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PACIFIC TOURISM ORGANISATION

PACIFIC SUSTAINABLE TOURISM COMMITMENT

Sustainable Tourism Enhancement in the Pacific (STEP)

Integrating Circular Economy and Sustainable Consumption Practices in the Pacific Tourism Sector

REGIONAL ROADMAP

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ACRONYMS

ABAS	Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS
CBTE	Community-based Tourism Enterprise
CBTEs	Community-based Tourism Enterprises
CE	Circular economy
COVID	Coronavirus disease
CROP	Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific
DC	Demonstration country
EU	European Union
GSTC	Global Sustainable Tourism Council
MEAL	Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NTO	National Tourism Organisation
PATA	Pacific Asia Travel Association
PIC	Pacific Island Country
PPD	Public-Private Dialogue
PSC	Policy Support Component
PSTI	Pacific Sustainable Tourism Indicators

PSTPF	Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework
PSTS	Pacific Sustainable Tourism Standards
PTSS	Pacific Tourism Statistics Strategy
SCP	Sustainable consumption and production
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small island developing state
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SPC	Pacific Community Secretariat
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
SPTO	Pacific Tourism Organisation (formerly known as South Pacific Tourism Organisation)
STEP	Sustainable Tourism Enhancement in the Pacific
SUP	Single-use plastics

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The STEP Regional Roadmap presents a coordinated strategy to embed circular economy and sustainable consumption and production principles across the tourism sector in Pacific Island Countries. Developed through the Sustainable Tourism Enhancement in the Pacific (STEP) project under the EU SWITCH-Asia Pacific Policy Support Component, the Roadmap is the product of extensive consultation, technical research, and regional consensus-building. It sets out a clear ambition: to embed circular economy practices within the Pacific tourism sector by breaking down persistent barriers, aligning efforts across the region, piloting successful national models, and attracting investment to scale proven solutions.

Context

Tourism is a cornerstone of Pacific economies, providing vital jobs, business opportunities, investment, and foreign exchange, especially for countries lacking large-scale extractive industries. Embracing circular tourism offers substantial benefits across the region: it reduces waste through better resource use, saves costs by favouring durable local products, and increases resilience by lowering vulnerability to supply chain disruptions. Circular approaches also strengthen local economies by fostering new jobs and enterprises around local sourcing and upcycling, all while enhancing the visitor experience, and attracting travellers who increasingly value destinations that protect their environment and culture. The importance of shifting from a linear 'take, make, dispose' model toward a circular economy, where resources are kept in use for as long as possible, is recognised throughout national and regional strategies in the Pacific.

The policy context for this Roadmap is shaped by the May 2024 SIDS Consultation Meeting in Apia, Samoa, where 20 Pacific Island countries addressed regional challenges in sustainable material use, waste management, and circular economy adoption. The meeting underscored the urgent need for integrated 3R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) and Circular Economy (CE) strategies, aligned to SPREP frameworks, to build resource-efficient, resilient, and low-carbon societies. Insights and commitments from this consultation directly inform this Roadmap, ensuring that Pacific realities and priorities guide regional CE and sustainable consumption policies and actions.

Regional ambition

The Roadmap aligns closely with regional priorities set out in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, Cleaner Pacific 2025 (and the forthcoming Cleaner Pacific 2036), the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework, and the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Standards. It is underpinned by seven guiding principles:

- Focused action and adaptability
- National leadership with regional coordination
- Partnerships and shared learning
- Equity and inclusivity
- Data-driven, results-focused delivery
- Innovation, circularity, and efficiency
- Respect for Pacific cultures and nature

Regional priorities

By charting a series of high-impact interventions – ranging from enabling policy frameworks to on-the-ground demonstration projects – the Roadmap addresses both regional and national priorities. Its phased approach empowers countries to take action at their own pace, drawing on shared tools, knowledge, and resources, while allowing for tailored solutions that reflect local needs and aspirations. The Roadmap outlines 14 priority interventions for the Pacific, grouped into three categories:

- **Foundational:** Establishing policy frameworks, national standards, knowledge platforms, and self-assessment tools to create an enabling environment
- **Enabling:** Building practical systems such as supply-chain development, procurement policies, and financing mechanisms to support industry adoption
- **Applied & Scalable:** Piloting and expanding on-the-ground solutions, including climate-resilient accommodation, traditional sustainable construction, and regional knowledge exchange

Nine interventions are recommended at the regional level for all Pacific nations, focusing on shared resources, capacity-building, monitoring, and collaborative learning. Five are recommended to be piloted within demonstration countries, serving as testbeds for national adaptation and scalability.

The regional approach is complemented by tailored Country Pathways in Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, and Vanuatu. These pathways offer country-specific implementation plans, informed by each nation's priorities, readiness, and capacity. These demonstration countries provide practical models, insights, and lessons for all Pacific Island Countries. Key outcomes and experiences will be documented and shared regionally, enabling other nations to rapidly adapt and scale successful approaches.

Call to action

The Roadmap recognises the essential role of collaboration: success depends on ongoing partnership among governments, the private sector, communities, donors, and development partners. Through regular knowledge exchange, capacity-building, and collective problem-solving, the Pacific can accelerate adoption of sustainable and circular tourism practices, safeguard its rich natural and cultural assets, and build a more resilient, inclusive, and prosperous sector.

ROADMAP AMBITION

To embed circular economy practices within the Pacific tourism sector by breaking down persistent barriers, aligning efforts across the region, piloting successful national models, and attracting investment to scale proven solutions

PRIORITIES

Regulatory & Policy Framework	Capacity Building, Communication & Awareness	Supply Chain, Purchasing & Procurement	Sustainable Infrastructure
Mainstream circular economy principles into national tourism policies Align national tourism standards with circular tourism practices	Strengthen sector-wide knowledge and skills through toolkits, communication platforms and knowledge exchange	Strengthen local supply chains to provide sustainable alternatives for tourism operations Create structured procurement and traceability systems linking local producers with tourism businesses	Develop and promote guidelines for low-carbon, climate-resilient tourism buildings Provide targeted skills training for the construction and operation of sustainable accommodation

ENABLERS

Collaboration between government, development partners, industry, and communities	Sustainable finance and invesment that will accelerate transition by the private sector	Infrastructure development to support circular solutions	Institutional capacity building and technical assistance

1. INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

1.1. The Circular Economy and the Pacific

Spanning Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia, the Pacific region is a tapestry of thousands of islands distinguished by vibrant cultures and deep-rooted histories. While geographic isolation shapes their identity, Pacific Island nations face shared and urgent challenges, including climate change and economic vulnerabilities tied to key sectors like tourism, agriculture, and remittances.

Guided by the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, which was endorsed in 2022, the region champions sustainable, inclusive growth rooted in resource efficiency and equitable opportunity. Recent high-level consultations, such as the 2024 SIDS (Pacific Island Countries) meeting, have sharpened the focus on integrated strategies for reducing, reusing, and recycling (3R), and accelerating the circular economy (CE) across all sectors.

CE is especially important for Pacific nations because it helps address critical challenges unique to the region, such as limited natural resources, high waste management costs, vulnerability to climate change, and dependence on imported goods. By keeping materials and products in use for longer through repair, reuse, recycling, and redesign, Pacific Island nations can reduce waste, conserve scarce resources, and strengthen economic resilience against external shocks.

1.2. The Circular Economy and the Tourism Sector

Tourism stands at the heart of Pacific economies, generating essential jobs, entrepreneurship, investment, and foreign exchange. For countries with limited extractive industry options, tourism offers a gateway to sustainable and skilled prosperity, a fact consistently recognised in national development plans. Against this backdrop, a shift toward circular tourism has the potential to deliver significant benefit for Pacific nations.

- ✓ Less Waste: Circular practices keep materials in use longer and prevent disposal at landfill.
- ✓ Cost Savings: By choosing durable products and local suppliers, businesses reduce dependence on expensive imports and spend less on disposal and replacement.
- ✓ Resilience: Reducing resource use and waste makes tourism operations less vulnerable to supply chain disruptions.
- ✓ Strengthened Local Economies: Supporting local sourcing, upcycling, and waste-to-resource initiatives generates new business opportunities and jobs in communities, while keeping tourism earnings within the nation.
- ✓ Improved Visitor Experience: Travellers are increasingly choosing destinations committed to sustainability; circular solutions demonstrate a genuine commitment to protecting local environments and cultures.

Further information on the types of circular economy strategies the tourism sector can adopt is presented in Figure 1. Appendix 1 provides additional details on the CE and sustainable consumption and production (SCP) principles.

1.3. Regional leadership and coordination

The Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) leads the regional approach to sustainable tourism and marketing for 20 member countries and 180+ private sector stakeholders. Its Strategic Plan 2025–2029 pinpoints six priorities: Sustainable Destination Management, Marketing Support and Events, Research Coordination, Partner Coordination, Capacity Building, and Connecting Tourism with Aviation. This regional leadership is crucial for harmonising initiatives and scaling best practices.

The Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework (PSTPF) offers a robust regional vision prioritising sustainability, environmental guardianship, and cultural authenticity. It explicitly promotes circular economy models and resource efficiency, aligning with the SDGs. Complementing this, the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Standards (PSTS) provide actionable benchmarks, thus empowering industry and governments to reduce footprints, enhance resilience, protect biodiversity, and capture greater value for local communities. Together, they lay the foundation for a unified, inclusive, and regenerative tourism ecosystem.

1.4. National Tourism Organisations

National Tourism Organisations (NTOs) are pivotal in translating these regional strategies into on-the-ground action. While most reference sustainable tourism practices in their plans, many lack detailed guidance for the private sector on how to adopt circular economy and sustainable consumption and production practices.

Despite momentum, the journey toward sustainable tourism (and circular economy) in the Pacific is not without obstacles characterised by:

- High vulnerability to external shocks, with most tourism enterprises lacking the financial buffers for swift recovery
- Fragmented governance and policies hamper co-ordinated action across government and non-government actors
- Insufficient infrastructure (especially for water, waste, and energy)
- Access to finance holds back growth and innovation
- Poor waste management, particularly for plastics, and inadequate recycling infrastructure
- Reliance on fossil fuels over renewable energy

1.5. Key enablers and opportunities

Despite these challenges, the opportunities for circular tourism are growing. Success will depend on:

- Genuine collaboration among government, industry, and communities
- Capacity building and training for businesses and suppliers
- Building strong supply chain linkages between tourism and local businesses
- Policies that encourage local procurement and foster green investment
- Infrastructure development to support circular solutions
- Resources and finance solutions that accelerate transition by the private sector

1.6. The STEP Project: A Roadmap for Circular Tourism

Acknowledging this opportunity, the Sustainable Tourism Enhancement in the Pacific (STEP) Project, implemented under the EU SWITCH-Asia Pacific Policy Support Component (PSC), serves as a strategic catalyst for embedding CE and SCP practices in Pacific tourism. Building on the region's unifying frameworks, namely the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework (PSTPF) and the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Standards (PSTS), the STEP initiative translates ambition into action by driving targeted, transformative interventions across the sector.

The policy context for this Roadmap is shaped by the outcomes of the SIDS (Pacific Island Countries) Consultation Meeting on the Pre-Zero Draft of the New Declaration on 3R and Circular Economy in Asia-Pacific (2024-2034), held in Apia, Samoa in May 2024. This landmark regional consultation, brought together representatives from 20 Pacific countries to address the unique challenges faced by SIDS in advancing sustainable material use, waste management, and circular economy practices. The meeting emphasised the urgent need for integrated 3R and CE strategies, aligned with SPREP's regional frameworks, to achieve resource-efficient, resilient, and low-carbon societies. The insights and commitments from this consultation directly inform the strategic direction and priorities outlined in this Roadmap, ensuring that Pacific perspectives and realities are at the forefront of regional policy and action on CE and SCP.

Regional Roadmap and National Pathways

The STEP Project is structured around two core components. First, a comprehensive Regional Roadmap, identifying priority actions to accelerate adoption of CE and SCP principles across the tourism sector. Second, tailored country 'pathways' for Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, and Vanuatu, which are 'demonstration countries' that illustrate how regional approaches to accelerate the adoption of CE and SCP can effectively be customised and applied in practice. Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, and Vanuatu were selected on the basis that they are broadly representative of the PICs, based on:

- the scale/maturity/structure of their tourism economies
- differing development stages and needs for the tourism sector
- differing legislation and regulatory frameworks

The Country Pathways were shaped by in-depth consultation and regional validation, and they offer step-by-step, context-specific action plans aligned with national priorities and the principles of the PSTS, SCP, and CE.

Purpose of the Regional Roadmap

The Regional Roadmap lays out a coordinated, action-focused approach to help SPTO and its member nations operationalise the region's sustainable tourism vision and embed CE and SCP practices in the sector. It embodies the shared commitment of Pacific leaders to shape an environmentally responsible, inclusive, and resilient tourism sector that can set a global example.

Methodology: From Evidence to Action

The methodology underpinning the Regional Roadmap followed five logical phases.

Phase 1: Scoping Assessment

Through desktop research and a regional baseline survey, existing tourism strategies, policies, and sustainability frameworks were reviewed, and data on the current state of national standards and CE and SCP policy and practices was collected.

Phase 2: In-Country Consultations

Targeted consultations in the demonstration countries assessed local practices, identified key impact areas, and co-designed tailored national pathways that integrate CE and SCP principles.

Phase 3: Regional Validation Workshop

In April 2025, over 50 participants from ten countries, and including representatives from national tourism organisations, governments, industry, NGOs, partners, and communities, gathered in Fiji. Through interactive sessions, they validated findings and set regional priorities.[1]

Phase 4: Development of the Regional Roadmap

Insights from all previous phases were synthesised into a unified Regional Roadmap, to guide the SPTO and regional partners in systematically advancing CE and SCP practices.

Phase 5: Development of Country Pathways

The process culminated in four separate Country Pathways for Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, and Vanuatu. These reports present detailed, customised action plans, each tailored to the national context, tourism priorities, and the practical integration of CE/SCP principles.[2]

Further details on the methodology, consultations and the evolution of project design and thinking, is provided in a companion STEP Phase 1 Background Report.[3]

1 The Full Workshop report is available at:https://www.switch-asia.eu/resource/regional-validation-workshop-on-sustainable-tourism-enhancement-in-the-pacific-step/
2 Country Pathway Reports are available at xxxx
3 The STEP Phase 1 Background Report is available at xxxx

Figure 1: Closing the loop – Circular strategies for Pacific Tourism

1 Design out waste and pollution

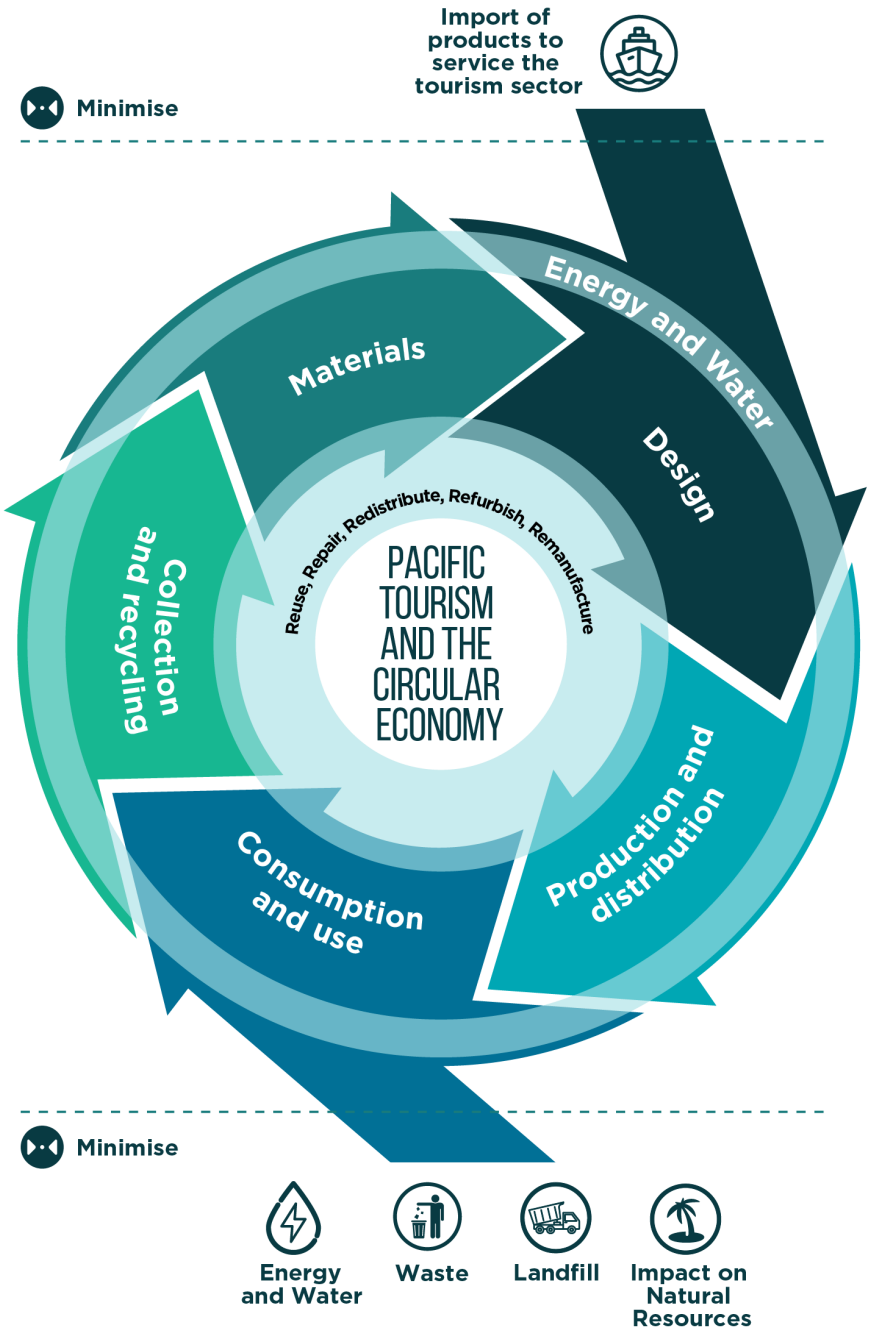
Tourism businesses can reduce waste and boost sustainability with smart design. When items like reusable water bottles or refillable toiletry dispensers in guest rooms are designed for easy cleaning, refilling, or recycling, they stay in use longer and are less likely to become waste. This makes it easier for operators and visitors to repair, reuse, and recycle plastic products—cutting down single-use plastics and their impact on the environment.

2 Keep products and materials in use at their highest value

By choosing durable equipment, reusing supplies, and repairing items instead of discarding them, tourism operators keep resources in circulation longer. This approach reduces waste, lowers business costs, and creates a more sustainable experience for visitors.

3 Conserve natural resources and regenerate nature

Resource use in tourism can strain the Pacific's fragile environments. Adopting circular economy practices—such as considering the full life cycle of products and materials—helps operators reduce their footprint and protect their islands' unique natural and cultural heritage for generations to come.



2. SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRACTICES IN THE PACIFIC

This chapter provides an overview of the collective progress and stakeholder perspectives on what is needed to embed sustainable and circular practices across the tourism sector.

2.1. Regional Actions and Initiatives

At the regional level, the movement toward sustainability in tourism is being driven by a strong spirit of collaboration among Pacific nations, regional organisations, and development partners. Key frameworks, such as the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, provide a unified direction for greater resource efficiency, waste reduction, and climate-smart growth.

SPREP (the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme) is the leading intergovernmental organisation responsible for environmental protection and sustainable development across the Pacific Islands, including the coordination and delivery of regional waste management and pollution control strategies.

SPREP's regional waste strategy, notably embodied in the 'Cleaner Pacific' frameworks (such as Cleaner Pacific 2025, and the forthcoming Cleaner Pacific 2036), provides a comprehensive, long-term approach for integrated waste management and pollution prevention throughout PICs. The strategies emphasise sustainable solutions for various waste types, such as solid municipal waste, e-waste, hazardous waste, chemicals, marine litter, and disaster waste, while supporting national capacity-building and regional cooperation.

The circular economy is increasingly central to these strategies. SPREP explicitly promotes circular economy approaches focusing on reducing waste, designing out waste, maximising reuse and recycling, and seeking holistic, system-wide change. SPREP has developed a Circular Economy Policy Framework and established dedicated side events, workshops, and declarations (like the Jaipur 2035 Declaration and 3R/Circular Economy Declaration 2025–2034) to advance circular economy thinking and action regionally. These efforts span product design, business practices, regional networks, and public policy, aiming for resource-efficient, low-carbon, and resilient societies.[4]

In summary, SPREP both leads and mainstreams circular economy principles in the region's waste strategies, ensuring they are integrated across waste management, pollution control, and sustainable development policy frameworks.

In partnership with the SPTO, SPREP has created the Single Use Plastics (SUP) Toolkit, which equips tourism businesses with practical tools and decision-making resources to phase out single-use plastics and embrace circular economy best practices.

At the strategic core of the region's sustainable tourism transformation are the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework and the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Standards. SPTO leads their implementation, establishing meaningful regional goals, embedding circularity in planning and operations, and setting clear sustainability benchmarks for both destinations and businesses. These frameworks support the alignment of national tourism strategies with international best practices.

To ensure these ambitions are realised on the ground, SPTO provides practical, hands-on support to its members. Through workshops, webinars, and the development of robust toolkits and guidelines, SPTO builds the capacity of national tourism organisations, businesses, and communities across the Pacific. These activities are designed not only to transfer knowledge but to foster peer learning and strengthen local expertise.

Further information on ongoing regional programmes and capacity-building initiatives is provided in the Background Report.

4 https://www.sprep.org/news/realising-circular-economies-for-the-pacific-region

2.2. National Policies & Standards

Complementing coordinated regional action, PICs are each advancing their own national strategies to embed sustainability and circular economy principles into tourism development. Most national tourism policies and strategies recognise the importance of sustainability, reflecting shared regional aspirations: yet their approaches differ, shaped by unique local contexts and priorities.

Despite their diversity, these policies commonly cover themes essential for tourism growth, such as accommodation standards, biodiversity conservation, cultural heritage protection, workforce development, infrastructure, investment, marketing, connectivity, product innovation, quality management, data, and technology. While the commitment to sustainable tourism is widely evident, explicit integration of CE/SCP principles remains limited (see Table 1).

Table 1. National policy commitments to tourism

Country	Tourism Policy	Key Themes & Focus Areas	Source
Fiji	Transform tourism into a driver of inclusive economic growth, environmental protection, and cultural preservation.	Legislative reform, eco-infrastructure, community-based tourism, inclusive growth, cultural and natural heritage protection.	Fiji National Sustainable Tourism Framework 2024–2034
Vanuatu	Develop tourism that protects and celebrates the environment, *kastom* (culture), and people.	High-value, low-impact tourism; diversification (e.g. agritourism); sustainability standards; resilience to shocks; strong links to SDGs.	Vanuatu Sustainable Tourism Policy 2019–2030; Strategy 2021–2025
Samoa	Become a resilient, inclusive, and green tourism destination that supports economic recovery and sustainable growth.	Product diversification, cultural/natural heritage protection, private-sector engagement, inclusive development.	Samoa Tourism Sector Plan 2022–2027
Kiribati	Develop sustainable tourism aligned with cultural values, environmental integrity, and social inclusion.	Heritage conservation, outer island engagement, economic opportunity, social benefit delivery, climate resilience.	Kiribati Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework 2021–2026; KV20
Cook Islands	Committed to regenerative tourism – 'leaving destinations better than found' via Destination Stewardship.	Destination stewardship model; community engagement; culture-conservation- commerce; marine park (Marae Moana).	Cook Islands Sustainable Tourism Development Framework
Niue	A responsible, low-impact tourism model aligned with SDGs and community values.	Responsible Tourism Policy; marine park stewardship; green growth, renewable energy, local participation.	Niue Responsible Tourism Policy
Marshall Islands	Rebuilding tourism with sustainability, resilience, and regional collaboration at its core.	High-level commitment to inclusive, climate-resilient tourism.	Marshall Islands Strategic Tourism Development Plan
Federated States of Micronesia	Pivoting to low-volume, high-yield tourism that protects culture and environment.	National tourism policy; focus on sustainability, climate mitigation (NDC Tourism Action Plan).	FSM National Tourism Policy & NDC Implementation

Country	Tourism Policy	Key Themes & Focus Areas	Source
Papua New Guinea[5]	Acknowledges tourism as a growth opportunity while striving to improve sustainability.	Environmental stewardship and economic inclusion.	Tourism Sector Plan 2022-2026.
Solomon Islands	As of 2025 there is no dedicated, standalone tourism policy, but tourism is recognised as a national priority, with ambitious targets set for growth and sustainability	Strategic efforts focus on sustainable development, infrastructure upgrades, product diversification, and community benefit.	National Development Strategy
Tonga	Aims to revitalise and transform the tourism sector (under development)	strong focus on sustainability, climate resilience, investment readiness, and community benefits.	Tonga Tourism Roadmap 2025–2030[6]
Tuvalu	By 2032, Tuvaluans will benefit from tourism that is environmentally sustainable, economically viable and socially acceptable to enhance *te olaga filemu* and wellbeing of Tuvaluans and visitors.	Environmental sustainability and resilience, inclusive economic prosperity, culture, respectful relationships and health, safety and security.	Tuvalu Sustainable Tourism Policy 2022–2032
Wallis & Futuna	Developed following Covid 19 with funding for the EU	Sustainable recovery, job creation, and economic growth	Wallis & Futuna Sustainable Tourism Development Strategy for 2021–2026,

2.3. National Tourism Standards: Progress and gaps

National tourism standards are crucial for advancing circular economy goals because they:

- Set shared expectations for sustainability and resource management across the sector
- Help businesses and governments measure and improve their circular practices, such as recycling, repairing, and purchasing sustainably
- Enable consistent monitoring, reporting, and capacity building, making it easier for operators to understand and adopt circular actions
- Create supportive frameworks for innovation such as eco-certification, sustainable infrastructure, and supply chain improvements, to amplify the adoption of circular economy models

Several Pacific nations, including the Cook Islands, Samoa, Vanuatu, Kiribati, Niue, Tonga, and Solomon Islands, have developed national tourism standards that primarily address issues like accommodation quality, customer service, and visitor safety.

With the introduction of the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Standards (PSTS), many of PICs are re-examining and strengthening their frameworks to incorporate stronger sustainability and circularity benchmarks.

The 2024/25 STEP Project Baseline Survey provides a snapshot on the current status of standard implementation across the Pacific: only about 22% of surveyed countries are fully or partially aligned with the PSTS, and more than half still lack an established national tourism standard. While inter-agency collaboration

5 A new PNG National Tourism Policy is in final stages of approval at time of writing. It is understood that the new Policy has been informed by, and aligns with the PSTPF and the PSTS

6 Under development https://pacerplus.org/2025/03/13/tonga-develops-a-tourism-roadmap-to-revitalise-and-regenerate-tourism-development/

is common (reported by 77.8% of respondents), sustainability integration into policy and practice remains a significant challenge, underscoring the need for technical support, training, and systems strengthening. Persistent barriers identified in the survey include:

- Economic: Gaps in MSME resilience, sustainable procurement, and data collection; need for enhanced business frameworks and targeted training
- Social: Deficits in accessibility (77% of survey respondents) and community empowerment (81% of survey respondents) despite wide commitment to inclusion
- Cultural: Limited action on intellectual property, cultural impact management, and cultural data collection
- Environmental: Infrastructure constraints hinder effective waste, water, and energy monitoring; broader adoption of circular practices is vital
- Circular Economy: Strong regional interest in reducing waste and promoting eco-friendly products, but NTOs require more capacity, investment, and practical tools to succeed

These challenges highlight the urgent need for national standards aligned to the PSTS, investment for resource efficiency, greater awareness among MSMEs, and capacity-building for measurement and reporting (refer Table 2).

2.4. The Role of International Hotel Standards

The presence of global hotel groups, including InterContinental Hotel Group (IHG), Marriott, Hilton, and Wyndham, has accelerated the region's uptake of sustainable and circular practices. This is especially true in Fiji (with the highest concentration of international brands), but the trend extends to Samoa, Vanuatu, French Polynesia, and Papua New Guinea. These companies often exceed national requirements for energy and water use, waste reduction, and procurement, and provide a model for best practice.

However, adopting international standards brings its own challenges. Centralised procurement and certification can create barriers for local MSMEs, which may lack the scale or documentation needed to participate. Generic training programmes often overlook Pacific values and realities, and some sustainability requirements conflict with limited local infrastructure (such as waste-sorting where facilities do not exist). This underlines the need to localise standards so that global sustainability initiatives empower, rather than exclude, local businesses and communities.

Pacific regional hotel groups like Warwick, Tanoa, and Pearl also play a crucial role by testing more adaptable, locally relevant solutions. Their approaches help blend international credibility with practical, context-appropriate standards, supporting a tourism ecosystem that is both world-class and deeply rooted in Pacific realities.

Table 2. Key barriers to accelerating the transition to sustainable tourism and circular economy practices

Barrier	Representative Issues
Institutional Capacity and Governance Constraints	NTOs are under-resourced, with limited staff, skills, and funding to lead sustainable tourism efforts. Governance responsibilities are fragmented across multiple ministries, resulting in poor coordination and lack of leadership. Existing tourism standards are narrow in scope and weakly aligned with PSTS.
Limited Industry Awareness and Incentives	MSMEs lack awareness of SCP and CE principles. Few financial or non-financial incentives exist to drive adoption. Training and guidance are limited, especially in remote areas.
Weak Policy Integration and Monitoring Systems	Sustainability is often embedded in policy but lacks enforcement and monitoring tools. Data collection on key indicators is minimal. Licensing and regulations often do not mandate sustainability.

Barrier	Representative Issues
Market and Supply Chain Barriers	Fragmented supply chains, low local production, and limited importer willingness hinder access to sustainable goods. No clear authority defines sustainable products. Local supplier aggregation is limited.
Sectoral Fragmentation	Multiple uncoordinated actors lead to duplication. CE and SCP initiatives are disconnected and difficult to scale.
Access to Finance	MSMEs face persistent challenges accessing grants, loans, and concessional finance for sustainable upgrades.
Knowledge and Skills Gaps	Limited training programs, minimal access to best practices, and weak peer-learning systems.
Regional Coordination	Knowledge-sharing is weak. Innovation tends to be concentrated in a few countries like Fiji and Vanuatu.
Incentive Frameworks	Policy levers such as tax relief or import concessions are rarely used to promote sustainable practices.
Public–Private Collaboration	Low trust and fragmented engagement between governments, NGOs, and businesses limit coordinated action.
Recognition of Local Practices	Traditional knowledge and successful local sustainability models are underutilised.
Data and Monitoring	Insufficient systems to track and evaluate environmental, social, and economic performance.

2.5. Consultation Outcomes

National Priorities

Focused consultations were carried out in Fiji, Samoa, Kiribati, and Vanuatu. These country engagements revealed a strong and unified commitment to advancing sustainable tourism practices, consistent with the regional vision set out in the PSTPF and each country's own development strategies. However, the journey from vision to implementation remains challenging. All four countries face common hurdles, such as limited institutional capacity, fragmented inter-agency coordination, and resource constraints that make it difficult to translate sustainability goals into real progress.

NTOs are increasingly expected to evolve from agencies focused solely on promotion to leaders in sustainability and destination management, although many lack the staffing, funding, and technical expertise to fulfil this expanded mandate.

Within the private sector, many micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) have limited awareness of sustainable and circular practices and are often without incentives or support to adopt better practices. Sustainable products and services struggle for visibility, hampered by fragmented supply chains and verification systems.

Despite these barriers, each country has developed a targeted set of priority actions to drive national progress. The main areas of focus include:

- Strengthening governance through improved inter-agency coordination and dedicated steering committees
- Expanding and updating tourism standards to capture the full spectrum of sustainability, with emphasis on community-based and agritourism initiatives
- Building capacity through training, data systems, and awareness campaigns

- Enhancing sustainable procurement and developing resilient supply chains, particularly in food and waste management
- Embedding sustainability more deeply into national planning, investment, and regulatory frameworks

These consultations emphasise both the opportunity and necessity of targeted support, which can range from capacity building and incentives to infrastructure investment and knowledge-sharing. The resulting national actions not only inform the Regional Roadmap but also present models that other PICs can adapt as they pursue their own sustainable tourism objectives. Further details on consultation outcomes are summarised in the STEP Phase 1 Background Report.

Regional Validation

The Regional Validation Workshop drew on the outcomes of the national consultations and regional survey, providing an interactive platform for stakeholders to collectively validate the most pressing barriers and agree on key priorities for advancing sustainable and circular economy practices.

Bringing together representatives from national governments, the private sector, NGOs, and development partners, the workshop used interactive polling and breakout discussions to test and refine six priority topics: governance, capacity building, waste and resource efficiency, sustainable purchasing, agriculture-tourism linkages, and sustainable buildings. Cross-cutting issues including supply chain integration and green finance were also discussed.

Participants' feedback, captured through pre- and post-workshop rankings, revealed strong consensus on the importance of systemic and capacity-building interventions. The workshop process led to the consolidation of the original six topics into five themes, serving as the foundation for both regional priorities in the Regional Roadmap and practical pathways for national implementation.

The five themes are:

1. Enabling Sector Transition

Building robust institutions and knowledge platforms, supporting the capacity of SMEs and community-based tourism enterprises (CBTEs), and strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems

2. National and Regional Policy Support

Reforming policy frameworks, fostering regulatory alignment, and creating tools for ongoing assessment and dialogue among stakeholders

3. Sustainable Consumption and Production Practices

Scaling up efforts to reduce plastic use, encouraging circular business models, and enabling the adoption of eco-friendly and SUP-free options by both SMEs and governments

4. Sustainable Buildings and Infrastructure

Advancing climate-resilient, culturally appropriate tourism infrastructure through training, new finance facilities, and demonstration projects

5. Agriculture and Tourism Linkages

Boosting agritourism and local food sourcing with structured procurement platforms, aggregator hubs, and improved traceability, supporting both livelihoods and food security.

Further details on workshop activities and outcomes are available in the STEP Phase 1 Background Report and Workshop Report.

3. THE REGIONAL ROADMAP

3.1. Circular Economy Ambition

This Roadmap's guiding ambition is to embed circular economy practices within the Pacific tourism sector by breaking down persistent barriers, aligning efforts across the region, piloting successful national models, and attracting investment to scale proven solutions. The Regional Roadmap is designed to support this ambition by:

- Identifying gaps, challenges, and opportunities among SPTO member countries to improve policy consistency and speed up the shift to sustainable and circular tourism practices
- Offering a clear, step-by-step implementation plan to help countries align their tourism policies and standards with the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Standards (PSTS)
- Creating and testing scalable models in demonstration countries (Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Vanuatu), generating insights and examples for adaptation across the region
- Strengthening collaboration between governments, development partners, and stakeholders to maximise support and increase capacity within the sector
- Showcasing investment opportunities that match regional sustainability priorities, attracting donors and partners to support faster adoption of sustainable tourism and circular economy practices

It recognises that achieving a genuinely sustainable and circular tourism sector requires a dual approach:

Maximising Circularity Potential: Tourism businesses and destinations are encouraged to initiate actions that reduce their reliance on non-recyclable materials, invest in renewable energy sources, and advance climate-resilient infrastructure. These measures not only limit waste but also strengthen operational resilience and cut long-term costs.

Closing the Loop: The sector can work towards ensuring that materials, once they have served their initial purpose, are recovered, recycled, and reintroduced into the tourism value chain. This approach boosts resource productivity and significantly advances Pacific circular economy objectives.

The Regional Roadmap outlines the measurable objectives, specific actions, enabling conditions, that will drive systemic change and create meaningful, lasting benefits for both Pacific peoples and their natural environments.

3.2. Collaboration and enabling conditions

Translating the Roadmap's ambition into widespread impact requires moving beyond isolated projects and mainstreaming effective solutions throughout the Pacific tourism sector. This can only happen through strong, multi-level cooperation that links governments, industry, partners, researchers, and communities, and by enabling collaboration throughout supply chains.

Financial backing and public-private partnerships are critical, especially for MSMEs, who need access to information, incentives, and technical support to embrace circular models.

Governments play a pivotal enabling role. By integrating circular principles into policies, standards, education, and incentives, they foster an environment where sustainable tourism businesses can thrive.

Tourism Industry as Innovators

Tourism businesses can lead by phasing out single-use plastics, adopting resource-efficient practices, investing in renewables, and collaborating across the supply chain.

Building strong links with local producers, manufacturers, and recycling firms helps create closed-loop systems, spreads costs, and showcases sector-wide innovation.

Partners as Catalysts and Thought Leaders

Development partners can accelerate progress by investing in circular business models and technologies and derisking innovative approaches, while the financial sector can amplify impact by aligning investments with circular outcomes.

Researchers and NGOs can provide the evidence base, advocacy, and outreach needed to drive a culture of circularity, and in so doing supporting governments and industry alike with knowledge, tools, and awareness campaigns.

By rallying governments, business, partners, and communities behind shared goals and practical action, the Roadmap sets the stage for a Pacific tourism sector that is sustainable, competitive, and resilient, thereby powerfully driving circularity for both regional prosperity and global leadership.

3.3. Guiding Principles

Implementation of the Roadmap is built on seven essential principles:

- **Focused Action and Flexibility**: Prioritise practical steps and frequent updates, allowing the sector to adapt quickly and learn as new challenges or opportunities emerge.
- **Local Leadership, Regional Unity**: Let each country lead its own progress, while SPTO and regional bodies support coordination and the sharing of knowledge across nations.
- **Collaboration and Partnerships**: Encourage governments, businesses, communities, and development partners to work together, fostering peer learning and strong partnerships for shared success.
- **Equity and Inclusivity**: Create processes and outcomes that empower women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, and vulnerable groups to benefit meaningfully from tourism.
- **Data-Driven and Outcome-Oriented**: Base decisions on reliable evidence, track progress transparently, and set clear targets for results.
- **Innovation with Circular Economy Focus**: Champion new ideas and circular practices that improve resource efficiency, reduce waste, and promote sustainable tourism products and services.
- **Respect for Pacific Cultures:** Respect for ocean and island ecosystems.

3.4. Accelerating Circular Tourism in the Pacific

To facilitate effective delivery and maximise regional impact, the recommended interventions are organised into focus areas that align with the validated priorities identified during consultation:

- **Regulatory & Policy Framework** focuses on policy reform and standards development.
- **Capacity Building** strengthens institutional skills and sector-wide sustainability knowledge.
- **Communication & Awareness** enables knowledge exchange and stakeholder engagement.
- **Supply Chain, Purchasing, and Procurement** supports resilient local supply chains and sustainable sourcing.
- **Finance** ensures accessible funding and investment for circular economy practices.
- **Sustainable Infrastructure** delivers guidelines and training for buildings and facilities.

Each focus area has been identified as either Foundational, Enabling, or Applied & Scalable. These categories help Pacific nations start with basic systems and policies, build supporting structures, and then pilot and expand practical solutions.

- Foundational Interventions: Set up the basics, like updating policies, creating standards, training staff, and sharing knowledge.
- Enabling Interventions: Build systems for action, such as better supply chains, practical toolkits,

procurement programmes, and industry awareness.

- Applied & scalable Interventions: Put solutions into practice by piloting sustainable tourism models, training, and regional coordination to expand successful examples across the Pacific.

The recommended interventions are presented in Table 3, giving governments, tourism operators, donors, and partners the information they need to focus resources and action where they will be the most effective.

Table 3. Recommended interventions to advance circular economy (CE) practices in the Tourism Sector

Focus Area	Recommended Intervention	Brief Description/Outcome
Regulatory and Policy Framework *Foundational*	Embedding CE and SCP principles into National Tourism Policy	Integrates sustainable tourism and SCP into national policies to ensure enabling environments.
	National Sustainable Tourism Standards Development	Develops national tourism standards aligned with PSTS, promoting SME participation.
Capacity Building *Foundational*	Finalisation and Implementation of SUP Toolkit	Finalises and rolls out the SUP Toolkit to support reduction of single-use plastics in tourism.
	Self-Assessment of Tools for Government and Industry	Provides tools for NTOs and operators to assess alignment with PSTS and identify areas for improvement.
	Standards 'Starter Pack' and SCP Toolkit for Community-Based Tourism Enterprises (CBTEs)	Distributes a practical package to help countries initiate tourism standard development and uptake.
Communication and Awareness *Foundational*	Pacific Sustainable Tourism Knowledge Exchange	Facilitates peer learning and regional exchange on SCP practices and sustainable tourism.
	Regional Dashboard for Measuring Tourism Sustainability	Monitors progress on tourism sustainability using harmonised metrics aligned with PSTI.
	Public-Private Dialogue and Communication Platforms	Promotes stakeholder collaboration and awareness through regional dialogue and knowledge-sharing platforms.
Supply Chain, Purchasing and Procurement *Enabling*	Sustainable Tourism Supply Chains and Aggregator Hubs	Strengthens local supply chains to provide sustainable alternatives for tourism operations.
	Farm-to-Table Procurement and Traceability Schemes	Creates structured procurement and traceability systems linking local producers with tourism businesses.
	Procurement and Purchasing Policy Development	Develops model policies and pilots for sustainable procurement practices across the sector.
Finance *Enabling*	Sustainable Finance Mechanism and Support for Tourism Enterprises	Establishes funding mechanisms to support tourism enterprises in adopting CE and SCP practices.

Focus Area	Recommended Intervention	Brief Description/Outcome
Sustainable Infrastructure	Sustainable and Climate Resilient Accommodation	Develops and promotes guidelines for low-carbon, climate-resilient tourism buildings.
Applied	Traditional and Sustainable Building Construction Techniques	Provides targeted skills training for the construction and operation of sustainable accommodation.

Appendix 2 summarises the relationship between each focus area. Appendix 4. Provides an overview of the activities associated with each intervention.

Overview of Interventions

Foundational Elements

The foundational interventions lay the groundwork for a resilient, sustainable tourism sector by embedding CE and SCP principles at the policy and institutional level.

Intervention 1: Embedding CE and SCP principles into National Tourism Policy

This intervention strengthens the policy environment by advancing national policy dialogue and supporting the development of sustainable tourism and SCP policies aligned with the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework (PSTPF). Activities include reviewing existing tourism legislation, holding workshops to co-design updated policy goals, developing a regional policy alignment toolkit, and delivering technical guidance and model clauses for all countries.

Recommended Implementation: Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Vanuatu

Intervention 2: National Sustainable Tourism Standards Development

Focusing on both destination and industry standards, this intervention ensures countries establish or upgrade their tourism standards to align with PSTS and SCP principles. It emphasises an inclusive, participatory process, especially with MSME engagement, to develop or align standards and provides guidelines and monitoring tools. Outputs include draft standards and guidelines designed for replication by other Pacific nations. Further information on how this intervention can be customised to fit local needs and contexts for other PICs to assist them get started quickly is presented in Appendix 3.

Recommended Implementation**:** Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Vanuatu

Intervention 3: Finalisation and Implementation of Single Use Plastic Toolkit

To reduce single-use plastics in tourism, the SPTO/SPREP Single Use Plastics (SUP) Toolkit equips tourism SMEs and Community-Based Tourism Enterprises (CBTEs) with practical, locally tailored tools. Project activities include finalising and adapting toolkit content, training stakeholders, translating resources to local languages, and supporting awareness events, ensuring broad accessibility and real results throughout the region, with pilot activities in Vanuatu and Samoa.

Recommended Implementation**:** Vanuatu and recommended inclusion of Samoa

Intervention 4: Self-Assessment Tools for Government and Industry

This action empowers National Tourism Organisations (NTOs) and industry with user-friendly self-assessment tools aligned with PSTS and SCP. The tools allow NTOs to measure progress, pinpoint gaps, and develop action plans, while workshops and digital resources make them easy to adopt across the region.

Recommended Implementation**:** Regional

Intervention 5: Standards 'Starter Pack' and SCP Toolkit for Community-Based Tourism Enterprises (CBTEs)

To support smaller businesses and community tourism, this modular package offers templates, guides, and case studies in local languages, plus a customised CBTE toolkit. Pilots in countries such as Fiji, Vanuatu, and Samoa generate lessons, showcase indigenous standards, and help connect CBTEs to green finance.

Recommended Implementation**:** Fiji, and recommended inclusion of Vanuatu and Samoa

Intervention 6: Pacific Sustainable Tourism Knowledge Exchange

An expanded digital platform will support knowledge sharing around SCP, offering toolkits, peer learning, templates, and live webinars. The Knowledge Exchange makes resources accessible, supports capacity building, and enables ongoing regional adaptation.

Recommended Implementation**:** Regional

Intervention 7: Regional Dashboard for Measuring Tourism Sustainability

This dashboard will track SCP performance, sustainability standards, and progress against the PSTI and PTSS. Training and open-access elements ensure policymakers and industry actors can make data-driven decisions.

Recommended Implementation: Regional, with Samoa pilot

Intervention 8: Public-Private Dialogue and Communication Platforms

Strengthening collaboration is key to sector-wide transformation. This intervention fosters regular dialogue and shared leadership among public agencies, industry, SMEs, and CBTEs. Activities include national events, campaign toolkits, tailored messages in local languages, and digital platforms – all supporting unified and effective communication on sustainability goals.

Recommended Implementation**:** Regional

Enabling Mechanisms

These interventions provide the practical systems needed to support sustainable practices and build sector resilience.

Intervention 9: Sustainable Tourism Supply Chains and Aggregator Hubs

This initiative enhances local, sustainable supply chains, establishing aggregator hubs that connect producers to tourism markets. Technical support, regional directories, business model co-design, and logistics innovation are key to reducing import dependence and building Pacific value chains.

Recommended Implementation**:** Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Vanuatu

Intervention 10: Farm-to-Table Procurement and Traceability Schemes

Pilots in Fiji and Vanuatu will develop structured systems for linking local producers with tourism operators. Activities include digital traceability, crop planning agreements, food safety/quality training, and innovative solutions to address seasonal supply constraints.

Recommended Implementation: Fiji and Vanuatu

Intervention 11: Procurement and Purchasing Policy Development

Providing model procurement guidelines (rather than only standards) for adoption across the public and private sector, pilot destinations will develop and refine these guidelines through stakeholder input, workshops, and impact monitoring to ensure real-world relevance.

Recommended Implementation: Regional

Intervention 12: Sustainable Finance Mechanism and Support for Tourism Enterprises

This region-wide initiative gives tourism enterprises access to grants and technical support for SCP and CE investments, while also building the capacity of financial institutions to serve the sector. Components include a small grant scheme, finance aggregation, and tools for business planning and compliance.

Recommended Implementation: Regional

Applied and Scalable Initiatives

These interventions scale practical impact and bridge innovation from pilots to region-wide adoption.

Intervention 13: Sustainable and Climate Resilient Tourism Accommodation Guidelines

This intervention focuses on developing and institutionalising practical guidelines for sustainable, climate-resilient tourism accommodation, with a focus on low-carbon materials and energy-efficient construction, renovation, and refurbishment. Policy consultations, technical materials, and demonstration projects create pathways for wider regulatory adoption.

Recommended Implementation: Vanuatu

Intervention 14: Traditional and Sustainable Building Construction Techniques

This action revitalises traditional building knowledge, pairing vocational training and digital resources with demonstration projects and assessment for national building codes. By integrating circularity and cultural strengths, these initiatives foster safer, greener, and more relevant tourism infrastructure.

Recommended Implementation: Vanuatu

3.5. Regional Roadmap and Country Pathways

The Pacific Sustainable Tourism Roadmap identifies 14 key interventions to drive sector change. Nine of these are designed for regional implementation, giving all member countries access to vital resources, training, toolkits, and systems that support sustainable tourism. The remaining five are tailored for piloting in the demonstration countries – Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, and Vanuatu – allowing for practical adaptation and targeted learning in different local contexts.

How the two approaches work together

Regional Roadmap

All Pacific Island Countries (PICs) benefit from shared solutions like training programmes, standardised toolkits (such as the Knowledge Exchange and SUP Toolkit), common policy templates, sustainability dashboards, and peer-to-peer learning forums. These region-wide tools and systems help countries of any size, capacity, or level of experience adopt circular economy and sustainable tourism practices.

Country Pathways

Each demonstration country uses a tailored plan, with interventions chosen and adapted to match local needs and priorities. These actionable plans are based on national consultations and help drive change 'on the ground.' As demonstration countries implement their pathways and build expertise, their successes and lessons learned are captured, analysed, and shared with the wider region, making it easier for others to follow and adapt the most effective strategies.

Benefits of the integrated approach

By combining a strong regional backbone with customised national pathways, all PICs gain:

- Equal access to critical resources and capacity-building programmes.
- Flexibility to address specific local contexts and challenges.
- Opportunities for learning and scaling up proven solutions through regular reporting, shared case studies, and regional knowledge exchanges.
- Faster and broader uptake of effective practices, while safeguarding each nation's cultural and environmental strengths.

This approach ensures every country can accelerate sustainable tourism and circular economy adoption, whether by joining region-wide initiatives or customising their own action plan. Figures 2 and 3 visually show how regional and country-led interventions are distributed and how both levels work together for maximum impact.

Table 4 provides a reference showing which interventions are regional, which are country-led, and which are piloted—making it easy to track roles and responsibilities across the Pacific.

Figure 2: Framework of benefits to Pacific Island Countries

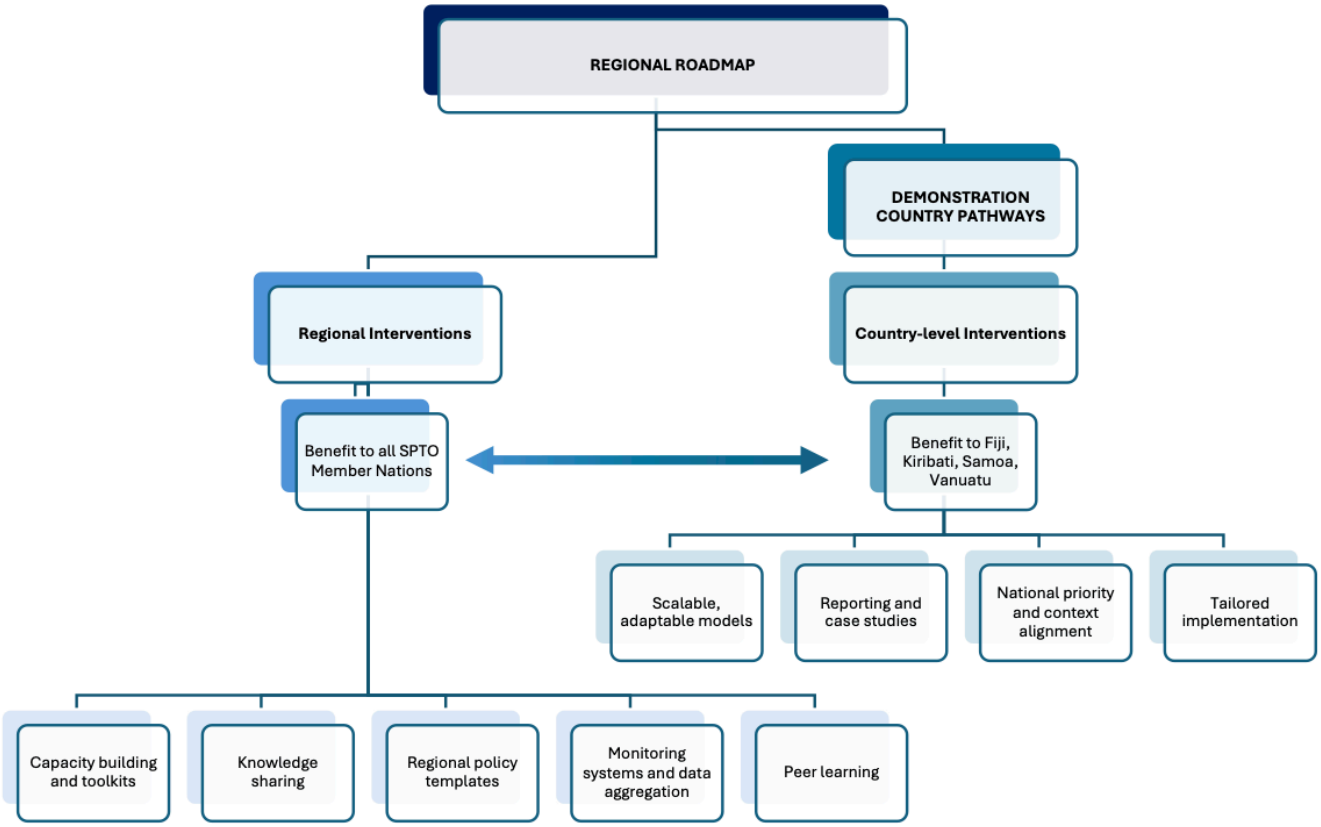


Figure 3: Distribution of interventions, Regional Roadmap, and Country Pathways

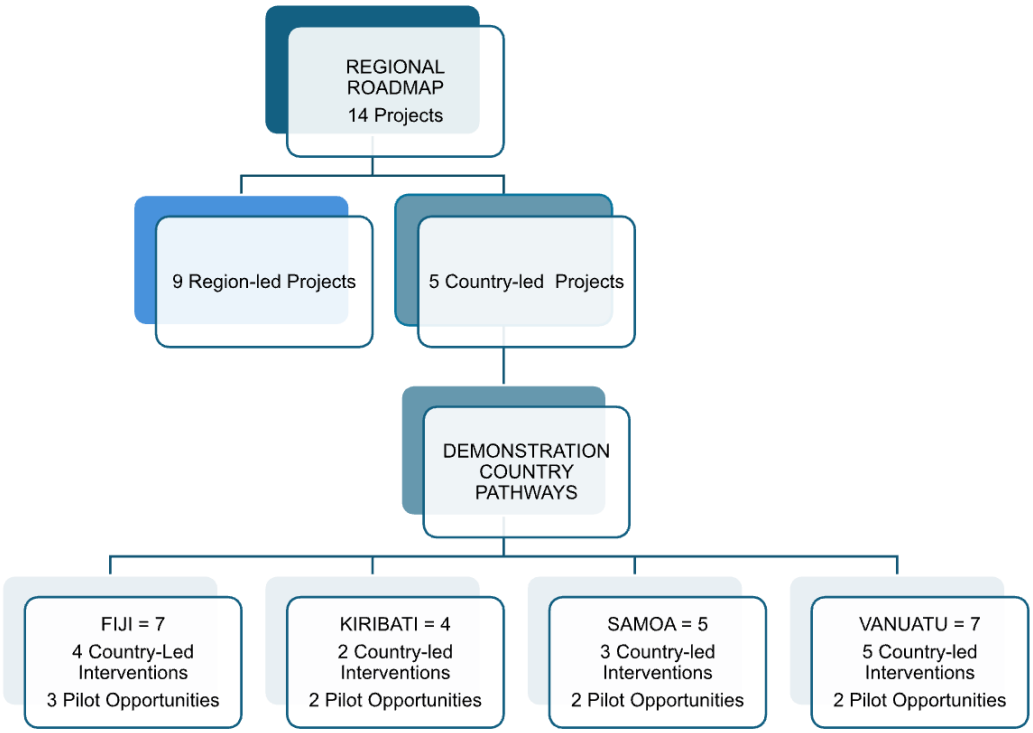


Table 4. Intervention activities at regional level and in Demonstration Countries

Intervention	Regional or National led	SPTO	Fiji	Kirbati	Samoa	Vanuatu
1. Embedding CE and SCP into National Tourism Policy	National					
2. National Sustainable Tourism Standards Development	National					
3. Finalisation and implementation - Single Use Plastic Toolkit	Regional					
4. Self-Assessment Tools – Government and Industry	Regional					
5. Standards 'Starter Pack' and SCP Toolkit for CBTEs	Regional					
6. Pacific Sustainable Tourism Knowledge Exchange	Regional					
7. Regional Dashboard for Measuring Tourism Sustainability	Regional					
8. Public-Private Dialogue and Communication Platforms	Regional					
9. Sustainable Tourism Supply Chains and Aggregator Hubs	National					
10. Farm-to-Table Procurement and Traceability Schemes	National					
11. Procurement and Purchasing Policy Development	Regional					
12. Sustainable Finance Mechanism and Support for Tourism Enterprises	Regional					
13. Sustainable and Climate Resilient Tourism Accommodation Guidelines	Regional					
14. Traditional and Sustainable Building Construction Techniques	National					

4. CONCLUSION

The Regional Roadmap provides a clear, practical, and unified framework for embedding Circular Economy and Sustainable Consumption and Production principles across the tourism sector in PICs. Developed through deep regional collaboration, country-level consultation, and evidence-based analysis, the Roadmap reflects the unique environmental, social, and economic realities facing the Pacific.

By charting a series of high-impact interventions ranging from enabling policy frameworks to on-the-ground demonstration projects, the Roadmap addresses both regional and national priorities. Its phased approach empowers countries to take action at their own pace, drawing on shared tools, knowledge, and resources, while allowing for tailored solutions that reflect local needs and aspirations.

The Roadmap also recognises the essential role of collaboration: success depends on ongoing partnership among governments, the private sector, communities, donors, and development partners. Through regular knowledge exchange, capacity-building, and collective problem-solving, the Pacific can accelerate adoption of sustainable tourism practices, safeguard its rich natural and cultural assets, and build a more resilient, inclusive, and prosperous tourism sector.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Circular Economy and SCP

Tourism, Circular Economy & Sustainable Consumption and Production

Circular Economy

Circular Economy (CE) in the context of tourism refers to an economic model that moves away from the traditional 'take-make-dispose' approach and instead promotes the continual use and regeneration of resources to minimise waste, pollution, and environmental impact.

Applied to tourism, the circular economy involves:

- Designing out waste from tourism infrastructure, products, and services (e.g. through reusable materials, modular construction, zero-waste accommodation)
- Keeping materials and products in use by extending their life cycles through repair, reuse, recycling, and sharing (e.g. refillable amenities, second-life furnishings, rental equipment)
- Regenerating natural systems by restoring biodiversity, enhancing ecosystem services, and supporting local food production and renewable energy initiatives
- Creating closed-loop systems across tourism supply chains (e.g. farm-to-table food systems, water reuse, composting, and circular procurement practices).

In tourism, adopting circular economy principles supports resource efficiency, climate resilience, and local economic empowerment, aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (particularly SDG 12 and SDG 13). It contributes to building low-carbon, regenerative tourism destinations where growth enhances rather than depletes natural and cultural capital.

Sustainable Consumption and Production

Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) refers to the use of resources in a way that minimises environmental impacts, enhances social equity, and supports long-term economic viability across the tourism value chain.

In line with SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production, SCP in tourism involves designing and managing tourism products, services, and operations that:

- Reduce waste and pollution, including energy and water consumption, single-use plastics, and greenhouse gas emissions
- Promote resource efficiency, circular economy practices, and sustainable sourcing (e.g. local food systems, low-impact infrastructure)
- Support fair and inclusive economic opportunities for local communities, including women, youth, and Indigenous groups
- Encourage responsible visitor behaviour that respects cultural values, biodiversity, and heritage sites.

SCP aims to decouple tourism growth from environmental degradation, ensuring that the benefits of tourism are shared equitably while preserving the natural and cultural assets that underpin the sector's long-term sustainability. It is foundational to building resilient, regenerative tourism systems in line with the SDGs.

Appendix 2. Regional Roadmap Implementation Matrix

Intervention	Type	Focus	SPTO Role	SPTO Strategy Alignment- Focus Area	Dependencies
Embedding CE and SCP principles into National Tourism Policy	Foundational Elements	National	Provide technical assistance, coordinate policy review workshops, and disseminate model policy templates.	Sustainable Destination Management	Prerequisite for national standards, financing, and institutional alignment
National Sustainable Tourism Standards Development	Foundational Elements	National	Support co-design of national standards with countries and align with PSTS framework.	Sustainable Destination Management	Builds on enabling policy environment
Finalisation and Implementation of SUP Toolkit	Foundational Elements	Regional	Finalise content, coordinate translation and dissemination, and deliver training via NTOs.	Capacity Building and Training	Dependent on policy and standards design
Self-Assessment Tools for Government and Industry	Foundational Elements	Regional	Develop tool framework, pilot in demonstration countries, and host regional training sessions.	Capacity Building and Training	Parallel to toolkit rollout; supports monitoring
Standards 'Starter Pack' and SCP Toolkit for Community-Based Tourism Enterprises (CBTEs)	Foundational Elements	Regional	Co-design pack with NTOs, provide print and digital versions, and train NTO staff on use.	Capacity Building and Training	Supplements NTO capacity to implement standards
Pacific Sustainable Tourism Knowledge Exchange	Foundational	Regional	Establish online platform, curate knowledge resources, and facilitate cross-country learning events.	Capacity Building and Training	Continuous support tool across phases
Regional Dashboard for Measuring Tourism Sustainability	Foundational	Regional	Design framework, host technical workshops, and support countries to input data.	Research Coordination and Insights	Enables early tracking of all SCP implementation efforts
Public-Private Dialogue and Communication Platforms	Enabling Mechanisms	Regional	Facilitate forums and campaigns; co-design communications with stakeholders.	Capacity Building and Training	Requires tools and standards as content base

Intervention	Type	Focus	SPTO Role	SPTO Strategy Alignment- Focus Area	Dependencies
Sustainable Tourism Supply Chains and Aggregator Hubs	Enabling Mechanisms	National	Map national supply chains, convene regional product development dialogues, and support supplier directories.	Capacity Building and Training	Requires standards and procurement policy direction
Farm-to-Table Procurement and Traceability Schemes	Enabling Mechanisms	National	Coordinate pilot projects, design traceability tools, and document case studies for regional sharing.	Capacity Building and Training	Requires value chain strategy + partnerships
Procurement and Purchasing Policy Development	Enabling Mechanisms	Regional	Draft policy templates, support national adaptation, and run policy engagement sessions.	Capacity Building and Training	Builds on national policy and product availability
Sustainable Finance Mechanism and Support for Tourism Enterprises	Enabling Mechanisms	Regional	Establish grant mechanism, define eligibility and evaluation criteria, and provide outreach to SMEs.	Capacity Building and Training	Depends on standards/tools to guide investment criteria
Sustainable and Climate Resilient Accommodation	Applied and Scalable Initiatives	Regional	Coordinate design guideline development, share with NTOs and regional planners.	Sustainable Destination Management	Implements design principles developed in Phase 1 & 2
Traditional and Sustainable Building Construction Techniques	Applied and Scalable Initiatives	National	Support pilot builds, document processes, and disseminate traditional knowledge-based designs.	Capacity Building and Training	Implements design principles developed in Phase 1 & 2

Appendix 3. Accelerating PSTS Adoption

Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, and Vanuatu were selected to be DCs since they are broadly representative of the wider SPTO membership considering a combination of factors:

- the scale/maturity/structure of their tourism economies
- public and/or private sector led on tourism standards
- with or without existing tourism standards
- differing development stages and needs for tourism standards programmes
- differing legislation and regulatory positions regarding tourism standards

While the DCs and their Country Pathways provide valuable examples of customising the interventions to national context, workplan templates can provide an immediate and simplified starting point for adopting the PSTS.

Differing Approaches to PIC Needs

Adopting a differentiated approach is essential to ensure that PICs can implement the PSTS in ways that are realistic, context-specific, and responsive to their current levels of readiness. Each country operates from a different starting point, and this Roadmap uses a simple tiering based on the status of nations: some have no existing standards framework (Tier 1), others have foundational systems requiring alignment with PSTS and CE/SCP principles (Tier 2), and a few have matured programmes ready for advanced upgrades (Tier 3).

The tiered model allows for customised support, targeted investment, and progressive capacity building that reflect national priorities and institutional capability. It also ensures inclusivity by providing all countries, regardless of their starting point, with a clear and practical pathway to transition towards more sustainable, resilient, and regionally aligned tourism systems. The tiering system is a starting point and guide rather than prescriptive – it is expected that each country will draw inspiration from the full suite of interventions and activities to create their unique pathway.

TIER 1: No Tourism Standards Programme

This workplan outlines a sequenced roadmap for countries with no existing tourism standards programme. Activities are grouped into three implementation phases - Foundational, Enabling, and Applied - to guide coordinated rollout of sustainable tourism frameworks aligned with the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Standards (PSTS).

Table 5. Workplan for Tier 1 Country

Phase	Activity	Purpose	Lead Actors
Phase 1: Foundational (0–12 months)	Review national tourism laws and strategies	Identify entry points for SCP	Tourism Ministry, Legal Unit
	Develop national strategy integrating SCP and standards	Align policy with sustainable tourism goals	Tourism Ministry, Cabinet
	Facilitate multi-stakeholder consultation on standards	Build shared vision and roadmap	Tourism Ministry, Private Sector, NGOs
	Establish Sustainable Tourism Standards Unit	Enable coordination and implementation	NTO or Tourism Ministry
	Train stakeholders on PSTPF and SCP	Build institutional understanding	SPTO, Development Partners
	Set up National Coordination Group	Provide oversight and strategic guidance	Tourism Ministry, Associations
	Conduct baseline data assessment (PSTIF)	Establish monitoring starting point	Statistics Office, SPTO
	Register on SPTO Knowledge Hub	Access and contribute to regional knowledge	NTO, Standards Unit
	Train in use of SPTO regional dashboard	Enable future monitoring capability	SPTO, Tourism Ministry
Phase 2: Enabling (Year 2)	Adapt and launch national version of SPTO toolkit	Provide practical guidance to enterprises	Standards Unit, NGOs
	Distribute Starter Pack for NTOs	Equip local offices with tools and templates	Tourism Ministry, NTO
	Pilot self-assessment tool	Support voluntary early adoption	Tourism Ministry, Enterprises
	Design sustainable tourism finance mechanism	Enable SCP upgrades via grants/loans	Tourism Ministry, Finance Ministry, Donors
	Develop national procurement standards	Prioritise sustainable and local products	Procurement Office, Tourism Ministry
	Create supplier directory of SCP-compliant products	Enable buyers to source responsibly	Chamber of Commerce, Standards Unit
	Engage women's and youth groups	Promote inclusive enterprise certification	NGOs, Women's Groups
	Introduce SCP modules into tourism curricula	Build future workforce capacity	TVET institutions, Education Ministry

Phase	Activity	Purpose	Lead Actors
Phase 3: Applied (Year 3 onward)	Provide grants and technical support for enterprise upgrades	Improve SCP compliance at operator level	Tourism Ministry, Donors
	Launch national recognition system (e.g. bronze/silver/gold)	Incentivise compliance and promote leadership	NTO, Standards Unit
	Partner with industry for skills development	Build green infrastructure capacity	Private Sector, TVET
	Promote sustainable design through model builds	Demonstrate SCP infrastructure in practice	Architects, NTO
	Introduce standards feedback loop	Ensure standards evolve with local input	Tourism Ministry, Enterprises
	Conduct mid-term review	Refine and improve implementation strategies	Tourism Ministry, SPTO
	Join SPTO regional harmonisation efforts	Strengthen Pacific alignment	Tourism Ministry, SPTO
	Nominate focal points for peer learning	Sustain regional knowledge exchange	Tourism Ministry, NTO

TIER 2: Basic Tourism Standards Programme

This workplan is designed for countries that already have a basic tourism standards programme in place, but which lacks alignment with the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Standards (PSTS), global Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) principles, and integration into regulatory frameworks. Activities focus on upgrading, aligning, and embedding standards.

Table 6. Workplan for Tier 2 Country

Phase	Activity	Purpose	Lead Actors
Phase 1: Assessment and Strategic Alignment (0–9 months)	Conduct gap analysis of existing standards vs PSTS	Identify gaps in content, inclusivity, and SCP alignment	Tourism Ministry, External Consultant, SPTO
	Engage stakeholders to validate revision priorities	Ensure proposed updates are feasible and widely supported	Tourism Ministry, Private Sector, NGOs
	Review legal and regulatory frameworks governing tourism standards	Identify opportunities to embed updated standards into national law	Tourism Ministry, Legal Affairs Office
	Develop a national alignment strategy and action plan	Provide a roadmap for phased reform and integration	Tourism Ministry, Standards Unit, Development Partners

Phase	Activity	Purpose	Lead Actors
Phase 2: Standards Revision and Institutional Strengthening (Year 1–2)	Revise tourism standards to align with PSTS and SCP	Ensure standards are inclusive, adaptable, and benchmarked	Standards Unit, SPTO, Technical Experts
	Integrate standards into relevant tourism legislation	Provide enforceability and clarity through regulation	Tourism Ministry, Parliament or Cabinet
	Update inspection, licensing, and accreditation procedures	Align enforcement tools with updated standards	Tourism Inspectorate, Licensing Boards
	Deliver capacity building to regulators and compliance officers	Enable implementation and oversight of revised standards	SPTO, Development Partners
	Enhance tourism data systems to monitor compliance	Strengthen evidence-based reporting and adaptation	Tourism Ministry, Statistics Agency
	Expand public awareness of updated standards	Drive industry-wide understanding and buy-in	Tourism Ministry, Private Sector Associations
Phase 3: Uptake, Financing, and Regional Integration (Year 2–3)	Launch national certification programme tied to revised standards	Recognise and reward compliance among operators	Tourism Ministry, NTO
	Facilitate access to sustainable finance for compliant operators	Support capital investments aligned with standards	Development Bank, Donors
	Engage with SPTO harmonisation and dashboard initiatives	Benchmark progress and join regional reporting mechanisms	Tourism Ministry, SPTO
	Institutionalise feedback loops for standard refinement	Ensure adaptability to market, community, and climate realities	Tourism Ministry, Industry Platforms
	Promote recognition of revised standards at regional and international levels	Increase visibility and market access for certified operators	Tourism Ministry, Trade & Export Promotion Bodies

TIER 3: Mature Tourism Standards Programme

This workplan is designed for countries with a well-established tourism standards programme. It focuses on updating existing standards to reflect current sustainability principles (aligned with PSTS and global best practices) and improving industry engagement and uptake.

Table 7. Workplan for Tier 3 Country

Phase	Activity	Purpose	Lead Actors
Phase 1: Criteria Modernisation and Benchmarking (0–6 months)	Conduct technical review of current standards criteria	Identify areas for alignment with PSTS, climate resilience, circular economy	Tourism Standards Authority, Technical Consultants
	Benchmark against global standards (e.g. GSTC, PSTS, ISO)	Ensure international relevance and comparability	Standards Unit, SPTO
	Facilitate targeted stakeholder consultations (sector-specific)	Refine sustainability upgrades based on operational realities	Tourism Ministry, Industry Groups
	Draft sustainability-enhanced criteria and indicators	Integrate practical, measurable SCP elements	Technical Team, Sustainability Experts
Phase 2: Institutional Integration and Communication (Months 6–18)	Update legislation/ regulations to support revised standards	Ensure legal basis for enforcement and compliance	Tourism Ministry, Legal Authorities
	Develop updated auditing, scoring, and certification protocols	Enable consistent and fair assessment under revised standards	Accreditation Bodies, Technical Auditors
	Train auditors, inspectors, and tourism businesses on new criteria	Build implementation capacity across the system	Training Institutes, Government Agencies
	Launch public awareness campaign on benefits of sustainable certification	Build market demand and stakeholder buy-in	NTO, Communications Teams
Phase 3: Enhanced Uptake and Regional Leadership (Year 2–3)	Pilot new criteria with selected operators and destinations	Refine tools and gather feedback before full rollout	Tourism Standards Authority, Leading Operators
	Launch revised national certification programme	Drive adoption of updated sustainable practices	Tourism Ministry, Private Sector Associations
	Link certified operators to green procurement, marketing, and funding schemes	Reward sustainability leadership and build momentum	Tourism Ministry, Export Boards, Donors
	Engage in regional knowledge-sharing and harmonisation	Support leadership and alignment with SPTO initiatives	SPTO, Tourism Ministry
	Institutionalise regular review and update cycle (e.g. every 3–5 years)	Keep standards dynamic and future-fit	Tourism Standards Authority

Appendix 4. Recommended Activities

Foundational Elements

Intervention 1: Embedding CE and SCP principles into National Tourism Policy

Key Activities:

- Diagnostic review of current tourism policies and laws.
- Stakeholder workshops to co-design updated policy goals and provisions.
- Develop a legal/policy alignment toolkit for broader regional use.
- Delivery of technical guidance and model policy clauses for integration into national frameworks.

Intervention 2: National Sustainable Tourism Standards Development

Key Activities:

- Convene national working group of government, industry, and SME reps.
- Facilitate a structured co-design process for new and existing standards with the sector
- Develop (or revise) draft standards and pilot implementation roadmap.
- Promote take up through national training and financial incentives
- Produce guidelines to support roll out of SCP and Sustainable tourism practices across the region.

Intervention 3: Finalisation and Implementation of Single Use Plastic Toolkit

Key Activities:

- Finalise and enhance toolkit content, including decision trees, supplier directories, and practical templates.
- Integrate circular economy principles into toolkit training and materials.
- Translate resources into national languages and adapt content for SMEs and CBTEs.
- Distribute the toolkit through National Tourism Organisations (NTOs) and conduct training sessions on implementation.
- Support national consultations and workshops to adapt the SUP Standard for country-specific contexts.
- Develop country-level implementation guidelines and sector-specific toolkits.
- Facilitate SME and supplier engagement through awareness events, training, and technical support.

Intervention 4: Self-Assessment Tools for Government and Industry

Key Activities:

- Co-design user-friendly digital and printable assessment tools aligned with a) PSTS Destination Criteria and SCP principles and b) PSTS Industry Criteria and SCP principles (the latter sitting within, or as a complementary starting point to, any national programme).
- Test the tool with pilot destinations to refine content and usability.
- Provide workshops and online guidance to support NTOs and local government in using the tool as part of planning and review processes.
- Enable destinations to generate performance reports and action plans from self-assessment results.
- Allow anonymised comparison across destinations to identify strengths, gaps, and good practices.

Intervention 5: Standards 'Starter Pack' and SCP Toolkit for Community-Based Tourism Enterprises (CBTEs)

Key Activities:

- Develop a modular 'Starter Pack' including templates, step-by-step guides, checklists, and case studies to support countries in initiating or advancing national tourism standards.
- Align the Starter Pack with PSTS and SCP principles, ensuring accessibility for public agencies and tourism operators, particularly SMEs and CBTEs.
- Translate materials into local languages and tailor content for low-resource settings and diverse cultural contexts.
- Identify and support 3–5 pilot CBTEs in different Pacific settings to co-design and test a practical SCP toolkit.
- Create a user-friendly CBTE toolkit featuring operational checklists, examples of good practice, and basic training modules.
- Document case studies and lessons learned through the pilot process to inform regional adaptation.
- Integrate pathways to access green finance mechanisms tailored to CBTEs, including micro-grants and technical assistance (linked to broader finance support initiatives).
- Deliver regional and in-country training sessions for NTOs, CBTEs, and SMEs to facilitate adoption and use of both toolkits.
- Make both resources available via SPTO's Pacific Sustainable Tourism knowledge platform and mechanism to support regional learning and long-term uptake.

Intervention 6: Pacific Sustainable Tourism Knowledge Exchange

Key Activities:

- Design and launch an interactive exchange for toolkits, templates, training materials, and data dashboards.
- Integrate discussion boards, webinars, and regional case study libraries to promote peer learning and exchange.
- Develop a series of step-by-step guides and templates for priority implementation areas, including:
- Tourism policy and legislative reform development
- Tourism policy implementation and project management
- MEAL toolkit
- Guidance on designing tax incentives, import duty waivers, and enabling policies.
- Industry standard development and revision
- Public-private dialogue (PPD) structures
- Community-Based Tourism Enterprise (CBTE) standards
- Incentive programmes
- Enforcement and compliance frameworks
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for cross-agency coordination
- 'Quick wins' and case study compendium
- Package toolkits with adaptable training materials and peer learning resources for use in national and regional capacity-building programmes.
- Translate toolkits and other selected resources into local languages and adapt content to national contexts for accessibility and relevance.
- Deliver toolkits and training through regional workshops, online platforms, and targeted in-country sessions.
- Resources to maintain and update.

Intervention 7: Regional Dashboard for Measuring Tourism Sustainability

Key Activities:

- Integrate destination-level metrics for SCP performance, sustainability standards, and MEAL indicators at national and regional level.
- Align metrics with PSTI; integrate with existing national data systems.
- Deliver training to NTOs and relevant ministries on data collection, input, and interpretation.
- Provide open-access elements to enhance transparency and raise stakeholder awareness of regional progress.
- Establish protocols for annual data updates and dashboard enhancement based on user feedback and policy changes.

Intervention 8: Public-Private Dialogue and Communication Platforms

Key Activities:

- Facilitate open, merit-based industry representation to ensure SMEs and private sector leaders are actively involved in regional tourism policy discussions.
- Host regional and national events to bring together governments, industry, development partners, and community representatives to share lessons and showcase leadership in SCP implementation.
- Provide practical guidance for countries to establish national-level dialogue structures, including terms of reference and facilitation tools.
- Develop adaptable strategies and advocacy approaches tailored to tourism and non-tourism audiences.
- Create media toolkits, infographics, posters, and social media content on priority topics such as waste reduction, energy efficiency, and local sourcing.
- Assist countries in adapting messages and materials to local contexts, including translation into national languages.
- Launch regional and country-level campaigns featuring case studies, practical tips, and industry showcases to promote SCP and PSTS uptake.
- Organise webinars and workshops to improve tourism business capacity in sustainability communication and PSTS alignment.
- Track the effectiveness of campaigns and platforms, and update materials based on industry and community input.
- House all tools, case studies, and resources on the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Knowledge Exchange for ongoing access and learning.

Enabling Mechanisms

Intervention 9: Sustainable Tourism Supply Chains and Aggregator Hubs

Key Activities:

- Identify key products, materials, and services required by the tourism sector at the national level.
- Identify local and regional producers of sustainable, biodegradable, or reusable alternatives to high-impact materials; provide technical assistance and co-funding to support innovation and market access.
- Develop and maintain a national register and online portal showcasing verified sustainable suppliers, with regional aggregation to support cross-border procurement.
- Organise a regional platform for micro and small tourism operators to showcase sustainable products, build visibility, and connect with potential buyers and partners.
- Analyse seasonal demand from tourism businesses to identify suitable locations and logistics for aggregation.

- Set up community-based hubs to coordinate supply, manage logistics, and consolidate production among smallholder groups.
- Co-design cooperative business models to scale smallholder engagement in tourism supply chains.
- Develop and implement quality control systems to meet tourism buyer expectations in terms of consistency, standards, and volume.

Intervention 10: Farm-to-Table Procurement and Traceability Schemes

Key Activities:

- Pilot farm-to-hotel/resort procurement platforms with traceability tools (digital or manual).
- Provide training and mentoring on safety and hygiene standards, quality control, and agri-business development (e.g. food supply for the tourism sector).
- Introduce crop planning agreements between farmer cooperatives and large-scale buyers.
- Identify and promote value-added products and alternatives to reduce seasonal supply constraints.

Intervention 11: Procurement and Purchasing Policy Development

Key Activities:

- Design model procurement policies and templates for public and private sector adoption
- Conduct stakeholder consultation workshops with ministries and business associations.
- Pilot procurement systems in select destinations and monitor impact.
- Develop a Green Events Guideline: providing guidance for sustainable events for industry and Government.

Intervention 12: Sustainable Finance Mechanism and Support for Tourism Enterprises

Key Activities:

- Establish a regional small grant scheme offering competitive grants (e.g. USD 5,000–USD 20,000) to support MSME and NGOs undertake projects such as waste minimisation, renewable energy adoption, sustainable product development, and eco-efficient infrastructure.
- Provide technical assistance to businesses on business planning, compliance, and proposal development.
- Engage and build the capacity of financial institutions to understand sustainable tourism models and assess investment viability.
- Aggregate sector financing needs to make the case for broader institutional support through grants, loans, or concessional financing mechanisms.
- Explore and co-design long-term financing models tailored to the needs of SMEs, entrepreneurs, and CBTEs across the Pacific.

Applied and Scalable Initiatives

Intervention 13: Sustainable and Climate Resilient Tourism Accommodation Guidelines

Key Activities:

- Develop a ‘green and resilient’ building guide for hotels and other accommodation in consultation with developers and other experts
- Facilitate policy consultations with ministries, developers, and other experts.
- Provide guidance materials for regulatory adoption and implementation.

Intervention 14: Traditional and Sustainable Building Construction Techniques

Key Activities:

- Develop demonstration projects showcasing traditional and sustainable construction techniques and document best practices through technical guides.
- Advocate for the testing and assessment of traditional materials for future inclusion in national building codes.
- Link construction practices to vocational training and circular economy initiatives (e.g. bamboo supply chains, waste-to-resource innovations).
- Deliver modular training programmes for communities, builders, and officials on sustainable and climate-smart design, including solar orientation, off-grid systems, and energy storage.
- Facilitate training in the safe and approved use of traditional materials aligned with building standards.
- Develop mobile-accessible and digital learning platforms to expand training access.
- Co-deliver sessions with experts in traditional and ecological design and establish peer mentoring and skills exchange networks.
- Capture and share lessons learned across Pacific nations to support regional scaling.

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