

Pacific Biodiversity Blue Belt

Targeted territories: French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Pitcairn, Wallis & Futuna

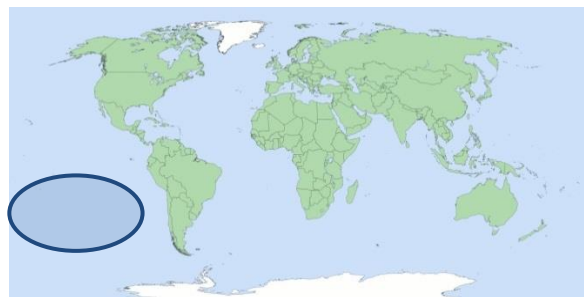
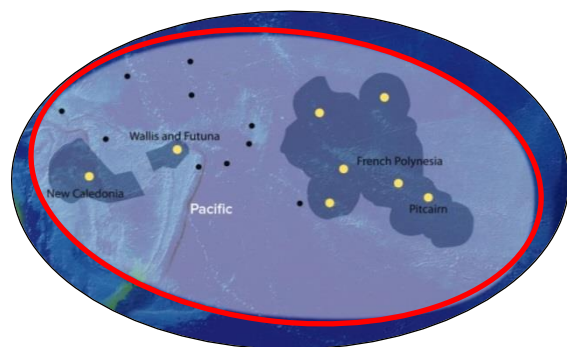
Total project budget: 440,997 Euros

BEST 2.0 grant awarded: 399,897 Euros

Duration: May 2016 – November 2018 (31 months)

Lead organisation: Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

Partner organisation: Agence des Aires Marines Protégées (AAMP)



Background:

Oceans are essential for sustainable development and the health and well-being of the planet. They are an important source of sustenance, livelihoods, recreation, and cultural value, and they provide a wealth of ecosystem services that are not only critical to the healthy functioning of the planet but also for sustainable economic growth and the social welfare of local communities. Oceans are also facing growing threats, including overfishing, climate change, pollution and habitat destruction, which are causing an unprecedented loss of biodiversity and impeding efforts to achieve sustainable development.

Similar to other Pacific Island States, the Pacific Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) face enormous challenges in achieving their sustainable development aspirations. Particular challenges faced are limited resources and capacity for management and conservation of marine ecosystems and

biodiversity; limited ecological networks of protected and managed areas at national and regional scales for species that migrate or depend on connectivity; and limited levels of integration among Pacific OCTs and with neighbouring Pacific Island countries in regional marine ecosystem and biodiversity conservation.

Description of the Project:

This project is designed to serve the Pacific island territories with practical actions that support them in achieving tangible outcomes toward their marine Aichi targets 6 (sustainable fisheries), 10 (healthy coral reefs) and 11 (10% marine areas conserved) as the European territories have reporting obligations on the Aichi targets to their signatory states.

The project will implement tangible national and territorial actions supporting local initiatives; to promote trans-boundary cooperation and thus to achieve a greater level of integrated ocean management and biodiversity conservation amongst SPREP members.

The project will address the challenges highlighted by the Pacific OCTs as limiting their ability to manage their marine environment sustainably. It comprises three interlinked components.

1. Assisting the territorial governments and stakeholders to develop strategic approaches for establishing and managing large and small Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), using methodologies which are appropriate and feasible for a range of remote small island states. The project will also establish a Pacific MPA Managers Network to facilitate the sharing of experience and approaches.
2. Developing a synthesis and guidelines on surveillance technologies and approaches appropriate for small and large MPA managers, including their application, their cost and their suitability for different MPAs and local capacities.
3. Development of best practices in ecotourism and the development of underwater/coastal educational trails to promote wider engagement in the conservation of biodiversity and support the development of sustainable ecotourism industries.

Intended results:

- Increased knowledge within the Pacific OCTs on appropriate methodologies for the planning and management of large and small MPAs.
- Increased knowledge within the Pacific OCTs of appropriate surveillance and monitoring approaches for MPAs and accessible technical and methodological guidelines for implementing them.
- Increased knowledge and application of good practices in ecotourism, including the use and management of coastal and submarine educational trails



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