achieve the purpose of a identifying broad priorities for action towards the Goals, their lack of specificity - i.e. SMARTness. makes it difficult to see how they achieve their stated purpose of five year Milestones and they should be recognised as long term objectives rather than short term milestones.

There was also a conclusion that the economic and social goals diluted the effort of PICT's towards the environmental goal and the suggestion that it may be more effective to focus on the environment goals in the future. However, given the retention of the four goals in the current strategy, this was clearly not acted on by the Conference which endorsed the relationship between biodiversity conservation, sustainable economic development and human well being captured by the three Goals. This issue gets to the heart of the scope of the Action Strategy and may well be a subject for further review by the Action Strategy Drafting Committee at the 9th Conference.

It is recommended that as a starting point, the Action Strategy Review Committee of the 9th Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas obtain consensus on the

¹ It is noteworthy that the original review recommendations did not extend to embracing Sustainable economic development and the sustainable use of resources within the nature conservation and protected areas context of the Action Strategy. The linkage between these themes which is rooted in the rationale/purpose of conservation and protected areas is a subject of debate which continues in the region. It is however, now widely accepted that for conservation to be relevant in the Pacific context, it must be linked sustaining livelihoods and food security and now, strengthening the resilience of island ecosystems to climate change. The adoption of Objective 1 in recognition of these theme and the Strategies Economy Goal, seems wise.

functional scope of the next version of the Action Strategy, especially in relation to its treatment of the economic development context of biodiversity conservation.

3.4 Principles of Nature Conservation in the Pacific - a Code of Conduct

In a major departure from previous Action Strategies, the 2008 - 2012 Action Strategy contains a set of eight guiding Principles which are at the heart of the re-formulated Strategy (**See Annex 1**). They define the critical components for delivering nature conservation effectively in the Pacific region based on lessons learned from past Action Strategies and the vast experience of the participants at the Alotau conference. Viewed collectively, they represent the best practice for designing, establishing, implementing and sustaining conservation programmes. Essentially, the Principles are a Code of Conduct to which all parties involved in conservation in the Pacific are urged to recognise, respect, adopt and commit to in their design and implementation of programmes.

This approach to the implementation of the Action Strategy was seen as being more pragmatic and realistic than persevering with the specificity of multiple objectives and targets which were often not regional in scope and confused the real intent of the Action Strategy as a guiding framework. However, the move away from specific, measurable targets has made the assessment of progress towards its goals and objectives more difficult than perhaps would have been the case in the past.

It is recommended that the Principles - Code of Conduct to be retained to guide the implementation of future Action Strategies and the programmes and projects of Pacific conservation stakeholders in the achievement of the full range of regional conservation goals and objectives.

3.5 Guidelines for Implementing Community Conservation Programmes.

The Action Strategy includes guidelines developed by working groups during the Alotau conference. These represent the collective wisdom of conference participants who are experienced in community conservation and were included to inform practitioners involved in conservation programmes in the Pacific of effective community conservation.

It is recommended that the Guidelines for Implementing Community Conservation Programmes developed for the 2008 - 2013 Action Strategy be retained in the 2014 - 2020 version of the Action Strategy.

4 Ownership, Scope and Utilisation of the Action Strategy

In the lead up to the Alotau conference the 2007 Action Strategy Review found that ownership of the Action Strategy was a major problem. The review process concluded that the Strategy was either unknown, or had been forgotten by most in the region. It was often confused with the SPREP Action Plan and comparatively few people in the region appeared to know of its existence and fewer still of its contents and related commitments. The review noted that since the Strategy has to be implemented at country level, this was a serious problem

The current Action Strategy was designed to better align with national priorities and strategic frameworks by developing Objectives which took these into account and improved the Strategy's relevance to PICT's. The focus on a Code of Conduct was aimed at encouraging ownership and endorsement by PICT's as well as the broad community of conservation implementers including Roundtable members, in the region.

Five years this review's assessment of the level of ownership and endorsement of the Action Strategy which currently exists concludes that with the exception of Roundtable members and SPREP staff, overall the situation has not improved. This assessment is based on the responses of Roundtable members to the self assessment questionnaire and the disappointing response by PICTs to formal requests for completion of a simple questionnaire on the use of the Action Strategy. Anecdotal evidence and consultations also suggest that the desired outcome of broad PICT ownership and employment of the Strategy has not been achieved.

In fact, only three PICT's responded to the survey, and two of these in only as a response to a direct personal request. Two out of the three respondents stated that they did not use or refer to the Action Strategy or its Guiding Principles in the planning or implementation of their programmes or projects and the third only occasionally.

A marginally improved situation is evident amongst the members of the Roundtable (Table 1) . Seven of a possible thirteen members together with two non member regional NGO's, responded to the questionnaire voluntarily. All 9 respondents reported "Occasional" reference to the Strategy in their programme planning and implementation.

The conclusion was that while it serves the region as a guiding framework for achieving programme/project success if the Code of Conduct is fully applied as currently structured the Action Strategy is not widely 'owned or used nor does not serve as a call to action or is it effective for monitoring and measuring progress.

This raises the question of just what the purpose and by implication, the format of the Action Strategy should be. Some Options are:

- (a) to essentially proceed with the current format but tweak it to take account of new any new trends in conservation approach or issues which have come to the fore in the past five years or may develop in the near future should not be discounted.
- (b) To use the current Action Strategy as a framework but return to the approach adopted prior to Alotau and introduce SMART targets against which evaluation can be undertaken in five years.
- (c) Dispense with the Action Strategy altogether (or acknowledge it as a guiding framework for conservation in the Pacific) on the understanding that there already exists a plethora of strategic frameworks in the Pacific which carry greater institutional and regional authority and ownership than the Action Strategy ever will.

It is recommended that although this consultancy is also required to produce a draft Action Strategy framed along the lines of (b) above, these issues are nonetheless worthy of further debate and that as clarity on and confirmation of whose Action Strategy this is; i.e. Roundtable members, Roundtable and PICT's; all and sundry be addressed by the Action Strategy Working Group of the 9th Conference in order to shape the outcome of the final conference product.

Table 1 Utility of the Action Strategy			
(9 PIRT Members + 3 PICT)			
Overall Assessment 1	Not At All	Occasionally	Refer regularly
Have you or your programme staff referred to the Action Strategy and its Guiding Principles in the	2	10	

planning or implementation of your programmes/projects?			
Overall Assessment 2 Of the Guiding Principles which do you think your organisation is strongest and weakest in its adherence?	Strongest		Weakest
	Principle 3 Also Principles 1,5,7		Principle 4
Overall Assessment 3 Overall, how strongly do you consider your organisation adheres to the Guiding Principles in the implementation of its programmes and projects	Poorly	Moderately	Strongly
	1	5	6

5 The Action Strategy Principles-Code of Conduct and how They Were Employed

The Principles define the critical components for the delivery of nature conservation and were derived through lessons learned from past Action Strategies. They are at the heart of the 2008 - 2012 Action Strategy. The scope of the Principles reflect the outcomes of the Alotau conference and they were given the status of a Code of Conduct for all conservation practitioners working the Pacific (**See Annex 1**).

The premise behind the Code of Conduct is that its importance to the successful implementation of the Action Strategy and indeed, all projects, programmes and frameworks in the Pacific dictates that it must be respected, recognised, supported and applied by all agencies, partners and organisations striving for nature conservation outcomes the region. Collectively the application of the Code of Conduct and its Principles in full will result in stronger projects and programmes, more effective strategies, improved financial sustainability and a significant and exponential improvement in the Pacific's overall conservation capacity. These generic outcomes will then be reflected in the achievement of the national and regional priorities, programmes and project outcomes which have shaped the Action Strategy Goals and Objectives.

The above rationale suggests understanding how the Code of Conduct Principles have been applied and have influenced regional conservation may provide insight on progress with the Objectives and Goals of the Action Strategy. This was the purpose of the two questionnaires which were circulated, the results being reflected in the summary of progress made with the application of the Principles below.

It is worth noting that in consultation and discussions with representatives of the RoundTable membership, the point was made that they have been engaged in conservation in the Pacific for many years, with some organisations such as USP and IUCN being present as original champions of conservation at the initial conferences in 1975, 1979 and 1985. As such they have been early adopters of these Principles before they were incorporated into the Code of Practice, and indeed helped to shape the Code. Thus it is not new for them to be applying the Principles - it is in fact, business as usual to many of these organisations. The implication is that regular referral to the Action Strategy is not required in order to ensure the Code is applied - or that its objectives are aligned with new programme and project initiatives, as long as these are aligned with country priorities. This again raises the question of the purpose and scope of the Action Strategy referred

to in Section 4 above.

Overall the respondents indicated that of the 8 Guiding Principles, **Principle 3**, was considered the most strongly adhered to by the Round table organisations with Principles **1 (Community Rights)**, **5 (Good Governance)** and **7 (Capacity Development)** close runners up. **Principle 4 (Financial sustainability)** was clearly the most challenging for the respondents to address.

Principle 1. Community Rights

This Principle is based on the premise that most natural resources in the Pacific are owned and used by indigenous and local communities.

The Principle calls on International and national partners to actively recognise, respect and support:

- *Community property rights including traditional rights over natural resources, indigenous intellectual property relating to natural resources and cultural knowledge;*
- *Community decision making practices*

Participants in the Self Assessment were asked if they could provide an example(s) where their organisation has recognised and supported community Property rights and decision making and how specifically was this done?

Summary

Amongst the Roundtable members, there was unanimous agreement that recognition of community rights underpinned all programmes and projects and non-coercive consultation, engagement including and provision of advice and technical assistance was a fundamental starting point in developing cooperative programmes with communities. Basically all sites worked on have at the very least, the full consent of appropriate community representative/s. The 5 year trend has been strongly toward the active involvement of communities and their representatives in all facets of programme development and implementation and there are many examples of active community engagement and employment (permanent and casual) in research, training, workshops etc. Roundtable members sometimes supported by community representatives, have been a strong advocates at the national, regional and international level on community rights issues and have embraced the concepts of Rights Based Management and Access to Benefit sharing in programme planning. Numerous examples of programmes recognising and supporting community property and resource rights were provided and the underlying principle of working in support of and for communities, respecting their decisions and facilitating community decision making..

Amongst the few PICT respondents, the prevailing view was that government awareness of the need for community level consultation on policy and resource development decisions had improved over the past five years.

Overall Assessment: Given the widespread community authority, ownership and rights over natural resources, this Principle is adhered to strongly across the region and is recognised as being fundamental to conservation success.

Case Study: Supporting Community Rights and Livelihoods in the Adelbert Mountains of PNG

For over a decade, The Nature Conservancy has been working in partnership with local communities of the Adelbert Mountains region Madang Province to create community Land Use Management Plans (LUMPs) to assist the sustainable management of the forests and waters under the stewardship of the communities. These plans provide communities — which, in Papua New Guinea, still retain their traditional ownership of the land — with a blueprint for using local resources in sustainable ways that promote the well-being of people and forests. LUMPs are the basis for conservation agreements with the local government and are supported by the Madang Provincial Government and the PNG Forest Authority which are both long term partners in this programme. However, while the LUMPs have played an important role in the sustainable managing these community owned forests, especially in cementing recognition of traditional ownership and rights, there remained the need to improve the economic livelihoods of the people of the Adelberts.)With this as a goal, The Nature Conservancy worked closely with local communities and their leaders and in 2008, the Conservancy helped organize the Adelbert Conservation Cooperative Society, a large coalition of farmers who had already signed on to LUMPs. The idea was to obtain Fair Trade certification for locally grown cocoa, thereby converting local farmers' commitment to conservation into increased profits. Fair Trade certification also makes good ecological sense by requiring that cocoa producers comply with sustainability criteria. In the case of the Adelbert Cooperative, having the LUMPs in place and following local conservation laws are preconditions for membership to the cooperative. The Conservancy helped with every step of the Fair Trade process. Finally, in October 2010 — almost three years after the process started — the certificate came through. The Adelbert Conservation Cooperative Society's cocoa is now a Fair Trade product. And in November 2011, Monpi - a local cocoa exporter - obtained its Fair Trade Chain of Custody certification. This gives the Adelberts region the ability to send its cocoa to high-value overseas markets with its Fair Trade pedigree intact.

<http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/asiaandthepacific/papuanewguinea/explore/sweet->

Principle 2. Conservation from a Pacific Perspective

This Principle is based on the understanding that natural resources are often the most important source of wealth and development opportunities for Pacific communities. Therefore the role of conservation and sustainable natural resource management in Pacific communities will influence the economic, social and cultural affairs of those communities.

The Principle calls on International and national partners to actively recognise, respect and support:

- *Community aspirations for development and well being*
- *A Pacific approach to conservation based on sustainable resource use.*

Participants were asked to provide example(s) where there organisation had supported community aspirations for development and sustainable resource use.

Summary

The similarity between this and need to work with, understand and support community development aspirations in Principle 1 was noted by several respondents. Examples of the application of the Principle were drawn from across the region. These suggest that where the right pre-conditions exist development opportunities are be implemented. Pre-conditions include the identification of

community appropriate development opportunities good community understanding of the development activity and engagement and external support in the form of government, NGO, donor or private sector support, expertise and seed investment, available. Among the examples developed over the past 5 years are:

- Establishment of the Adelbert Conservation Cooperative Society's cocoa cooperative and Fair Trade Certification (see Case Study above)
- Community engagement in PNG in the identification of development needs, design of development plans and Climate Change Action Plans for possible REDD+ and PES financing
- Establishment of RAMSAR site to be managed by Nooto Village in Kiribati with investment and support from the government
- The impact of Fiji's (and other countries) establishment of LLMA's in supporting local sustainable fish and marine resources production.
- The work being done in partnerships between communities and international and national NGO;s and the Fiji on sustainable forest management linked with REDD+

Overall Assessment: The past five years has seen continued will to apply the Principle over - but still a major challenge in the region with too few examples of concrete results to judge widespread impact..One of the weakest and in need of improved performance.

Principle 3. Ownership of Conservation Programmes

This Principle is based on the understanding that lasting conservation in the Pacific can only be achieved if national partners (including communities) take responsibility for leadership of the design, implementation and evaluation of all conservation programmes in their respective areas

The Principle asks National and community partners to commit to:

- *Exercise and build their capacity for leadership of conservation programmes*

International partners were asked to commit to:

- *Respecting and encouraging national and community partner leadership for all conservation programmes and helping strengthen partner capacity to exercise their leadership for all programmes and helping strengthen partner capacity to exercise their leadership;*
- *Aligning all conservation programmes with those of the national partners;*
- *Strengthening national and local partners as an alternative to establishing their own institutions and infrastructure;*
- *Connecting regional and international initiatives with national priorities and aspirations;*
- *Ensuring all key programme decision-making take place in-country with participation by national and community partners and led by their conservation priorities.*

The Roundtable members and PICT's were asked to comment on how they have worked to ensure strengthened "ownership" of conservation programmes/projects by community and national partners and provide examples where they had:

- Strongly engaged community leadership in determining a course of action
- Aligned a conservation programme or project with national policy or National Plan of Action
- Worked through and supported national and or community to take the lead rather than do it your self
- Linked a national programme or project to a multi-country, regional or international initiative?

Summary

This Principle has been assessed as being the most strongly applied of the eight.

Examples were offered where community leadership was engaged and implementation of plans and programmes was being undertaken through local NGO's or community groups. This is a particular feature of the work of organisations engaged in invasive species control where in-country and local groups undertake the work with funding, technical and training support provided for external sources such as in Tahiti where control efforts by local groups have seen promising increase in the population of the Tahiti Monarch.

Other programmes demonstrating local leadership include the MARSH programme in PNG and integrated ridge to reef planning in the Solomon Islands. There facilitated and cooperative planning between churches, government and traditional leadership in Choiseul and Isabel provinces has helped them develop a conservation and sustainable development programme linked to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. In Fiji similar facilitation by government and NGO's have helped 10 villages and 2 settlements to establish a ridge to reef integrated management plan for the protection of forest and coastal resources. This plan is being wholly implemented by the Kubalu Resource Management Committee made up of representatives of the communities.

There are several examples where organisations have explicitly adopted the principles of local ownership of projects and programmes in their capacity building and operational strategies and most are conscious of the need to encourage strong national and regional representation in their governance structures.

Similarly there are examples where Roundtable members have linked their strategic plans closely with national policies and frameworks such as NBSAP's and the National Plans of Action of the Coral Triangle. Over the past 5 years it seems all new programmes have been developed in alignment with national policy and plans, and a number have given rise to regional initiatives. One example is the Pacific Mangroves Initiative which links national mangrove conservation initiatives such as the successful MESCAL mangrove project in Fiji.

Overall Assessment. The past five years has seen the efforts of Roundtable members and PICT governments to embrace and apply this Principle resulting a strong partnership philosophy underpinning implementation of most major programmes and projects, together with a clear commitment to alignment with national policies and frameworks (although some governments still consider there is need for more improvement and especially in relation to feedback of results). Coupled with these advances is a commitment to empower and support local/national leadership in programme development and implementation although this remains hampered by capacity issues.

Principle 4. Financial Sustainability

This principle reflects the fact that conservation initiatives must be adequately resourced over time if they are to be successful.

The Principle calls on international and national partners to commit to:

- *Ensuring their conservation programmes are of scale and budget appropriate to the local context*
- *Long-term strategic planning and resource mobilisation that sustains conservation over time.*

Roundtable members and PICTs were asked how they had ensured that their conservation programmes were of a scale and budget which is appropriate to the local context and can be sustained over time

Summary

Of all the Principles, this was the one which Roundtable members considered most challenging and have a struggle to implement. There are however, notable successful examples of financial sustainability mechanisms established over the past 5 years. One prominent example is the Micronesia Trust established to provide sustainable funding in support of the Micronesia Challenge. Another is the national sustainable financing system developed by Palau. The Palau Green Fee is an exit fee for all visitors departing from Palau and the money is dedicated to the establishment and maintenance of the Palau Protected Areas Network. Offsetting this achievement is the report of a similar airport tax based conservation support fund being disestablished by the Cook Islands government.

At another level an Endowment Fund has been established to sustain the management of the Arnavon Islands Community Marine Conservation Area, one of the region's most important community managed marine protected areas which protects vital hawksbill turtle nesting habitat. The Interest from the endowment substantially supports the annual management costs of the MPA (see case study).

In other examples, the difficulty in balancing programmes and project funding between the need for sustaining established outcomes and costs replicating those outcomes elsewhere is an issue. Inability to fund and sustain the capacity development needed to ensure long term effective management of projects remains a funding issue.

All organisations struggle with the issue of operating overheads. Balancing these with funding and capacity needed to achieve outcomes in the field and provide support to partners is difficult. The rapidly escalating costs of operating in some countries over the past five years, particularly PNG, and to a lesser extent the Solomon Islands, has seriously impacted on the country operations of some organisations.

One outcome of the application of the Principle is the strengthened commitment to work with and support local organisations as primary implementers identified under Principle 2. This has led to a trend in the development of partnerships with Provincial level governments and local NGO's and a focus on building capacity at that level. This extends to the strategic funding /co-funding of environment positions in provinces, and significant investments in capacity building for both local government and NGO partners. Also included is management training in financial management, accessing grant funding and identifying and developing modest alternative livelihood income streams.

There is increasing interest in the use of funding mechanisms like Trust Funds, PES, revolving funds and working with the private sector to generate long term funding. However, there is a dearth of expertise in the region in these highly technical areas of funding. They are also difficult to replicate because every situation calls for a specific mechanism which is tailored to financing required and funding options available to secure drives up the cost of development and establishment. An essential ingredient of success is long term dedication and commitment by those championing the mechanism which is potentially high cost. Coupled with the high level of investment needed to develop and establish these mechanisms it is likely the development of financially sustainable outcomes beyond the life of well funded programmes is and will remain a struggle in the Pacific.

Overall Assessment

Application of this Principle has led to increasing consideration of the local context in programme development and implementation and with an increasing trend towards the transfer of funding to local government and NGO implementers and partners. There are a few excellent examples of

sustainable funding mechanisms in the region, but they are too few and their establishment remains a challenge. However understanding of the need to address financial sustainability at all stages of programme design implementation has increased over the past five years.

Case Study: Sustainable Financing for the Arnavon Islands Community Managed Marine Protected Area.

The Arnavon Islands are a small group of low islands located in the Manning Strait between Isabel and Choiseul Islands in the Solomon Islands. The islands are the most important nesting habitat for Hawksbill marine turtles in the Pacific islands region and also contain some of the most pristine marine habitats in the Solomon Islands. In 1995 working with the Solomon Island Government and the Isabel and Choiseul Provinces, The Nature Conservancy helped the surrounding communities unite to establish the Arnavon Islands Community Marine Conservation Area (ACMCA).

In the intervening years under the guidance and leadership of the ACMCA Management Committee through the work of the Community Conservation Officers the ACMCA has been protected and is now established as one of the most important marine protected area in the Solomon Islands. The work of the management committee and partners was recognised by the UN Equator Prize at the World Conservation Congress in Barcelona, Spain in 2008.

The success of the ACMCA, its regional and global importance as a Hawksbill nesting site and the effectiveness of its management, together with its role in helping increase socioeconomic opportunities for the local communities warranted consideration of a sustainable funding mechanism to help defray the modest costs of management. In 2008, The Nature Conservancy established a US\$400,000 endowment fund with donations from private donors. The endowment now generates annual income which contributes substantially to covering the management costs of the ACMCA. The income from the fund is also supplemented by a growing user fees generated by visiting yachts and cruise ships which also visit the local communities contribute significant income to the villages.

Principle 5. Good Governance

The basis for this principle is the need for effective conservation programmes to be participatory, accountable and transparent.

The Principle calls for national and international partners to commit to:

- *Reinforcing participatory approaches by involving all stakeholders, particularly community representatives when designing, implementing and assessing conservation programmes;*
- *Ensuring systems are in place to enable full accountability to the people affected by conservation programme implementation;*
- *Ensuring their programmes and systems are well communicated, fully transparent and open to stakeholder scrutiny.*

The Roundtable members and PICTs were asked how they had ensured their programmes and projects were participatory, accountable and transparent and whether they had specific example(s) where these elements have aligned and contributed to improved programme/project implementation and sustainability.

Summary

All Roundtable members reported unequivocally that great effort is being placed on consultative and participatory processes and stakeholder engagement and ownership of project management

planning and implementation. Commitment to understanding, supporting and reinforcing good governance, transparency and accountability in all partnerships is apparent. Numerous examples of how this is accomplished on the ground were cited. It is clear this principle is embedded in the guiding policies and strategic plans of the organisations and recognised as best practice. In some cases monitoring and evaluation that measures progress and conservation impact allowing for more accountability and transparency is fed back to stakeholders.

Project and programme leadership groups comprising both national and international staff and good gender balance promote accountability. There are examples where capacity development has included organisational strengthening including training on issues of accountability, financial systems and management and the responsibilities of grant management and reporting.

This Principle was seen as including the responsibility of reporting to governments on programmes on a regular basis. As noted under Principle 3, some governments still consider there is a need to improve reporting and alignment with partners.

From the PICT perspective most countries have established consultative processes and mechanisms in support of the development of their major policy and strategic framework documents such as NBSAP's, Conservation Needs Assessments, National Action Plans, Protected Area Policy etc. These serve to promote transparency and accountability at the national level. The obligations of PICT's in terms of reporting under MEA's is also assists governance and transparency. This trend of wider government consultation on policy and strategic planning is evident throughout the region.

Overall Assessment

The effective application of this Principle is in the DNA of all programme development and implementation organisations working in the Pacific region. There is now widespread recognition and adherence to the importance of good governance and transparency as a foundation to strong partnerships and a corresponding responsibility for reporting by implementing organisations. Increasingly governments are establishing consultative and coordinating mechanisms to assist with bridging the gap between government and stakeholders and improving transparency and accountability.

Principle 6. Coordination

The Principle is based on the tenet that conservation is more effective when partners coordinate and work within a strategic framework

It calls on National Partners to commit to:

- *Ensuring NBSAPs and the locally devised conservation programmes are strategic, focused and set clear local priorities for action;*
- *Taking a leadership role in coordinating all partners;*
- *Providing national and local focal points for coordinating NBSAP and other programme implementation.*

International Partners will commit to

- *Working within the legislation, policies, strategies, agreed priorities and coordination of political engagement to avoid duplication*
- *Working with each other to ensure collaborative analysis, strategies, agreed priorities and coordination of political engagement to avoid duplication*
- *Avoiding programming that directly competes with national partners for projects and funding.*

Roundtable members and PICTs were asked for example(s) where their efforts at coordination with partners and within a strategic framework had made their programme more effective by:

- Taking national leadership to coordinate partners and inputs into policy to ensure priorities are strategic, focussed and broadly agreed to

- Working within national frameworks
- Working with other organisations to avoid duplication, agree on priorities and avoid duplication

Summary

Most countries have established consultative processes and mechanisms in support of the development of their major policy and strategic framework documents such as NBSAP's, Conservation Needs Assessments, National Action Plans, Protected Area Policy etc. Sometimes these are required by donors especially where large multi-year commitments are made. In two countries, PNG and Solomon Islands, National Coordinating Committees consisting of NGO and Government Agency representatives have been established by the Executive to coordinate the development and implementation of the National Plans of Action for implementation of the Coral Triangle Regional Plan of Action and local marine and fisheries policy.

Other examples include the establishment of multi-disciplinary and multi sectoral steering committees to guide all major grant funded projects and programmes in Kiribati, and investment by the Cook Islands in improved financial and governance mechanisms which link closely to community participatory and consultative processes.

All Roundtable members provided multiple examples where they had engaged in national scale coordination activities. These included convening partner forums, technical working groups often at the request of Government. Nowhere is this more evident than in Fiji where Roundtable members are prominent in coordination and participation on a number of multi-sectoral technical advisory committees such as the National Environmental Council, the Protected Area Committee, Ramsar Committee, Integrated Coastal Management Committee, and National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan Implementation Steering Committee. This participation has enabled these organisations to collaborate with government and non-government partners to provide advice on environmental policy and to align programmes against the relevant policy documents (e.g. NBSAP Implementation Plan, National Integrated Coastal Management Plan Framework, Priority locations for protected areas in Fiji). Although not explicitly referred to, it is assumed that this high level of coordination between NGOs and Government would help all organisations in that country to avoid duplication and strengthen collaboration.

A similar trend towards strengthened coordination is evident in other parts of the Pacific. The Micronesia Challenge is an example of a sub regional coordination mechanism which is effective in coordinating the implementation of the conservation programmes of the Micronesia countries and Territories. At a national level the Palau Protected Area Network is a multiple government agency and community partnership with responsibility for establishing and managing the PAN.

Specific examples where international partners have collaborated to ensure the avoidance of programming that directly competes with national partners were not provided. However, it is to be assumed that this is a logical outcome of improved national level coordination and participation in planning and policy forums where increased transparency of programme interests would help resolve any issues.

At the national level there are examples of government led coordination mechanisms such as in the Cook Islands where the National Environment Strategic Action Framework brings together government agencies, communities and NGO's in both its development and implementation. Similarly in Kiribati the Kiribati Integrated Environment Policy is a framework aligned to the Kiribati Development Plan 2012 - 2015. It is the result of an inclusive consultative process involving all key environment stakeholders at all levels of society and is based on the outcome of participatory consultation processes. Similarly coordination is evident in Palau where the Conservation Consortium works to avoid duplication and agree on priorities. In Palau and most PICT's the

preparation of large funding grants is now a multi - agency affair.

One final point is the role of donors and GAA's in promoting collaboration and coordination. This can and has been achieved in the design phase of large multi-country grant funded programmes which often require coordination and integration of activities between multiple stakeholders in order to achieve the desired outcomes. Examples include the ADB RETA for Strengthening the Capacity of South Pacific CTI-CFF and the USAID Coral Triangle Support Partnership which has supported the establishment and facilitation of CTI-CFF Coordinating Committees in CI member countries.

Overall Summary

The evidence shows that over the past 5 years significant progress in the establishment of coordination mechanisms at national and regional level has occurred across the region. Importantly these mechanisms are characterised by multi agency stakeholder representation and the openness of most governments to working with and involving NGO partners sometimes in a leadership role.

Case Study: Partnerships In Conservation - Aligning Programmes to National Frameworks (NBSAPs)

The Permanent Forest Estate Programme In Fiji

In Fiji a partnership between the international conservation organisation Birdlife International and the local NGO, Nature Fiji-MareqetiViti (NFMV) has developed a Permanent Forest Estate programme. The programme is aimed at showcasing the Fiji Government Forest policy to communities (the landowners), highlighting their rights and obligations, and providing examples of how they might derive value from the forests that remain standing. The programme is focussed on developing a roadmap that enables individual landowners to become an integral part of Fiji's forest industry, and provide local communities with the opportunity to obtain livelihoods by involvement in that industry.

In addition, it plans to highlight the value that forests provide to the various sectors of society, both in their current state and in a realistic alternative state, to indicate the winners and losers in each scenario. This project has been developed with the full support of the Fiji government and in close liaison with other national stakeholders, including industry. As a result NFMV is seen as a key player in the development of a sustainable forest industry in the country and is in a position to influence policy implementation. In keeping with the Principles of the Action Strategy, the programme is aligned with the national framework of the Fiji NBSAP, in particular with Protected Areas (Protected Area Committee), and existing projects have been used to provide input into national policy for community conserved and other protected areas. The Permanent Forest Estate Programme in Fiji is a strong example of how NGOs and Government can partner and collaborate on working within the context of national frameworks to ensure their priorities are in parallel and to maximise the likelihood of success.

Principle 7. Capacity Development

The Principle recognises the importance of community and national capacity to design , prioritise, direct, manage, implement, monitor and evaluate conservation programmes s that lasting conservation objective can be achieved.

National partners and communities will commit to:

- *Building effective and sustainable conservation capability and organisations through on-going capacity development*
- *Ensuring conservation is continuously improved by recording , disseminating and*

incorporating lessons learned and best practices.

International partners will commit to:

- *Supporting national partners in their efforts to build effective and sustainable national institutions;*
- *Supporting national partners and communities in their efforts to develop leadership, project direction and management skills*
- *Ensuring their presence in -country does not undermine national and local institution - building or capacity development;*
- *Contributing to national partner's best practice by recording, disseminating and implementing lessons learned.*

Summary

Roundtable members and PICTs were asked how they had worked to strengthen national conservation capacity. Evidence shows that over the past 5 years most PICT Environment departments have experienced small increases in staff and improved budgets. However it is widely acknowledged that they remain seriously undermanned, under-resourced and struggling to carry out their work. It is clear much effort and emphasis has gone into capacity development over the past five years. This has been the result of the growing emphasis on the need for strong partnerships between local and national government agencies, communities and NGO's if sustainable outcomes are going to be achieved. Some Roundtable members have developed specific capacity building strategies which guide their investment and approach to this critical need and have extended their support to the secondment of staff to government departments to help overcome the dearth of environmental management capacity facing most PIC governments.

Over the past five years numerous workshops and on training activities, too numerous to identify here, have been delivered to NGO and Government staff in all PICTs, helping develop skills and knowledge needed for effective conservation. A sample of the many topics addressed include:

- Community leadership in conservation
- Environmental law and legislation
- Mangrove management
- Marine Protected Areas network design, establishment and effective management
- Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster risk planning and management
- Biological monitoring and marine and freshwater systems
- Invasive species management and control

A clear preference on in country delivery of training has emerged and is being articulated by PICTs in planning such activities. Involvement of national and local NGO conservation staff alongside international scientists in site based research and project implementation such as the SPREP coordinated multi -disciplinary BIORAP surveys of the Upland Forests of Savaai in Samoa and the survey of the biodiversity of Nauru is another example.

The past five years has seen the emergence of peer learning networks as a powerful capacity development tool. Built on the understanding that working together and learning from each other is one of the most successful ways to strengthen individual and collective capacity, networks such as the successful Micronesians in Island Conservation Network (MIC) which links between conservation leaders across the isolated islands of Micronesia, have continued to prosper. (see Box) Membership of MIC has grown to over 40 leaders, and covers the five jurisdictions of US-affiliated Micronesia. In these past five years MIC leaders have provided critical leadership for implementation of the Micronesia Challenge and conservation across the Micronesia sub region².

² See also <http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/asiaandthepacific/micronesia/howwework/micronesians-in-island-conservation.xml>

In a similar development in Papua New Guinea the establishment of the PNG Learning and Training Network (PNGLTN) was initiated in 2010. With partners including Department of Environment and Conservation and National Fisheries Authority, this network now has five provincial hubs in New Ireland, West New Britain, Manus, Madang and Milne Bay. Other networks which have had significant influence on capacity development in the region over the past five years include the Fiji Locally Managed Marine Areas (FLMMA) network, the PNG Centre for Locally Managed Areas and the regional coordinating body, the Pacific LMMA Network.

One of the most pressing issues facing the region is the dearth of young graduates entering government service and departments tasked with implementing NBSAPs and other conservation and protected area programmes.

Although the region's two principal universities, USP and UPNG, are producing graduates with skills in conservation and protected area management, they acknowledge there are not enough to meet the region's needs. They have reshaped their courses to provide specialty training in these areas. An example is the UPNG's incorporation of courses in Participatory project planning and design; Conservation area management; and Organisational strengthening in the undergraduate degree in environmental science and geography.

It is apparent that good graduates are in demand. The weakness is that the better employment opportunities exist outside of government; the private sector (especially in PNG) the international NGOs and once experience is gained, eventually with regional organisations.

One solution is to provide Conservation and Biodiversity scholarship/human resource development components in all major projects and programmes linked to specified periods of government employment on graduation. This together with supporting funding to the universities would enhance USP and UPNG and other institutions' ability to produce graduates and help meet the capacity shortfall in PICT's. There is also a pressing need to bolster the ranks of young natural scientists who can be developed into effective advocates for nature conservation and protected areas and up

Case Study: Capacity Development through Learning Networks - The Micronesians in Island Conservation Story

The Micronesians in Island Conservation Network (MIC) was initiated by The Nature Conservancy in 2001. Its aim was to link conservation leaders across the isolated islands of Micronesia and provide them with knowledge and skills to improve their conservation work. It also aimed to provide a forum for addressing common conservation management, policy and institutional issues and to foster mentoring opportunities and the sharing of experience and personal networks.

Thirteen years later the membership of MIC has grown to over 40 leaders, and covers the five jurisdictions of US-affiliated Micronesia. MIC leaders provide critical leadership for conservation implementation across Micronesia and in the past five years since the 8th National Parks and Protected Areas Conference in Alotau, PNG, has been instrumental in the implementation of the Micronesian Challenge which calls on the countries and territories of Micronesia to effectively conserve 30% of their near shore marine environments and 20% of terrestrial areas by 2020.

The success of the MIC has led to a strong partnership with the US NOAA and the launching of a sister network, the Pacific Islands Managed and Protected Areas Community (PIMPAC) and which focuses on building the skills of protected areas managers (<http://pimpac.org/>) and the Micronesia Challenge Young Champions program which identifies promising future environmental leaders while they are still in college and links them with internships and scholarships to "keep them in the islands". All three networks are now coordinated by the Micronesia Conservation Trust as part of their capacity building and outreach activities

skilled to provide the vital links between conservation organisations, governments and communities.

Overall Summary

All organisations engaged in nature conservation and protected area programmes in the region are addressing the capacity constraints which are hindering the effective implementation of programmes and projects across the region. A wide variety of approaches have been implemented over the past five years including the development of facilitated learning and leadership networks. Of real concern is the dearth of graduates skilled in conservation, natural resource and protected area management being employed in Government agencies and across the region. The need to redress this challenge is critical to the future implementation of conservation and protected area programmes and by implication, the Goals and Objectives of the Action Strategy.

Principle 8. Accountability

This principle addresses the need for international and national partners to be accountable to the communities and countries they work in for their investment and engagement in conservation programmes.

National partners would commit to:

- *Reinforcing participatory approaches by involving all national conservation partners and other stakeholders, including community representatives, when designing, implementing and assessing conservation programmes;*
- *Setting clear and standard processes of the establishment, operation and accountability of international partners through formal agreements. These agreements should include a Code of Conduct with defined consequences for breaches, and mechanisms to ensure transparency of operations;*
- *Establishing systems to register all partners conservation activities against national and local priorities (for example NBSAP's)*
- *Setting easily measured benchmarks to ensure progress against defined conservation problems with each partner held accountable for its commitments and progress.*

International partners will commit to:

- *Adopting systems that ensure transparency and accountability of their programmes at a national level;*
- *Providing timely transparent and comprehensive reporting on conservation programmes to national partners, including reporting on implementation of NBSAP priorities.*

Summary

Methods used by PICTs and Roundtable members to ensure accountability and transparency of programmes at the national level, including reporting on progress, are many and varied. All responding organisations indicated they had adopted specific internal measures or met external requirements for reporting and accounting for their activities. These include:

- Formal MOU's with national governments requiring annual reports and demonstration of programme linkages to national priorities;
- Joint reporting with national partners on grants which support common programmes and on programme outcomes;
- Reporting to national coordinating committees such as the National Coordinating Committees for the CTI-CFF National Plans of Action and NBSAP implementation plan coordinating committees;
- Producing Annual Reports for public dissemination;
- Providing detailed programme information, technical reports etc on the internet.
- Ensuring programme or project results and data are repatriated to local communities and

government agencies.

While MOUs between international partners and governments are in place in some countries systems to register all partner's conservation activities against national and local priorities (e.g. NBSAP's) do not appear to be a widespread practice. There are examples in Fiji where the government has established clear and standard processes of the establishment, operation and accountability of international partners through MOUs.

Overall Summary

Accountability is a recognised responsibility amongst Roundtable members Feedback on activities is provided through membership of national coordinating mechanisms, donor and grant management requirements the requirements of MOU's where they exist. The call for PICT's to establish formalised registration and reporting systems for international partners with the possible exception of PNG and Fiji, does not seem to have been implemented widely.

6 Funding and Pacific Conservation

6.1 Funding Commitments over past 5 years

The future of funding for biodiversity conservation in the region emerged as a concern at the Alotau Conference 2007 on the back of the economic downturn generated by the Global Financial Crisis. The past five years have proved difficult ones, especially for many of the Roundtable members. These organisations are at the forefront of Pacific conservation programme implementation and most have all been impacted by decreasing private donor and discretionary funding sources. This has seen a downsizing in some NGO country programmes, staffing and budgets. However in a positive development, a renewed emphasis on partnerships, shared programmes and institutional efficiency has emerged.

While initial concerns were harboured that there would be a corresponding downturn in public funding for biodiversity and related conservation, a number of large multi-country programmes with associated large scale multilateral and bilateral grant funding have been established and have helped offset the impact of diminished private funding. However the region is still dependent on a limited number of public funding sources. The GEF administered through the UN Development Programme and UN Environment Programme, is still a major funder of conservation and sustainable natural resource management programmes and the Australian and New Zealand Governments through AusAID and NZ Aid, have contributed strongly to SPREP and its programmes. Together with the European Union, the French Government and the US Government these sources are the most active funders and are responsible for the delivery of the bulk of the environmentally focused aid money to the Pacific region. More recent and welcome addition to this group over the past 5 years include the German government through its BMU and GIZ. agencies.

Examples of the scale and focus of grants to the region for biodiversity conservation and protected areas over the past five years include:

- ADB/GEF US4 15 million (support for Strengthening Coastal and Marine Resources Management in the Coral Triangle of the Pacific (PNG, Solomon Islands, Fiji, Vanuatu) under the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI))
- GEF, Bi-lateral, Country and NGO contributions to the Micronesia Conservation have capitalised it at USD 12 million, two thirds of its way to the Goal of US\$ 18 Million.

- CEPF US\$ 7 million (Invasive Species, Habitat Protection and Protected Areas Polynesia - Micronesia Hotspots)
- CEPF Eastern Melanesia Hotspots US\$9 million (Invasive Species, Habitat Protection and Protected Areas in Eastern Melanesia)
- UNEP - GEFPAS \$1.74 million (Regional Integrated Island Biodiversity projects)
- UNEP-GEFPAS \$3 million (Invasive Alien Species Management in the Pacific)
- USAID \$US 1 million EBA CCA in Choiseul, Solomon Islands)
- French Government PACIOCEA E450,000 (Pacific Ocean Ecosystem Analysis)
- German Government (GIZ/IUCN) E500,000 MACBIO project
- German Government (BMU) - (Marine Protected Area Network support PNG) E1million.
- USAID US\$ 7.5million (Marsh mangrove restoration in PNG)

6.2 Trends in Funding

In the five years since the 8th Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas was held in PNG, global awareness of the pervasive environmental threat posed by climate change and awareness of the impact this will have on vulnerable Pacific Island ecosystems and the communities they support has escalated rapidly. This has seen a significant increase in donor commitments to funding the implementation of Climate Change related programmes and projects across the region. This has resulted in an increase in the capacity and budgets of regional organisations like SPREP and SPC/SOPAC to assist PICTs in addressing climate change adaptation and disaster risk management. The US\$ 20.8 million SPREP Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change programme which has been in development since 2009 is an example of this new funding trend.

During the past five years, a subtle shift in donor goals and preferences away from the biodiversity "conservation" and "protection" towards programmes focused on sustaining communities and securing food security and human and economic well being has also been reported. Securing funding for habitat and species protection, including invasive species management and threatened species protection, which are at the core of the biodiversity management goals of the Action Strategy, has reportedly become more difficult.

However, at the same time, there has been a growing recognition within the donor community that healthy and resilient ecosystems, including intact habitats and species diversity, underpin sustainable communities and human well being, especially in the vulnerable small island economies of the Pacific where there remains a heavy dependence on natural resources for food and livelihoods. This emerging trend is helped by the focus on Climate Change Adaptation and disaster risk management and the understanding of the role of ecosystem based management in mitigating climate change impacts and providing low cost options for adaptation.

As a result, donor interest in supporting the development of integrated approaches to CCA has increased sharply. These embrace ecosystem based adaptation and management, including coastal habitat protection (and restoration), ridge to reef management planning and ecosystem based fisheries management, all of which support sustainable livelihoods and resilient communities, by maintaining intact ecosystems, habitat and species through protection and sustainable management.

A positive outcome of this integrated approach has been the forging of partnerships in recognition of the need to bring multi-disciplinary expertise and experience across several sectors if implementation is to be successful. The USAID funded Choiseul Integrated Climate Change

Adaptation project in the Solomon Islands implemented by a partnership of the Solomon Islands Government, Choiseul Provincial Government, USAID, SPREP, GIZ, Pacific Australia CC Science and Adaptation Planning Programme, The Nature Conservancy and UNDP is one such example.

This linkage with the Climate Change priority has opened up new funding opportunities for nature conservation and protected area financing. The recognition of the essential role of conservation in this more holistic, integrated ecosystem based management approach is helping preserve the natural heritage of the Pacific islands region. It is a trend which has been embraced by Roundtable members, regional organisations and PICTs and is embraced in the theme of the 9th Conference and will be fundamental in securing future funding for conservation.

7 Linkages and Synergies with Regional and International Planning Frameworks.

7.1 Current Action Strategy Alignment

As already mentioned, the 2007 review of the previous Action Strategy (2002 - 2007) called for the rationalisation of the 17 Objectives and 77 Targets which led to the development of the four Objectives in the current Action Strategy. These inter-related Objectives have been well designed to reflect the priority themes and strategies of the **PICT's NBSAPs** and the **CBD Islands Biodiversity Programme of Work**, the **Pacific Plan** and the **Millennium Development Goals**. These are identified as:

- Community – empowerment, awareness, involvement, ownership and benefits
- Traditional culture and practices; indigenous property rights
- Improving knowledge, research, education, public awareness
- Developing and managing protected areas, habitats
- Species conservation – terrestrial, coastal and marine, and agro biodiversity
- Management of invasive species and genetically modified organisms
- Capacity building and training, Governance
- Sustainable economic development, sustainable use of resources
- Mainstreaming conservation
- Financial resources, mechanisms
- Waste management
- Climate change

Within the format of the current Action Strategy the PICT NBSAP Strategic Themes are summarised by country in Annex 4 and those of the Island Biodiversity POW and the Pacific Plan in Annex 5.

Table 2 below presents a summary of how these themes were assessed for inclusion in the 2008 - 2012 Action Plan Objectives which in turn, are the product of extensive review and consultation, and were debated, modified and eventually endorsed by the 8th Conference in Alotau.

Table 2. Indication of how themes arising from the NBSAPs and elsewhere are reflected in the 2008 - 2012 Action Strategy³	
THEMES ARISING FROM NBSAPs and OTHER DOCUMENTS	REFLECTION IN ACTION STRATEGY OBJECTIVES
Community –	Community participation, traditional values, and related elements are not seen as

³ This Table is a revised and updated version of Table 5 of the Review of the Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the Pacific Region 2003 - 2007 Report 2 Recommendations for Strengthening the Action Strategy and Enhancing its Implementation, Roundtable for Nature Conservation in the Pacific Islands, July 2007.

empowerment, awareness, involvement, ownership and benefits	a simple Objective – they are considered as overarching principles for the implementation of all Objectives and are embraced in the Principles on Community Rights, Conservation From a Pacific Perspective and Ownership of Conservation Programmes and the Guidelines for implementation of Community Conservation Programmes
Traditional culture and practices; indigenous property rights	
Improving knowledge, research, education, public awareness	Information and knowledge management is a fundamental requirement, but it is not seen as an objective in itself. Instead it is considered as part of the implementation support for all Objectives. These are embraced in the Principles Good Governance, Capacity Development and Accountability
Developing and managing protected areas, habitats	Reflected fully in Objective 2
Species conservation – terrestrial, coastal and marine, and agro biodiversity	Reflected fully in Objective 3
Management of invasive species and genetically modified organisms	Reflected fully in Objective 4
Capacity building and training, Governance	This is a means to an end and it applies to all Objectives. It has therefore been adopted as Principle 7 Capacity Development applicable for all Objectives
Sustainable economic development, sustainable use of resources	In focusing on the “Environment” pillar, the original review did not recognise this as an Objective for the conservation focused Action Strategy. However, subsequent discussions at conference have clearly led to its elevation as underlying rationale for Objective 1 . Sustainability of Resource Use is also a Guiding Principle for implementation
Mainstreaming conservation	While this may be a valid objective at country level, for the Action Strategy it is the sub-title, and serves as an overall outcome to be targeted by all themes and objectives. It is reflected in Principle 6 Coordination
Financial resources, mechanisms	This is a means to an end and while it may not be an Objective, Financial Sustainability is covered in Principle 4 for implementation of all Objectives
Waste management	Four NBSAPs and the IBPoW address waste management and pollution but this theme was not considered appropriate in the conservation context of the Action Strategy.
Climate change	Climate change did not/does not feature in most NBSAPs (it is however, mentioned in the IBPoW and the Pacific Plan and is now a fundamental strategic priority for the region and all PICTs) because it is the subject of dedicated plans and strategies. However, the Conference was aware of the need to link climate change and biodiversity conservation to the extent possible to reflect the consequences of one on the other – resilience to climate change is therefore included in Objective 4

It is noteworthy that the original review recommendations did not extend to embracing Sustainable economic development and the sustainable use of resources within the nature conservation and protected areas context of the Action Strategy. The linkage between these themes which is rooted in the rationale/purpose of conservation and protected areas is a subject of debate which continues in the region. It is however, now widely accepted that for conservation to be relevant in the Pacific context, it must be linked sustaining livelihoods and food security and now, strengthening the resilience of island ecosystems to climate change. The adoption of Objective 1 in recognition of these theme and the Strategies Economy Goal, seems appropriate.

7.2 The Aichi Goals and Targets

Since the development of the Objectives and the decision to dispense with multiple objectives/targets in the Action Strategy a new global strategic action framework has been adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the CBD. The *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011 - 2020* and the accompanying 5 Strategic Goals and 20 *Aichi Biodiversity Targets* (Annex 2) set quantitative global targets to reduce the biodiversity and natural habitat loss, restore degraded areas and improve

protected area networks and provide for sustainable use to enhance the benefits to all form biodiversity and ecosystem services.

All Parties to the Convention which include most PICTs, have signed onto the Targets and are being urged to complete revisions of their NBSAPs to embrace these global Goals and Targets. The Aichi Targets represent the new global paradigm for action on biodiversity, will be adopted and embedded in PICT's NBSAPs and will be standards against which they will measure progress in the future.

It is therefore recommended that in the interest of synergy and avoidance of duplication, the version of the Action Strategy developed for 2013 - 2018 reflect the global, regional and national status of the Aichi Goals and Targets and adopt the targets and (especially Targets 5, 11 and 15 which are explicitly concerned with global targets to reduce the loss of natural habitats, restore degraded areas and improve protected areas) to serve as future measures of progress towards the 30 year goals.

Table 3 below is an assessment of the correlation of the Aichi 2020 Targets against the current Action Strategy Objectives and Principles has been undertaken with the aim of identifying appropriate targets in the context of the 2013 -2018 Action Strategy and the development of a hierarchy of Goals, Objectives and Targets for review and amendment at the 9th Conference.

Table 3. Correlation of Action Strategy Objectives with CBD Aichi 2020 Targets for Biodiversity	
Action Strategy Objective	Aichi 2020 Target
<p>Objective 1</p> <p>Ensure conservation has a development context that recognises, respects and supports sustainable livelihoods and community development aspirations.</p>	<p>Target 2 By 2020, at the latest, biodiversity values have been integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems.</p> <p>Target 4 By 2020, at the latest, Governments, business and stakeholders at all levels have taken steps to achieve or have implemented plans for sustainable production and consumption and have kept the impacts of use of natural resources well within safe ecological limits.</p> <p>Target 6 By 2020 all fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are managed and harvested sustainably, legally and applying ecosystem based approaches, so that overfishing is avoided, recovery plans and measures are in place for all depleted species, fisheries have no significant adverse impacts on threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems and the impacts of fisheries on stocks, species and ecosystems are within safe ecological limits.</p> <p>Target 14 By 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable.</p>

<p>Objective 2</p> <p>Identify, conserve and sustainably manage priority sites, habitats and ecosystems</p>	<p>Target 5 By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced.</p> <p>Target 10 By 2015, the multiple anthropogenic pressures on coral reefs, and other vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change or ocean acidification are minimized, so as to maintain their integrity and functioning.</p> <p>Target 11 By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes.</p>
<p>Objective 3</p> <p>Protect and recover threatened species and species of ecological, cultural and economic significance</p>	<p>Target 12 By 2020 the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained.</p>
<p>Objective 4</p> <p>Manage threats to biodiversity, especially climate change impacts and invasive species</p>	<p>Target 9 By 2020, invasive alien species and pathways are identified and prioritized, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and measures are in place to manage pathways to prevent their introduction and establishment.</p> <p>Target 15 By 2020, ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks has been enhanced, through conservation and restoration, including restoration of at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems, thereby contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to combating desertification.</p>

7.3 SPREP Strategic Plan 2011 - 2015

In 2010 the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment (SPREP) undertook a review of its strategic directions and developed a new Strategic Plan which incorporated its previous Action Plan and Strategic Programme. The SPREP Strategic Plan reflects the priorities of the SPREP member countries and the Goals, Strategies and Activities of the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Division, is closely aligned to the intent of the Action Strategy.

It is recommended that because of the regional focus and leadership of SPREP, especially in the area for biodiversity management, the synergy and alignment of the Action Strategy and SPREP Strategic Plan be ensured in the 2014 - 2020 version of the Action Strategy.

8 Partnerships and Coordination for the Action Strategy and its Implementation.

The 2008 - 2013 Action Plan was developed in the face of concerns that previous versions had lacked the "ownership" and commitment of the Pacific conservation communities and stakeholders needed to ensure effective programme implementation. Commitments and adherence to the Principles and Code of Conduct by Roundtable members and all conservation implementers in the region were aimed at overcoming this issue. In this regard, the Coordination Principle in the Code of Conduct addresses spells out the expectations of both national and international partners in terms of commitments to the Principle and is in effect, a regional strategy improving coordination and building partnerships.

In the assessment of the utilisation of this Principle evidence suggests that significant progress in the establishment of coordination mechanisms and partnerships had taken place in the past five years.. These were characterised by multi agency stakeholder representation and the openness of most governments to working with and involving NGO partners sometimes in a leadership role. Elsewhere the suggestion is made that new approaches such as integrated and ecosystem based management and donor expectations of multi-agency -multi-disciplinary partnerships has helped this development.

Large scale programmes like the CTI-CFF have also been responsible for strengthened partnerships and coordination through the formation of national coordinating mechanisms which have strengthened linkages between government and non government implementing agencies. New networks have been established such as the Pacific Heritage Hub which is focused on protecting the region's natural and cultural heritage under the World Heritage umbrella and the PNG Learning and Training Network and the LMMA networks are also examples of how groups are collaborating and working in partnership to further the implementation and goals of the Action Strategy.

These and a plethora of other examples too numerous to detail here but which did not exist 5 years ago suggest that the levels and extent of Partnership and Collaboration have progressed significantly over the past five years. This trend is growing and will continue to do so as the region's conservation stakeholders understand better how to work in partnership, experience the benefits of partnerships and the strengthened outcomes that result.

Annex 1. Principles of Nature Conservation in the Pacific - a Code of Conduct.

Principle 1. Community Rights

This Principle is based on the premise that most natural resources in the Pacific are owned and used by indigenous and local communities.

The Principle calls on International and national partners to actively recognise, respect and support:

- *Community property rights including traditional rights over natural resources, indigenous intellectual property relating to natural resources and cultural knowledge;*
- *Community decision making practices*
-

Principle 2. Conservation from a Pacific Perspective

The Principle is based on the understanding that natural resources are often the most important source of wealth and development opportunities for Pacific communities. Therefore the practice of conservation principles in Pacific communities will influence the economic, social and cultural affairs of those communities.

The Principle calls on International and national partners to actively recognise, respect and support:

- *Community aspirations for development and well being;*
- *A Pacific approach to conservation based on sustainable resource use.*

Principle 3. Ownership of Conservation Programmes

This Principle is based on the understanding that lasting conservation in the Pacific can only be achieved if national partners (including communities) take responsibility for leadership of the design, implementation and evaluation of all conservation programmes in their respective areas

The Principle asks National and community partners to commit to:

- *Exercise and build their capacity for leadership of conservation programmes*

International partners were asked to commit to:

- *Respecting and encouraging national and community partner leadership for all conservation programmes and helping strengthen partner capacity to exercise their leadership for all programmes and helping strengthen partner capacity to exercise their leadership;*
- *Aligning all conservation programmes with those of the national partners;*
- *Strengthening national and local partners as an alternative to establishing their own institutions and infrastructure;*
- *Connecting regional and international initiatives with national priorities and aspirations;*
- *Ensuring all key programme decision-making take place in-country with participation by national and community partners and led by their conservation priorities.*

Principle 4. Financial Sustainability

This principle reflects the fact that conservation initiatives must be adequately resourced over time if they are to be successful.

The Principle calls on international and national partners to commit to:

- *Ensuring their conservation programmes are of scale and budget appropriate to the local context*
- *Long-term strategic planning and resource mobilisation that sustains conservation over time.*

Principle 5. Good Governance

The basis for this principle is the need for effective conservation programmes to be participatory, accountable and transparent.

The Principle calls for national and international partners to commit to:

- *Reinforcing participatory approaches by involving all stakeholders, particularly community representatives when designing, implementing and assessing conservation programmes;*
- *Ensuring systems are in place to enable full accountability to the people affected by conservation programme implementation;*
- *Ensuring their programmes and systems are well communicated, fully transparent and open to stakeholder scrutiny.*

Principle 6. Coordination

The Principle is based on the tenet that conservation is more effective when partners coordinate and work within a strategic framework

It calls on National Partners to commit to:

- *Ensuring NBSAPs and the locally devised conservation programmes are strategic, focused and set clear local priorities for action;*
- *Taking a leadership role in coordinating all partners;*
- *Providing national and local focal points for coordinating NBSAP and other programme implementation.*

International Partners will commit to:

- *Working within the legislation, policies, strategies, agreed priorities and coordination of political engagement to avoid duplication*
- *Working with each other to ensure collaborative analysis, strategies, agreed priorities and coordination of political engagement to avoid duplication*
- *Avoiding programming that directly competes with national partners for projects and funding.*

Principle 7. Capacity Development

The Principle recognises the importance of community and national capacity to design, prioritise, direct, manage, implement, monitor and evaluate conservation programmes so that lasting conservation objectives can be achieved.

National partners and communities will commit to:

- *Building effective and sustainable conservation capability and organisations through on-going capacity development*
- *Ensuring conservation is continuously improved by recording, disseminating and incorporating lessons learned and best practices.*

International partners will commit to:

- *Supporting national partners in their efforts to build effective and sustainable national institutions;*
- *Supporting national partners and communities in their efforts to develop leadership, project direction and management skills*
- *Ensuring their presence in-country does not undermine national and local institutions - building or capacity development;*
- *Contributing to national partner's best practice by recording, disseminating and implementing lessons learned.*

Principle 8. Accountability

The issue addressed by this principle was the need for international and national partners to be accountable to the communities and countries they work in for their investment and engagement in conservation programmes.

National partners would commit to:

- *Reinforcing participatory approaches by involving all national conservation partners and other stakeholders, including community representatives, when designing, implementing and assessing conservation programmes;*
- *Setting clear and standard processes of the establishment, operation and accountability of international partners through formal agreements. These agreements should include a Code of Conduct with defined consequences for breaches, and mechanisms to ensure transparency of operations;*
- *Establishing systems to register all partners conservation activities against national and local priorities (for example NBSAP's)*
- *Setting easily measured benchmarks to ensure progress against defined conservation problems with each partner held accountable for its commitments and progress.*

International partners will commit to:

- *Adopting systems that ensure transparency and accountability of their programmes at a national level;*
- *Providing timely transparent and comprehensive reporting on conservation programmes to national partners, including reporting on implementation of NBSAP priorities.*

Annex 2. Aichi Goals and Targets of the Convention on Biodiversity

Strategic Goal A: Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society



Target 1

By 2020, at the latest, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably.



Target 2

By 2020, at the latest, biodiversity values have been integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems.



Target 3

By 2020, at the latest, incentives, including subsidies, harmful to biodiversity are eliminated, phased out or reformed in order to minimize or avoid negative impacts, and positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are developed and applied, consistent and in harmony with the Convention and other relevant international obligations, taking into account national socio economic conditions.



Target 4

By 2020, at the latest, Governments, business and stakeholders at all levels have taken steps to achieve or have implemented plans for sustainable production and consumption and have kept the impacts of use of natural resources well within safe ecological limits.

Strategic Goal B: Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use



Target 5

By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced.



Target 6

By 2020 all fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are managed and harvested sustainably, legally and applying ecosystem based approaches, so that overfishing is avoided, recovery plans and measures are in place for all depleted species, fisheries have no significant adverse impacts on threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems and the impacts of fisheries on stocks, species and ecosystems are within safe ecological limits.



Target 7

By 2020 areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity.



Target 8

By 2020, pollution, including from excess nutrients, has been brought to levels that are not detrimental to ecosystem function and biodiversity.



Target 9

By 2020, invasive alien species and pathways are identified and prioritized, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and measures are in place to manage pathways to prevent their introduction and establishment.



Target 10

By 2015, the multiple anthropogenic pressures on coral reefs, and other vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change or ocean acidification are minimized, so as to maintain their integrity and functioning.

Strategic Goal C: To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity



Target 11

By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes.



Target 12

By 2020 the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained.



Target 13

By 2020, the genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and of wild relatives, including other socio-economically as well as culturally valuable species, is maintained, and strategies have been developed and implemented for minimizing genetic erosion and safeguarding their genetic diversity.

Strategic Goal D: Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services



Target 14

By 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable.



Target 15

By 2020, ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks has been enhanced, through conservation and restoration, including restoration of at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems, thereby contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to combating desertification.



Target 16

By 2015, the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization is in force and operational, consistent with national legislation.

Strategic Goal E: Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building



Target 17

By 2015 each Party has developed, adopted as a policy instrument, and has commenced implementing an effective, participatory and updated national biodiversity strategy and action plan.



Target 18

By 2020, the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their customary use of biological resources, are respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, at all relevant levels.



Target 19

By 2020, knowledge, the science base and technologies relating to biodiversity, its values, functioning, status and trends, and the consequences of its loss, are improved, widely shared and transferred, and applied.



Target 20

By 2020, at the latest, the mobilization of financial resources for effectively implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 from all sources, and in accordance with the consolidated and agreed process in the Strategy for Resource Mobilization, should increase substantially from the current levels. This target will be subject to changes contingent to resource needs assessments to be developed and reported by Parties.

(<http://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/>)

Annex 3. Pacific Islands Roundtable Self Assessment

PIRT Members Self Assessment of Application of Action Strategy Principles			
Organisation/Program*		Contact:*	
<p>Your taking the time to complete this assessment is appreciated and is an important contribution to the Action Strategy review. Please provide information in summary form. Where applicable the provision of web linkages for additional information would be welcome. If you consider the scope of your work is broad enough and requires a more in-depth response please feel free to provide programme specific information.</p> <p>*Please Note – THIS INFORMATION WILL BE TREATED CONFIDENTIALLY AND NO ORGANISATION OR INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTING TO THIS SURVEY WILL BE IDENTIFIED IN ANY PUBLICATION OR PRESENTATION WITHOUT FIRST OBTAINING AGREEMENT.</p> <p>Please submit the completed Self Assessment by 13 September 2013</p>			
Part 1 Utility of the Action Strategy			
<p>This section aims to gather information on how useful or not the Action Strategy has been in guiding conservation action by key organisations and the Countries and Territories over the past 5 years.</p>			
<p>Overall Assessment 1</p> <p>Have you or your programme staff referred to the Action Strategy and its Guiding Principles in the planning or implementation of your programmes/projects?</p> <p>(Please tick a box)</p>	Not At All	Occasionally	Refer to it Regularly
<p>Overall Assessment 2</p> <p>Of the Guiding Principles which do you think your organisation is strongest and weakest in its adherence?</p> <p>(Please indicate numbers 1 – 8).</p>	Strongest		Weakest

<p>Overall Assessment 3</p> <p>Overall, how strongly do you consider your organisation adheres to the Guiding Principles in the implementation of its programmes and projects (Please tick a box)</p>	<p>Poorly</p>	<p>Moderately</p>
		<p>Strongly</p>
<p>Part 2 Principles in Action</p> <p>This section of the Assessment seeks to obtain more specific information and examples of how and the Principles might have been applied and adhered to and applied over the past 5 years. We are also looking for possible examples which might be suitable for a brief case study for inclusion in the Action Strategy review.</p>		
<p>Principle 1. Community Rights</p> <p>Can you provide an example(s) where your organisation has recognised and supported community Property rights and decision making and how specifically was this done?</p>		
<p>Principle 2. Integrating a Pacific Perspective</p> <p>Do you have an example(s) where your organisation has supported community aspirations for development and sustainable resource use (can be same as in Principle 1)?</p>		
<p>Principle 3. Ownership of Conservation Programmes</p> <p>The Principle seeks to ensure strengthened “ownership” of conservation</p>		

<p>programmes/projects by community and national partners. Have you an example (s) where your organisation has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strongly engaged community leadership in determining a course of action • Aligned a conservation programme or project with national policy or National Plan of Action • Worked through and supported national and or community to take the lead rather than do it your self • Linked a national programme or project to a multi-country, regional or international initiative? 	
<p>Principle 4. Financial Sustainability</p> <p>How has your organisation ensured that your conservation programmes are of a scale and budget which is appropriate to the local context and can be sustained over time?</p>	
<p>Principle 5. Good Governance</p> <p>How have you ensured your programmes and project are participatory, accountable and transparent and do you have a specific example(s) where these elements have aligned and contributed to improved programme/project implementation and sustainability?</p>	
<p>Principle 6. Coordination</p> <p>Ave you an example(s) where your efforts at coordination with partners and within a strategic framework have made your programme/project more effective by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking national leadership to coordinate partners and inputs into policy to ensure priorities are strategic, focussed and broadly agreed to • Working within national frameworks • Working with other organisations to avoid duplication, agree on priorities and avoid duplication 	

<p>Principle 7. Strengthening national capacity</p> <p>How has your organisation worked to strengthen national conservation capacity?</p>	
<p>Principle 8. Accountability</p> <p>What systems has your organisation adopted to ensure accountability and transparency of your work at the national level, including reporting on progress?</p>	
<p>Thank You for Taking the Time to Help the Assessment Process</p>	

Annex 4. Country Consultation Questionnaire

SPREP Member Countries Assessment of the Implementation of the <i>Action Strategy for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas 2008 - 2012</i>			
Country*	Contact:*		
<p>Your taking the time to complete this assessment is appreciated and is an important contribution to the Action Strategy review. Please provide information in summary form. Where applicable the provision of web linkages for additional information would be welcome. If you consider the scope of your work is broad enough and requires a more in-depth response please feel free to provide programme specific information.</p> <p>The Assessment is offered in MSWord to assist you to respond. Please type your responses in the boxes accordingly.</p>			
<p>Part 1 Utility of the Action Strategy</p> <p>This section aims to gather information on how useful or not the Action Strategy has been in guiding conservation action by key organisations and the Pacific Island Countries and Territories over the past 5 years.</p>			
Overall Assessment 1	Not At All	Occasionally	Refer to it Regularly
<p>Use of Guiding Principles</p> <p>Have you or your staff referred to the Action Strategy and its Guiding Principles in the planning or implementation of your programmes/projects?</p> <p>(Please tick a box)</p>			
Overall Assessment 2	Strongest		Weakest
<p>Most important</p> <p>Which of the Guiding Principles which do you think are the most important for achieving conservation gains in your country?</p> <p>(Please indicate numbers 1 – 8).</p>			

<p>Overall Assessment 3</p> <p>Application of Principles</p> <p>Overall, how strongly do you consider the Guiding Principles have been applied in the implementation of the NBSAP in your country? (Please tick a box)</p>	<p>Poorly</p>	<p>Moderately</p>	<p>Strongly</p>
<p>Overall Assessment 4</p> <p>Human Capacity for Conservation</p> <p>Have the number of staff engaged in biodiversity conservation, protected areas management, policy and reporting changed since 2009</p>	<p>Fewer</p>	<p>Same</p>	<p>Increased</p>
<p>Overall Assessment 5</p> <p>Funding for Conservation.</p> <p>Has the government budget contribution to support biodiversity conservation, protected areas management, policy and reporting changed since 2009</p>	<p>Less (%)</p>	<p>Same</p>	<p>Increased (%)</p>

Part 2 Progress on Action Strategy Objectives

The following questions are aimed at broadly assessing the overall progress being made towards the four key objectives of the Action Strategy over the past 5 years in your country.

Objective 1. Ensure conservation has a development context that recognises respects and supports sustainable livelihoods and Community development aspirations.

Do you have any examples where conservation has been undertaken in a development context (e.g. to support communities and helps sustain livelihoods such as sustaining fisheries or improving water supply), in your country?

Objective 2 Identify, conserve and sustainably manage priority sites, habitats and ecosystems.

Have you completed a PoWPA Gaps Assessment or similar national assessment of conservation area priorities and do you have any examples where priority conservation sites have been identified and conserved over the past 5 years?

Objective 3 Protect and recover threatened species and species of ecological, cultural and economic significance

Have there been any new surveys, legislation or other actions to protect or help the recovery of threatened species in your country over the past 5 years?

Objective 4 Manage threats to biodiversity especially climate change impacts and invasive species.

Have there been any initiatives to mitigate threats such as logging, mining over-fishing or to set in place management responses to climate change impacts and invasive species?

Part 3 Principles in Action

This section of the Assessment seeks to obtain more specific information and examples of how and the Principles might have been applied and adhered to and applied over the past 5 years. We are also looking for possible examples which might be suitable for a brief case study for inclusion in the Action Strategy review.

Principle 1. Community Rights

Can you provide an example(s) in your country where community Property rights and decision making has been recognised and supported and how specifically was this done?

Principle 2. Integrating a Pacific Perspective

Do you have an example(s) in your country where community aspirations for development and sustainable resource use have been supported and met? (can be same as in Principle 1)?

Principle 3. Ownership of Conservation Programmes

<p>The Principle seeks to ensure strengthened “ownership” of conservation programmes/projects by community and national partners. Have you an example (s) where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community leadership has been strongly engaged in determining a course of action • a conservation programme or project has been aligned with national policy or National Plan of Action • where your government has taken the implementation lead on a multi-country, regional or international initiative? • 	
<p>Principle 4. Financial Sustainability</p> <p>How has your country ensured that your conservation programmes can be sustained financially over time?</p>	
<p>Principle 5. Good Governance</p> <p>How have you ensured your programmes and project are participatory, accountable and transparent and do you have a specific example(s) where these elements have aligned and contributed to improved programme/project implementation and sustainability?</p>	
<p>Principle 6. Coordination</p> <p>Do you have an example(s) where your efforts at coordination with partners and within a strategic framework have made conservation in your country more effective by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking national leadership to coordinate partners and inputs into policy to ensure priorities are strategic, focussed and broadly agreed to • Working within national frameworks • Working with other organisations to avoid duplication, agree on priorities and avoid duplication 	
<p>Principle 7. Strengthening national capacity</p> <p>How has your country worked most effectively to</p>	

<p>strengthen national conservation capacity?</p>	
<p>Principle 8. Accountability</p> <p>What systems does your country have to ensure accountability and transparency of your work at the national level, including reporting on progress?</p>	
<p>Final Question – do you think the current Principle based Action Strategy format should be retained or should we revert to format which identifies specific actions/outcomes against which we can measure progress in 2018?</p>	