



Weaving Nature with Culture

World Heritage Work Plan for the Pacific Region 2021-2025¹

November 2021



World heritage sites have **cultural and/or natural significance** of outstanding universal value and are so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity.

¹ Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau (of NZ), Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu (collectively called the 'countries' or the 'States Parties' or the 'Pacific region'). A Regional Action plan will also include Australia and New Zealand as States Parties.

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VISION FOR 2025

Pacific Island heritage is protected and enriched for current and future generations

We the people of the Pacific offer a unique contribution to the World Heritage community, through our enormous wealth of cultural diversity, as well as the island and marine biodiversity of our region.

For us, indigeneity is inseparable from heritage. Our indigeneity has the following characteristics:

- Heritage in the Pacific defines our cultural identity and remains inseparable from our social, economic, and environmental well-being, now and for future generations.
- Our heritage is holistic, embracing all life, both tangible and intangible, and is understood through our cultural traditions.
- There is an inseparable connection between the outstanding seascapes and landscapes in the Pacific Islands region, which are woven together by the rich cultural, historical, and genealogical relationships of Pacific Island peoples.
- The region contains a series of spectacular and highly powerful spiritually valued natural features and cultural places. These places are related to the origins of peoples, the land and sea, and other sacred stories.
- The Pacific is a region of distinct and diverse responses to oceanic environments.
- Protection of our heritage must be based on respect for and understanding and maintenance of the traditional cultural practices, indigenous knowledge and systems of land and sea tenure in the Pacific.

This extraordinary heritage, moreover, is often managed through traditional practices that reinforce the inseparable relationship between communities, cultures and environment that underpin sustainable development.

Note. This Vision is founded on the Pacific Appeal², which continues to be a valid and integral basis for World Heritage Action Plans in the Pacific region. The Appeal was further strengthened by the Ocean Declaration of Maupiti in 2009.

² The *Appeal to the World Heritage Committee from Pacific Island State Parties*, also known as the “Pacific Appeal”, was developed by Pacific delegates at the February 2007 Pacific World Heritage workshop held at Waitetoko Marae (Tongariro) in New Zealand. It is annexed to Document WHC-07/31.COM/11C, accessible online from: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/31COM/documents/>

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACCRONYMS

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian nations	PHH	Pacific Heritage Hub
AWHAC	Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee	PIRT	Pacific Islands Roundtable (for nature conservation and protected areas)
BIORAP	Biological Rapid Assessment	SPC	The Pacific Community
CBO	Community Based Organisation	SPTO	South Pacific Tourism Organisation
CEESP	Commission on Environment, Social and Economic Policy (IUCN)	SIDS	Small Island Developing States
CEPA	Conservation and Environment Protection Authority	SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program
CRIHAP	The International Training Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region	TL	Tentative list
HIST	International Centre on Space Technology for Natural and Cultural Heritage	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature	USP	University of the South Pacific
ICCROM	International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property	UNITWIN	University Twinning and Networking Programme
ICH	Intangible Cultural Heritage	VKS	Vanuatu Cultural Centre (Vanuatu Kaljoral Senta)
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites	WCPA	World Commission on Protected Areas (IUCN)
INGO	International Non-Government Organisation	WHCT	World Heritage Centre
KBA	Key Biodiversity Area	WHC	World Heritage Committee
LiDaR	Light Detection and Ranging	WH	World Heritage
NGO	Non-Government Organisation	WHITR-AP	World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and the Pacific Region
PA	Protected Area		
PAN	Protected Area Network		

Status of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention

(countries covered by this report)

States parties to the Convention @ 23-Oct-2020 (UNESCO website)	Convention status R-Ratified (Ac-Accepted A-Acceded)	Date	Date of the most recent Tentative List submission	Sites accepted as meeting the requirements for Tentative Lists in accordance with the <i>Operational Guidelines</i>	C –Cultural site N –Natural site CN –Mixed site	Inscribed World Heritage sites	C –Cultural site N –Natural site CN –Mixed site	Year of Inscription
Cook Islands	R	16/1/2009	Nil	Nil				
Fiji	R	21/11/1990	26/10/1999	Sigatoka Sand Dunes	C	Levuka Historical Port Town	C	2013
				Sovi Basin	C			
				Yaduataba Crested Iguana Sanctuary	N			
Kiribati	Ac	12/5/2000	Nil	Nil		Phoenix Islands Protected Area	N	2010
Marshall Islands	Ac	24/4/2002	24/10/2005	Likiep Village Historic District	C	Bikini Atoll Nuclear Test Site	C	2010
				Mili Atoll Nature Conservancy (and Nadrikdrik)	N			
				Northern Marshall Islands Atolls	CN			
Micronesia (Federated States of)	Ac	22/7/2002	3/1/2012	Yapese Disk Money Regional Sites	C	Nan Madol: Ceremonial Centre of Eastern Micronesia	C	2016
Niue	Ac	23/1/2001	Nil	Nil				
Palau	Ac	11/6/2002	6/11/2007	Imeong Conservation Area	CN	Rock Islands Southern Lagoon	CN	2012
				Ouballang ra Ngebedech (Ngebedech Terraces)	C			
				Tet el Bad (Stone Coffin)	C			
				Yapease Quarry Sites	C			
Papua New Guinea	Ac	28/7/1997	6/6/2006	Huon Terraces Stairway to the Past	CN	Kuk Early Agricultural Site	C	2008
				Kikori River Basin / Great Papuan Plateau	CN			
				Kokoda Track and Owen Stanley Ranges	CN			
				Milne Bay Seascape (Pacific Jewels of Marine Biodiversity)	CN			
				The Sublime Karsts of Papua New Guinea	CN			
				Trans Fly Complex	CN			
				Upper Sepik River Basin	CN			
Samoa	Ac	28/8/2001	21/12/2006	Fagaloa Bay Uafato Tiavea Conservation Zone	CN			
				Manono, Apolima and Nuulopa Cultural Landscape	C			
Solomon Islands	A	10/6/1992	23/12/2008	Marovo Tetepare Complex	CN	East Rennell	N	1998
				Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Solomon Islands	N			
Tonga	Ac	30/4/2004	9/8/2007	Lapita Pottery Archaeological Sites (A National Serial Site for consideration as the Kingdom of Tonga's contribution to a transnational serial site listing)	C			
				The Ancient Capitals of the Kingdom of Tonga	C			
Vanuatu	R	13/6/2002	5/10/2005	Lake Letas	N	Chief Roi Mata's Domain	C	2008
				The Nowon and Votwos of Ureparapara	C			
				The President Coolidge (shipwreck)	C			
				Vatthe Conservation Area	N			
				Yalo, Apialo and the sacred geography of Northwest Malakula	C			

As of the date of this report, Nauru and Tuvalu had not yet ratified the WH Convention. Tokelau's ratification of, or recognition of, the WH Convention is linked to NZ.

1. BACKGROUND

The Pacific region offers a rich and unique contribution to the World Heritage (WH) community, through an enormous wealth of cultural diversity and island and marine biodiversity. This extraordinary heritage is often managed through traditional practices that reinforce the inseparable relationship between communities, cultures, and the natural environment.

In the framework of the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World's Cultural and Natural Heritage, and with the aim to identify, protect, present and transmit this heritage to future generations, the Convention provides structures and processes to enable States Parties to have nationally important natural and cultural sites recognized internationally as having outstanding universal value, to be nominated as tentative or inscribed World Heritage sites and to be managed accordingly. Most Pacific countries are States Parties to the Convention³.

IUCN has been engaged by UNESCO to prepare this Review Report which identifies priorities that will guide the subsequent development of a Pacific Regional World Heritage Action Plan 2021-2025 (referred to in this Review Report as 'the Action Plan'). This will be the fourth edition of a Pacific Regional World Heritage Action Plan.

The Review Report identifies the specific challenges, needs and opportunities for implementation of the World Heritage Convention and identifies national and regional priorities up to 2025.

The aims of a *Pacific Regional World Heritage Action Plan 2021-2025* will be to:

- increase community, national, regional, and global awareness of the heritage of the Pacific countries and the contribution of Pacific Island and Ocean heritage to sustainable development.
- strengthen the foundation for sustainable implementation of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention in the Pacific countries, and
- build global recognition and support for conservation of the unique heritage of the Pacific through increasing representation of the heritage of the Pacific region on the World Heritage List

There are four pathways to achieving these aims:

1. The protection and conservation of Pacific heritage is effectively supported by resourced and organized structures that facilitate active and regular partnerships and cooperation of government agencies, regional and international organizations, non-government organizations and communities.
2. Pacific heritage is valued and effectively protected, managed, and promoted with legislative, administrative and collaboration mechanisms in place for the effective and efficient management of World Heritage sites.
3. Pacific communities are actively engaged in conserving their heritage with mechanisms in place to ensure strong partnerships between the State and communities.
4. Multi-layered capacity development enables Pacific countries to successfully nominate and effectively manage their World Heritage sites.

The Action Plan is further underpinned by five current strategic objectives of the World Heritage Committee notably - Credibility, Conservation, Capacity-building, Communication, and Communities (the 5 "C's") as outlined in the Operational Guidelines of the World Heritage Convention⁴.

A key implementation principle of the Action Plan will be to establish a refreshed and targeted set of essential actions that have implementation potential and that will build a stronger platform for progressing further actions.

³ Nauru and Tuvalu have not yet ratified the WH Convention. Tokelau's ratification of, or recognition of, the WH Convention is linked to NZ.

⁴ <https://whc.unesco.org/archive/opguide12-en.pdf>

A key intent is to seek to bring the protection, preservation, and promotion of natural and cultural heritage closer together at regional and national levels in recognition of their fundamental linkages and alignment, particularly within the Pacific context.

How this Review Report informs the Pacific Regional World Heritage Action Plan 2021-2025

The following processes and information sources have been used to generate the findings set out in this Background Report.

Between 2016 and 2021, several key reports, plans and strategies were developed providing a broad and current body of relevant reference material to inform the elaboration of the Action Plan. Additionally, various reports, plans, policies and aspirational statements and agreements prior to 2016 are recalled and remain valid in driving and supporting the Action Plan.

Further, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee's 3rd Cycle of Periodic Reporting led to the convening of numerous forums for national focal points and knowledge holders to support them in providing status updates about their World Heritage sites and the implementation of the Convention at the national level. The reporting process was launched in October 2020 and ended in June 2021 with the completion of periodic report questionnaires by national heritage focal points and site managers.

However, and most importantly, a systematic and rigorous program of consultation through October and November 2021, enabled experts in many Pacific countries, and regional specialists, to directly contribute their experiences, reflections, and honest perspectives about the state of world heritage and suggestions for realistic actions to strengthen progress under the World Heritage Convention.

Their inputs acknowledged the complex challenges they work within, noted areas for optimism and highlighted important matters for attention including: regional advocacy and leadership; strengthening communication and collaboration between responsible agencies and stakeholders; capacity development and training; effective engagement and awareness campaigns; reappraisal of tentative World Heritage lists; creating supportive legislation; stronger recognition of the regions character and needs and for the support of the international community, and; broadening the thinking around accessing the funding required for all aspects of WH activity.

Two workshops for national and regional contributors were convened over the 10th and 11th November 2021 to provide opportunity to discuss the findings of the consultation and the priority actions proposed.

Additionally, a closely associated project known as the Pacific Natural World Heritage Report will provide a regional overview of progress and prospects, challenges, and opportunities regarding implementation of the World Heritage Convention in Oceania and covers the 23 Pacific Island countries and territories. The consultations for both projects were undertaken jointly, and the findings are well aligned. As the timing of this allied project is slightly behind the finalisation timing for this Review Report, there may be some final findings from the Pacific Natural World Heritage report that will need to be considered for direct incorporation into the Pacific Regional World Heritage Action Plan 2021-2025.

The Review Report has culminated in a detailed, accurate and realistic representation of the key issues and priorities as advised by those involved in and/or responsible for, World Heritage across the Pacific region. This report is intended to serve both as a standalone publication to guide regional action, as well as to inform the 2021-2025 UNESCO action plan process for the Pacific. To ensure that the ongoing process generates support and buy-in, it should acknowledge the strengths and challenges identified in the Review Report and closely reflect the record of specific actions that have been proposed by national, regional, and international contributors and that have been documented in the Review Report.

Achievements

Since the pinnacle point of the “Pacific Appeal” that established and communicated a shared long-term vision on World Heritage for the region in 2007, the first Pacific World Heritage Action Plan 2009, the second Pacific World Heritage Action Plan 2010 – 2015 and the third Pacific World Heritage Action Plan 2016 – 2020, the following important actions have transpired:

- Twelve Pacific States Parties (out of fourteen) have ratified the World Heritage Convention - Fiji (1990), Solomon Islands (1992), Papua New Guinea (1997), Kiribati (2000), Niue (2001), Samoa (2001), Palau (2002), Marshall Islands (2002), Federated States of Micronesia (2002), Vanuatu (2002), Tonga (2004) and Cook Islands (2009). Tuvalu and Nauru are still working toward ratification of the Convention. Tokelau is a territory of New Zealand and any decisions it makes concerning WH are associated with NZ’s ratification of the World Heritage Convention in 1984.
- Nine Pacific States Parties have submitted World Heritage Tentative Lists, which include an array of natural, cultural, mixed, and transnational sites – Fiji (1999), Kiribati (2005) Marshall Islands (2005), Vanuatu (2005), Papua New Guinea (2006), Palau (2007), Tonga (2007) Samoa (2008) and Federated States of Micronesia (2012).
- Eight properties from Pacific States Parties are inscribed on the World Heritage List: East Rennell, Solomon Islands (1998) and listed as in-danger; Kuk Early Agricultural Site, Papua New Guinea (2008); Chief Roi Mata’s Domain (2008), Vanuatu; Bikini Atoll Nuclear Test Site, Republic of Marshall Islands (2010); Phoenix Islands Protected Area, Kiribati (2010); Rock Islands Southern Lagoon, Palau (2012), and; Levuka Historical Port Town, Fiji (2013). In 2016, Nan Madol - Ceremonial Centre of Eastern Micronesia, Federated States of Micronesia, became the most recently inscribed site in the region (listed as in-danger at the time of its inscription and with an agreed plan for managing threatening processes).

Between 2016 and 2020, further specific progress and activity for World Heritage occurred, including:

- More forthright recognition for heritage through new regional plans including: the 2050 Strategy for the Pacific Blue Continent; the UNESCO Pacific Strategy 2018-2022; the Pacific Islands Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas 2021-2025; the Framework for Pacific Regionalism; the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific: An Integrated Approach to Climate Change and Risk Management; the Regional Culture Strategy 2020-2030 (to be finalized); the Pacific 2030 Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework.
- The Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas (PIRT) is considering a proposal for establishment of a Nature/Culture Working Group within PIRT
- ‘Desired State(s) of Conservation’ for the Removal of East Rennell and Nan Madol World Heritage Sites from the List of World Heritage in Danger have been developed.
- A status review of WH sites due to the Covid-19 Pandemic (UNESCO) 2020.
- 3 sites in the Pacific region were reviewed in the IUCN World Heritage Outlook – A conservation assessment of all natural WH sites – East Rennell, Solomon Islands, the Phoenix Island Protected Area, Kiribati, and the Rock Islands Southern Lagoon, Palau (IUCN World Heritage Program) 2020
- In December 2019, the US Department of the Interior convened a World Heritage workshop and Historic Preservation Office training for the US Insular areas of American Samoa, Guam, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands and Republic of Marshall Islands
- The IUCN WH program provided advisory services to the WHC and participated in a number of technical missions to Pacific Islands Countries.
- UNESCO Pacific Strategy 2018 – 2022, UNESCO, a guide to the direction, distribution of resources and standards and performance indicators for UNESCO’s work in the Pacific (Office for the Pacific States).

- Levuka Pasifika Charter Workshop in association with the Culture: Conserving it Together Conference (Australia ICOMOS and ICOMOS Pasifika), 2018.
- Pacific Heritage Workshop (UNESCO Office for the Pacific States and Ministry for Community and Cultural Affairs in Palau) 2017.
- Workshop on Heritage and Environment Impact Assessment for the Pacific Island States (World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and the Pacific Region (WHITRAP) jointly with the UNESCO World Heritage Centre) 2017.
- Key funding injections for WH (egs; GEF, various ‘funds-in-trust’, US Ambassadors fund in FSM, UNESCO emergency funds, Australian government for PNG)

Note. Challenges, progress, and activity at the regional and national levels are further outlined in other sections of this Background Report.

Total number of WH sites for the countries covered by the background report

Site	Number	Global %
Inscribed Cultural sites	5 sites	0.5% of global total
Inscribed Natural sites	2 sites	1.0% of global total
Inscribed Mixed Natural and Cultural sites	1 site	2.5% of global total
Sites on the List of World Heritage in Danger	2 of the above sites	4.0% of global total
Natural sites on Tentative Lists	5	Not extrapolated
Cultural sites on Tentative Lists	13	Not extrapolated
Mixed Natural and Cultural sites on Tentative Lists	11	Not extrapolated

1.1 A DYNAMIC HERITAGE PROFILE

Before looking at the challenges and issues affecting the region, it is important to look at the strengths and opportunities and where there is optimism for WH and Pacific heritage more generally.

- WH is highly relevant to the Pacific with its customary land tenures and linking culture, people, communities, and nature together in values and management.
- For Pacific Islanders, whose identities weave together culture, economic well-being, the tangible and intangible, land, sea and sky, genealogies and spirituality, there continues to be the desire to recognize and protect their heritage.
- With the majority of land and water owned by communities throughout the Pacific the fundamental principles of WH support the close engagement and involvement of local communities, including women and youth.
- The notion of ‘cultural landscapes’ and ‘cultural seascapes’ is gaining attention and supports the weaving together of the natural and cultural as one.
- The WH program provides a framework for capacity building, promotion of heritage values, a recognized label for accessing funding and for increasing capacity.
- There is a depth of valuable experience accumulated on WH by responsible government agencies and their staff, regional bodies, NGOs, local communities, and site managers and this should be communicated more widely.

- Some communities are closely, if not fully, responsible for charting the course of WH sites and this reinforces rights-based approaches to WH.
- Some communities have effectively and appropriately capitalized on the opportunity for ecotourism as a source of revenue and in raising heritage awareness.
- National protected areas programs are moving ahead steadily (e.g. legislation in place, PA network development, varying levels of support for community-based resource management areas, progress on very large marine protected areas, Ramsar listings) and these efforts sit comfortably alongside the WH concept.
- Significant funding programs such as GEF and GCF have been utilized to support heritage actions.
- Allied conventions in particular the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, the Convention on Biological Diversity are recognized and implemented throughout the region. Opportunities are also there for linkages with Underwater Cultural Heritage.
- Heritage practitioners maintain an informal communication network, remain energized to contribute, develop and succeed in their roles and readily participate in capacity development opportunities.
- Countries with tentative WH lists recognize the overdue need for them to be reviewed in light of their experiences with currently tentatively listed sites or WH sites or because new and highly significant potential sites have emerged.
- A professional heritage certificate with a focus on cultural heritage is offered through the Pacific Studies program the Pacific Heritage Hub at the University of the South Pacific.
- The potential for a cultural heritage charter for the Pacific Islands region is being examined by ICOMOS Pasifika with support from Australia ICOMOS.
- Pacific territories have some good WH process and management models to showcase and that could be shared more effectively with their neighboring countries.
- Science oriented NGOs and individual technical experts have been willing and useful technical supporters for WH processes and WH sites.
- Proactive communities, with partners, have used, or are considering using, the WH convention and WH listing to achieve a high level of protection and recognition for the heritage values of their areas.
- At the international level, the joint Nature-Culture Journey is a developing program focusing on connecting natural and cultural heritage practice (IUCN and ICOMOS), from 2016.
- The virtual communication explosion that has come with COVID 19 travel restrictions has enabled people to become more comfortable and skilled with virtual platforms which opens the door to many possibilities for more effective and resource-friendly ways of talking, training, and meeting.

1.2 COMMON CHALLENGES FOR THE PACIFIC REGION⁵

The Pacific countries covered by the Action Plan are known as Small Island Developing States (SIDS). They are relatively remote, vulnerable to environmental challenges, such as climate change, and generally small in land area size. The SIDS were recognized as a distinct group of developing countries in June 1992, at the UN Conference on Environment and Development. The 29th session of the World Heritage Committee in 2005 adopted the World Heritage Programme for SIDS (Decision 29 COM 5B), and the SIDS have since become a point of focus for World Heritage identification and protection. The UNESCO SIDS Programme develops World Heritage activities in these areas,

⁵ # The accounts of challenges and issues are not presented with the intention of painting an exhaustive and overwhelmingly negative picture. The intention is however, to establish the depth of real and pressing circumstances faced by Pacific countries in order to unambiguously communicate the degree, and types, of support that are required to overcome hurdles and so that progressing future World Heritage actions is grounded in reality.

providing support for new nominations to the World Heritage List, and sustainable conservation and management practices for sites already inscribed.

Note. Many in the Pacific region are now using the term ‘Large Ocean States’ to be more reflective of regional geography (land and ocean) and as a more positive way to view national and regional aspirations.

Despite this type of broad support commitment, the Pacific region continues to be the most under-represented region on the World Heritage List. In redressing this imbalance in representation and endeavouring to continue to build on previous achievements, the Pacific Island States face major challenges. These include:

- Large geographic area, remote locations, isolation, resource limitations and difficult transport.
- Limited human and financial resources.
- Greater external challenges and threats in the Pacific than in most other regions of the world, with less capacity to respond to their impacts (e.g., climate change, financial instability, globalization of society and economy, demand for natural resources, geo-political positioning, technological development, commercialization, energy supply and demand, natural disasters).
- Climate change is of particular concern because the Pacific region is especially vulnerable to its wide-ranging (e.g., water and food security, habitat alteration) and often destructive impacts (storms, flooding, coastal erosion, property damage) and faces many difficulties in adapting to and mitigating its effects.
- Impacts on the environment, communities and resources are widespread and sometimes difficult to monitor (e.g., livelihood needs, altered habitats, spread of pests and diseases), which can constrain the ability to protect heritage.
- Political instability and a lack of effective governance along with varying political will.
- Public investment and decisions may be prioritized toward resource extraction and development opportunities and short-term financial advantage.

1.3 GENERAL ISSUES FOR THE WORLD HERITAGE IN THE PACIFIC REGION

There are a range of general issues that impact World Heritage in the Pacific Region. These include:

- Limited awareness outside the region of Pacific natural and cultural heritage and the extent of challenges faced in planning and managing heritage.
- There is relatively inadequate representation of the unique and special heritage of the Pacific on the World Heritage List.
- WH is far less understood than other conventions such as the ICH Convention, UNCBD and the UNFCCC.
- Limited financial and human resources, skills and capacities within communities and institutions to adequately manage the region’s cultural and natural heritage.
- There is no specific mechanism or forum for leading or advocating WH in the Pacific in terms of regional policy, promotion, or funding.
- National interests, roles and responsibilities for heritage matters may be distributed across various government ministries and bodies, NGOs, and communities with limited, or no, connecting structures for collaborative communication, planning or implementation.
- Recognizing and working with land tenure, customary rights and uses and local governance decision-making structures are fundamental aspects of any WH process.
- Community participation is fundamental to any WH aspirations however communities are naturally focused on pressing concerns such as health and medical services, education resources, income-generating enterprises, improved communication and transport facilities and access to markets, and may question the idea of WH if it does not appear to offer any clear benefit toward these essential interests and needs.

- A need for increased awareness across a broad base (national to community level) of the value that the World Heritage Convention can potentially contribute to the protection and vitality of cultural and biological diversity and that this type of information also needs to be embedded early in any WH process.
- The character and scope of the UNESCO and the World Heritage Convention administration for the Pacific region, which masks some of the specific important national and regional heritage issues and needs.
- Artificial and unintentional gaps between nature and culture are still present in the WH Convention.
- COVID19 has caused many support programs to stall due to travel restrictions and related disruptions with primary funding sources from tourism ceasing and even triggering serious health emergencies in some countries.
- While the natural environment sector is relatively better off in terms of organizational structures and funding programs, the culture sector does not have the same reach and networks.
- Cultural heritage is seen as a celebration of cultural values, however there is often limited conservation activity following an inscription which is generally not (or less) the case, for natural sites.
- Cultural heritage funding is largely reliant on variable and relatively modest external sources.
- There are many discrete and often short-term oriented sources and opportunities for funding and capacity development, particularly for natural heritage, yet Pacific countries may not always be aware of them or how they can be accessed.

1.4 SPECIFIC ISSUES FOR WORLD HERITAGE IN THE PACIFIC REGION

There are a range of specific issues that impact World Heritage in the Pacific Region. These include:

- Processes and criteria associated with World Heritage can present an onerous and potentially unachievable undertaking for the relatively small resources and capacities of Pacific Countries.
- Following their initial ratification of the WH Convention, most countries conduct an energetic phase of nominating tentative sites or having WH sites inscribed, often financially or technically supported by UNESCO then, characteristically, experience a downturn in momentum in progressing sites to WH listing or in the management of their WH sites.
- The linkages between people/communities and the cultural/natural environment are not reflected in policies and work in the region which, following Western governance models, separates natural and cultural heritage in an administrative, organizational, and funding sense.
- Clear communication about the realistic implications of WH may not be well articulated to communities, government staff, stakeholders, and partners early in any WH consideration process.
- Few people, beyond heritage experts, seem to understand the explicit processes associated with WH nominations.
- Legislative protection to protect heritage is minimal and requires specialized legal support that is not readily available within the region.
- There has been no Pacific region member represented in the World Heritage Committee other than New Zealand and Australia resulting in a lack of voice and visibility for the Pacific Islands State Parties at that level.
- While the Pacific Heritage Hub was established in 2012 as an important tool for supporting WH in the region, it has progressively reduced its scope of activity and now does not resemble its original mandate.
- Heritage is sometimes not a fully accepted role in national environment ministries.

- Pacific countries that have ratified the WH Convention (anywhere between 12 and 33 years ago) did not all have sufficient understanding at the time of the implications of fulfilling the duties expected of States Parties.
- Small population bases and external migration are leaving some countries with more limited governance and management capacity.
- The distinctions and connections between the WH and the ICH conventions can be blurred and confused as there is no, or little, distinction made between tangible and intangible heritage in the Pacific region's approach to heritage.
- The degree to which previous regional WH Action Plans have been a useful roadmap for implementation is not known.
- UNESCO (and other) funding is project oriented which hampers foundational capacity development and enduring structures.
- The UNESCO Periodic Reporting process does not appear to have been a useful activity for monitoring and evaluating national progress on WH, particularly at country level, as its enquiry format and results are primarily directed towards to the interests of an international audience. Given that this same process has been used for a long time without much change, it is worthy of review particularly in view of the experiences articulated by Pacific States Parties in the preparation of this Background Report.

1.5 REVIEW OF REGIONAL LEVEL ACTIVITIES 2016-2020

There have been significant regional level activities in the period 2016-2020. The following table outlines these.

Proposed regional level activities 2016 - 2020	Agency to implement	Potential funding sources/partnerships	Status	Priority activity to continue 2021 – 2025?
Secure sustainable funding for the Pacific Heritage Hub (PHH)		Regional Partners: WHITRAP, SPREP, Japan, UNESCO, HIST	Funding for the PHH has progressively declined following its establishment. It is currently not funded	Yes
Develop a Regional Cultural Heritage Register and Database or model for Heritage Registers to be adopted by national agencies	PHH	HIST to support IT training ICCROM, SPREP, IUCN	Not commenced	No
Promote Transboundary Nominations	Tonga PHH	France	Some discussion and technical assessment but relies on the priorities of different countries to align	Yes – but only if a high priority for national governments that have commenced activity on these initiatives
Complete a Regional Thematic Study of places associated with Traditional Voyaging and Navigation	ICOMOS	World Heritage Fund Partners: France	Not commenced	Yes – but only if a high priority for organisations with this specific interest
Establish a Register of Legal Experts for Cultural Heritage law	PHH	Fiji Environmental Law Association ³ SPC, USP School of Law, IUCN Oceania Regional Office	Not commenced	yes
Organise a regular Roundtable on Heritage at Regional Festivals	SPC, PHH	South Pacific Arts Council, Melanesian Spearhead Group Funding: national countries, UNDP, Equator Initiative, UNESCO, WHC	Heritage meetings and conferences organised at the Festival of Pacific Arts and Melanesian Arts Festival focussed on cultural heritage and sustainable development	yes – but to be adapted to national and regional events/forums where promotion and discussion effort will lead to tangible WH actions
Regional Capacity Building Programs for managers, communities, government officials	WHC UNESCO Apia	ICCROM, ICOMOS, SPREP, IUCN, WHITRAP, HIST USP	3 regional workshops convened	yes
Regional exchange program for heritage managers	PHH	Partners: Australia, NZ, other Pacific Island countries, WH sites in other regions (Canada), IUCN, CEESP	Not commenced	yes
Training on risk management and impact assessment and climate change mitigation for cultural heritage	UNESCO Apia	ICCROM, WHITRAP, ICOMOS, Blue Shield, SPREP	Workshop held on Heritage / Environment Impact Assessment for the Pacific Island States	yes

Proposed regional level activities 2016 - 2020	Agency to implement	Potential funding sources/partnerships	Status	Priority activity to continue 2021 – 2025?
Support development of USP Graduate Certificate Programme for Heritage Management	SPC PHH Steering Committee	USP Council Funding: SPC	A professional heritage certificate with a focus on cultural heritage is offered through the Pacific Studies program at the University of the South Pacific	yes – but looking at ways that the course can be offered in short duration or online format and with a culture/nature blend
Mainstreaming World Heritage in National Development Plans (regional and national)	National stakeholders, Ministers of Planning and Culture		Progressed at some national levels	yes
Study to review the economic benefits/impacts of World Heritage inscription	PHH	UNESCO Institute of Statistics ICOMOS, IUCN	Not commenced	no
Promote the value of heritage in context of sustainable tourism	PHH	SPTO	Pacific 2030 Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework completed	yes – as per the principles and recommendations identified in the framework
Regional study of vernacular architecture (publication, DVD, surveys and typological studies)	PHH	UNITWIN partnering with Caribbean (University of West Indies) in cooperation with USP and other partner Universities, Australia ICOMOS, ICOMOS International	Not commenced	no
'Lessons from the Pacific': sustainable use of resources and the resilience of Pacific Island communities (Publication and Social Media Campaign)	PHH	UNDP, SPC Pacific Way	Not commenced	yes – and considering ways that this effort can be modified to produce a representation of WH lessons learnt
Preparing Conservation Management Plans for Pacific World Heritage sites and sites on Tentative Lists	State Parties	WHITRAP	Some work on individual site management plans and desired states of conservation	yes – with a focus on using this theme as a specific area for capacity development support

Note. Many of the initiatives proposed above did not occur, or only partially progressed, due to the following issues:

- The Pacific World Heritage Action Plan 2016 – 2020 is not visibly embedded in decision-making or used proactively as a key WH reference point by stakeholders and partners.
- No central leadership role to help advocate, support and drive the identified regional actions forward and lend support to national actions.
- Lack of a unifying mechanism or forum charged with the responsibility for bringing the main stakeholders and partners together in a structured, regular way over the five-yearly duration of

the Action Plan and including opportunity to check that actions are being planned, conducted and monitored from a strategic and realistic standpoint.

- Proposed activities were not realistic or did not aim sufficiently at the real core of WH needs.
- Actions didn't find their way into other national decision making or plans.
- Reliance on the self-motivation of individuals to initiate action when they have a range of other duties and priorities competing for their time.
- Meagre funding allocations, or funding cuts.

2. REGIONAL PRIORITIES AND PROPOSED ACTIONS 2021 - 2025

Looking forward

The key observation concerning the state of WH at the regional level is that momentum has been waning over the last 10 years. A chief reason for this is that there is simply no 'entity' that has the formal, accepted role as a catalyst in guiding, establishing, or driving regional actions for WH. Without such an entity in place, regional actions, even the most targeted and relevant ones, have uncertain chances of success. For example, an aspiration in 2012 was that the PHH would be one of the key mechanisms to serve this function and to be responsible for driving or organising several WH actions. However, a lack of resourcing for its functions and a weak institutional base has meant that it could not achieve its intended purpose and there has been no body that has been able to advocate effectively on its behalf.

A good analogy is cooking a cake⁶ – first you assemble the right ingredients, then you can make the cake, and once it's nicely baked, you put the icing on. You don't start with the icing until you have a good cake underneath. Likewise, it's risky to initiate projects if they can't be sustained on a solid base of resourcing and capacity, suitable funding, and high-level commitment. Many WH projects in the Pacific (with some positive exceptions) crumble or melt away because of their weak base. This analogy is relevant to both regional and national efforts on WH.

There is a clear opportunity for the regional UNESCO office to have a key role in connecting the WH Programme (UNESCO and WH Centre) to the region in ways that are strategic, meaningful and sustained. Key partners could be comprised of those with close and active alliances associated with facets of WH. At the regional level, there are four institutions directly responsible for management (of aspects) of heritage: UNESCO, the Pacific Community (SPC), the Pacific Heritage Hub (PHH) at the University of the South Pacific (USP) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP). UNESCO and IUCN have obvious central roles as they are the organizations responsible for developing the Pacific Regional World Heritage Action Plan 2021 – 2025.

To these can be added a range of important and active partners: IUCN commissions (WCPA, CEESP); Australia ICOMOS; ICOMOS Pasifika; ICOMOS NZ; Blue Shield Pasifika; the PHH and its steering committee; UNITWIN; Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee (AWHAC); various universities and key funding agencies. The potential for a Nature/Culture Working Group within PIRT also presents a promising opportunity for regional collaboration on WH. In addition, the increasing use of virtual forums opens the way for substantially more convenient and cost-effective dialogue.

Recent years have also seen the emergence of institutions, particularly Category 2 centres under the auspices of UNESCO (e.g. World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and the Pacific Region WHITR-AP and the International Centre on Space Technologies for Natural and Cultural Heritage HIST) offering capacity building within the World Heritage context.

Commencing in 2016, a World Heritage Leadership Programme partnership between ICCROM, IUCN, and the Norwegian Ministry of Climate and the Environment, in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS aims to improve conservation and management practices for culture and nature through the work of the World Heritage Convention, as an integral component of the contribution of World Heritage Sites to sustainable development.

Therefore, with UNESCO sitting physically in the region, with international cooperation being offered, and with a wide body of key partner organizations present, there is abundant opportunity to form a regional WH 'steering' group - it just needs the ignition point for convening and collaboration to be lit. If support and direction can be coordinated at a regional level, it could create more opportunity to mobilize the leadership, capacity development, awareness and funding efforts

⁶ This analogy was introduced by a contributor to the regional consultations to this background report.

that are required to build, maintain, and strengthen WH commensurate with the Pacific perspectives as articulated in the Pacific Appeal and the Maupiti Declaration.

Regional strengthening for WH is recommended to follow a steady, focused and stepwise approach toward revitalizing WH and hinging on the establishment of a structured mechanism for collaboration via a regional WH 'steering' group and with an agreed charter. Ensuring legitimacy and 'buy in' by organisations and national institutions currently leading heritage management in the Pacific is essential. The tried and tested way to do this is through initiation involving a trusted organization/s with regional scale and reach, and a 'steering' group with a clear charter and preferably embedded within an existing, recognised regional forum. Improvements to WH in the region are needed yet will not occur overnight. It is important to acknowledge that if time and effort is put into making the 'cake', the icing will follow and stay in place.

Priority Regional Actions⁷

Priority regional actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	POTENTIAL			Timing
	Lead	Partners	Funding	
Regional leadership				
Convene an inception meeting for the purpose of designing an optimum approach for establishing a regional WH collaboration mechanism. Determine how 'secretariat' duties would be shared.	UNESCO Pacific Office IUCN Oceania Office	SPREP SPC	self-funded	Mid 2022
Draft a scoping paper for a regional 'heritage' charter – a coherent and cohesive approach to natural and cultural WH in the region (this could build on existing work conducted by ICOMOS Australia for a cultural heritage charter for the Pacific Islands region).	UNESCO Pacific Office IUCN Oceania Office	SPREP SPC	self-funded	Mid 2022
Bring together regional WH partners through virtual forums to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> confirm commitment by way of a charter or framework for a regional WH collaboration mechanism commence implementation of the most critical regional level priority actions from the Pacific Regional World Heritage Action Plan 2021 – 2025. # Align closely with any opportunities that may come from a PIRT Nature/Culture Working Group (if established).	UNESCO Pacific Office IUCN Oceania Office	IUCN commissions (WCPA, CEESP), IUCN Oceania, SPC, SPREP, ICOMOS Australia, ICOMOS Pasifika, ICOMOS NZ, Blue Shield Pasifika, the PHH and its steering committee, WHITRAP, UNITWIN, (AWHAC), various universities (inc. USP), key funding agencies – <i>(a WH 'steering' group)</i>	self-funded	Late 2022 (potentially in conjunction with launch of the Pacific World Heritage Action Plan 2021 – 2025 and Pacific Natural Heritage Report)
Seek to identify, nominate and support a Pacific Islands patron for WH. (i.e. similar to roles previously served by Paramount Chief Tumū te Heuheu Tukino [NZ] - former Chair of UNESCO World Heritage Committee or Dame Meg Taylor [PNG] – former Pacific Ocean Commissioner)	UNESCO Pacific Office IUCN Oceania Office	PIRT Nature/Culture Working Group (if established)	self-funded	Late 2022

⁷ The regional actions are to be read as recommendations for inclusion in the Pacific Regional World Heritage Action Plan 2021 – 2025 (the Action Plan) that is planned for completion within the first half of 2022.

Priority regional actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	POTENTIAL			Timing
	Lead	Partners	Funding	
Seek to have Pacific Islands regional representation instated on the World Heritage Committee so that the subregion receives greater visibility and can be a vanguard on participatory governance approaches to WH.	WH 'steering' group	World Heritage Committee		2023
Delivering and using the Pacific Regional World Heritage Action Plan 2021 – 2025				
<p>Embed the Action Plan in regional organizations and national governments through a planned and structured communication process involving active promotion, explanation and advocacy, and particularly with any organizations identified as being a lead or partner in the Action Plan.</p> <p>Propose that countries create their own 'sub-action plan for WH' based on the analyses and actions in set out in the Action Plan and provide follow through encouragement for them to do so.</p> <p>Ensure that the Action Plan interfaces with the (draft) Regional Culture Strategy (2020-2030), and the (draft) Framework on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas (2021-2025) and other key frameworks and initiatives.</p>	UNESCO Pacific Office	WH 'steering' group	self-funded	Initially in late 2022 (in conjunction with the launch of the Pacific World Heritage Action Plan 2021 – 2025 and Pacific Natural Heritage Report) and with regular updates and checks ongoing
Re-activating a Pacific Heritage Hub				
Initiate the development of a Terms of Reference for a collaboratively based re-evaluation of the PHH to determine its optimum purpose for WH program benefit and review its roles (ie; networking, knowledge management, capacity building, partnerships development, sustainable financing), capacity, achievements, resource needs and 'housing' commitment (organizationally and/or virtually)	UNESCO Pacific Office and USP	WH 'steering' group PHH steering committee	self-funded	Late 2022
Ensure that the PHH, in any future format it may take, fosters integration and recognition of both cultural and natural heritage values.	'entity' responsible for a 'PHH' in future	WH 'steering' group	TBA	2023 ongoing
Promotion and awareness				
<p>Develop a well targeted 'plain language' promotional campaign to coincide with release of the Action Plan in 2022 and to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate 'marketing style' engagement of national and regional stakeholders who have potentially instrumental, influential or decision roles that affect WH outcomes, but who are not ordinarily the recipients of advice, information or advocacy about WH 	UNESCO Pacific Office IUCN Oceania	IUCN WH Program SPC, SPREP, ICOMOS Australia, ICOMOS Pasifika, ICOMOS NZ, Blue Shield Pasifika	UNESCO Pacific Office IUCN Oceania	Late 2022

Priority regional actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	POTENTIAL			Timing
	Lead	Partners	Funding	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the identification and nomination of cultural landscapes and seascapes and mixed WH sites in the Pacific Improve understanding and information provision about World Heritage processes, criteria and the realistic benefits to communities Publicize snapshots of good/best practices in heritage management in the Pacific (countries and territories) by communities, governments and regional organizations Provide clarity around actual and potential funding sources, as well as the potential for income generation arising from WH listing 				
Examine the potential for developing a Pacific World Heritage Destination Tourism strategy/tour package	SPTO	SPREP, IUCN Oceania, UNESCO Pacific Office, SPC	SPTO	from 2022
Encourage ongoing events and workshops on natural and cultural WH at the regional festivals.	UNESCO IUCN	SPC, SPREP, ICOMOS Australia, ICOMOS Pasifika, ICOMOS NZ, Blue Shield Pasifika		from 2022 ongoing
Capacity development				
Continue to develop the professional heritage certificate at the USP with an amended focus on a nature / culture blend and with options for short duration and/or online specialized modules and courses.	USP	SPREP, IUCN Oceania, SPC 'entity' responsible for a 'PHH' in future	USP	2023 and ongoing
Support the work of heritage professionals and heritage students in the region and build their capacities and range of competencies (egs; how legal and planning provisions work; writing grant submissions; working with landowners, customary practice and local governance; WH nomination processes; site recording and dossier compilation; internal government agencies collaboration; understanding the relevant conventions; community capacity-building and empowerment for managing projects and natural resources; creating management plans; conservation and management skills; income generation; communication; climate change; and many more)	UNESCO Pacific Office	IUCN Oceania IUCN commissions (WCPA, CEESP), IUCN WH Program, SPC, USP, SPREP, ICOMOS Australia, ICOMOS Pasifika, ICOMOS NZ, Blue Shield Pasifika WHITRAP, UNITWIN, (AWHAC), various universities (inc. USP), various NGO's		From 2022 ongoing
Offer access to capacity development in a variety of formats, including: regional exchanges; practitioner networks; case study sharing; lessons stories; practical and virtual workshops; webinars/podcasts; templates and guides.			IUCN/ICCROM Leadership Programme	From 2022 ongoing
Examine the potential for TVET level for community capacity development in WH.	Pacific Association of Technical and	UNESCO Pacific Office		2023

Priority regional actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	POTENTIAL			Timing
	Lead	Partners	Funding	
	Vocational Education and Training			
Work with regional and national law societies to determine to best ways to draw on skills to assist legislative analysis and drafting processes at national levels.	UNESCO Pacific Office IUCN Oceania	Regional and national law societies		2023
Ensure that all capacity development and training opportunities are comprehensively communicated, as relevant, to: government agencies; WH organizational partners; communities involved in WH; WH site managers and workers; allied NGO partners.	UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau and UNESCO Pacific Office	IUCN IUCN commissions (WCPA, CEESP), SPC, USP, SPREP, ICOMOS Australia, ICOMOS Pasifika, ICOMOS NZ, Blue Shield Pasifika WHITRAP, UNITWIN, (AWHAC), various universities (inc. USP), various NGO's 'entity' responsible for a 'PHH' in future		From 2022 ongoing
Funding				
Ensure that all States Parties (and potential States Parties) are provided with specific information about the range of funding support options available through, or closely connected with, UNESCO, including for example, International Assistance, UNESCO regular budget, Emergency Heritage funding, Participatory Programme funding, Small Grants programs)	UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau and UNESCO Pacific Office			From 2022 ongoing
Support countries in exploring the potential for negotiating funding allocations from the larger regional funding programs such as GEF and GCF.	UNESCO Pacific Office		GEF, GCF	From 2022 ongoing
Support States Parties (and potential States Parties) to consider where and how they may consider finding supportive budget for World Heritage within their overall national budget allocations, no matter how modest.	UNESCO Pacific Office			
Periodic Reporting				
Undertake a review of the benefits that countries gain from Periodic Reporting to the WHC and determine how this time and effort could be enhanced as a reflective monitoring and evaluation style exercise to enable the development of simple roadmaps for ongoing WH efforts and to feed these into 5 yearly Action Plans and periodic reporting cycles	UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau	UNESCO Pacific Office WH 'steering' group	TBA	Prior to the next round or Periodic reporting to the WHC

Priority regional actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	POTENTIAL			Timing
	Lead	Partners	Funding	
Ensure that an accurate, current contact list for each States Party is maintained and identifies: the senior government contact point/s for both nature and culture; listed UNESCO focal points; any key government staff with active roles in natural and cultural heritage; heritage protection officers; WH site managers; WH site community contact points.	UNESCO Pacific Office		N/A	Early 2022 and ongoing
Regional Heritage List				
Undertake a preliminary assessment of the value in creating a Regional Heritage List that can be used to acknowledge a full suite of sites and areas that have important natural and cultural heritage value yet may not be possible (for a variety of reasons) to include on the WH list or WH tentative lists (using the existing regional WH list, national WH tentative lists, national potential tentative lists and any additional findings from the Background Report to the Pacific Regional World Heritage Action Plan 2021-2025 and the Pacific Natural Heritage Report (due for completion in early 2022)). One example of this model is the ASEAN Heritage Parks initiative.	SPREP	IUCN Oceania and UNESCO Pacific Office		by 2025

3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND PROPOSED ACTIONS

3.1 COOK ISLANDS

Challenges in implementing World Heritage actions, 2016 – 2020

Remote and widely spaced outer islands across a vast ocean territory means that significant planning and resources are required to conduct consultation and research in these locations. Under Cook Island laws, landowners have rights to determine the final outcomes of any designation, use or activity proposed for their land including in any area that may be nominated under WH. The impact of Covid19 has curtailed all tourism, impacting funding and the conventional revenue stream available to historic sites, and has also meant people are more inwardly focused on day-to-day survival especially in accessing land and food, and not on higher order matters such as WH. The physical impacts of increasingly destructive cyclones have caused damage to natural and historic sites. Limited funding is available for heritage generally and no direct funding specifically for WH has been accessed from UNESCO. Low resources are seen as a major hurdle for moving ahead on WH.

The Cook Islands have a population of around 17,500 and limited human resources. Internal and external migration have led to knowledge and institutional memory gaps and fewer qualified people to do the range of jobs required, thus impacting capacity in the area of WH. At the government level, ministries responsible for natural and cultural matters do not have a formal mechanism for interaction on WH, or heritage matters generally. National election cycles can cause recurring changes or stoppages in programs delivery.

Awareness of WH for natural sites and WH understanding more generally are limited. This lack of knowledge and understanding has resulted in development impacting on or near important heritage sites, sites not being maintained and limited research activity. No national level training on WH has occurred although some regional opportunities have been available through UNESCO support and were undertaken. As very general observation, there has perhaps been more resourcing, including funding, for the natural environment planning and management sector.

While Cook Islanders are aware of historical and cultural sites and of the importance of cultural protection there may not be the same broad awareness for the natural environment.

Review of implementation of national priorities - PRWH Action Plan 2016 to 2020

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (by interview, Sept - Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Cultural Heritage Database Research Publication of oral histories relating to sites Signage at sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Database for Cultural and Historical Places that is updated regularly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maungaroa Mountains and Valleys site approved by cabinet in 2019 as a Mixed Site (C and N) for addition to the WHTL subject to meeting UNESCO requirements, final consultation and access for any visitor and tourism objectives. This site has not had complex land tenure issues to resolve due to its remote topography. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training on WH nomination process, and preferably to obtain this from exchanges with other PICs (ie; Palau, Vanuatu) If WH is to be progressed at all it will require greater awareness building across government and the population more generally Review and reprioritization of potential sites for Tentative Listing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops in the Pa Enua (site identified is a serial site located on 5 islands and linked to the Taputapuatea site in French Polynesia) Publish materials for school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Running workshops for cultural tour guides so that cultural information knowledge is enhanced and enriched 		

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (by interview, Sept - Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion on local media • Staff training and up-skilling • Regional exchange programs • Heritage managers training • Training for communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current enrolment of heritage staff in the Certificate in Heritage Management through University of the South Pacific 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taputapuatea Marae WHS was previously a reasonable consideration for a transnational serial nomination with French Polynesia but is now not a priority. • Limited consideration continues for other potential TL sites, such as the Marae Moana Marine Park (possible Mixed Site), and the outer islands of Suwarrow Island National Park (possible Natural Site) and Atiu (possible Mixed Site) • A Cultural and Historical Site Committee is in place • ICH is being successfully implemented with support from UNESCO funding and is considered to be a useful and positive platform for WH engagement, training and awareness (particularly with traditional leaders) • Completed the UNESCO 3rd periodic report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a desire to be able to promote the natural and cultural identity of the Cook Islands on the global stage and WH is seen as one way to achieve this • There is desire for a systematic mechanism to enable collaboration between the natural and cultural streams of government • Apply for UNESCO funding for nomination preparation as it is a useful capacity development mechanism

Looking forward

There is enthusiasm and national pride in the Cook Islands for making a mark globally. The Marae Moana Marine Park demonstrates this objective significantly. WH is viewed as one means to further strengthen the profile of the Cook Islands. Within the government ministries responsible for both natural and cultural heritage there is an understanding that greater collaboration would yield positive outcomes and improved communication within government and with communities.

There is also recognition by these bodies that it is timely to review their approach to WH. A ‘stop, review and refresh’ point could involve re-examining tentative listings and deciding how WH is best carried forward in a way that aligns well with Cook Islanders understanding of intertwined culture, place, land and seascape. There is also a strong desire for ongoing skills development with participatory regional exchanges and connection with other experts being some key avenues. There is also a realistic acknowledgement that economic recovery from the COVID 19 border closures will be a top priority over the coming few years, and that this will have an influence on available resources and funding for WH activities.

Countries are encouraged to continue to seek and advocate for specific funding needs.

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
<p>Bringing natural and cultural heritage together as one</p> <p>The Ministry of Cultural Development and the National Environment Service convene for the purposes of agreeing to establish a structured meeting forum - a 'heritage working group' – (with Cabinet support) that enables the two bodies that address the natural environment and cultural heritage to have regular and collaborative discussion, planning, implementation and reporting of actions associated with the WH Convention.</p>	Ministry of Cultural Development		Early 2022
Develop a simple charter for a 'heritage working group' and commence regular interchange, meetings and with potential for shared chairing and secretariat duties	Ministry of Cultural Development National Environment Service		Mid 2022
<p>Review and reprioritize potential sites for WH Tentative Listing</p> <p>Review natural, cultural and mixed sites that have previously been identified for their potential to be submitted for WH Tentative Listing and determine whether they remain preferred sites.</p> <p>Consider natural, cultural and mixed sites, that were not originally identified for their potential to be submitted for WH Tentative Listing but have since emerged as potential sites to be submitted.</p> <p>Give consideration to how natural and cultural values can be mutually considered, promoted and managed through potential WH recognition.</p>	'heritage working group'		Late 2022
Undertake an assessment of the relative priority of potential sites being considered for submission as Tentative Listings, and based on 'reality-check' factors such as: 'fit' with Cook Islander values of culture, people, communities and nature; OUV criteria; existing site documentation; baseline site information and research needs; funding and human resources availability; intra-government collaboration arrangements; level of landowner and community interest and support; political interest and support; awareness raising required; partnership opportunities; capacity to fulfill future management requirements including expectations on community and/or landowners; potential for sustainable funding streams.	Ministry of Cultural Development National Environment Service		2022-2023
Prepare submission/s for a revised and prioritized set of sites for submission to the WH tentative List.	'heritage working group'	UNESCO Pacific Office	2023-2024
<p>Capacity development</p> <p>Ensure that all training opportunities relating to WH and heritage management more generally, are known about and that suitable people are able to participate, particularly those who are establishing their careers or roles in heritage (egs; government staff, site managers, community members, tour guides).</p>	Ministry of Cultural Development National Environment Service		Ongoing from 2022
<p>Engagement and information sharing</p> <p>Establish a coordinated approach to developing and sharing information about WH.</p>	'heritage working group'		Mid 2022

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
Develop contextualized 'plain language' information about WH and the Cook Islands for sharing at community and government levels – i.e.; heritage values, benefits, opportunities, WH Convention and processes, management, support and relationships with allied Conventions such as the ICH Convention	Ministry of Cultural Development National Environment Service 'heritage working group'	Cook Islands Tourism	Late 2022
Refresh and reposition the notion of a WH program for the Cook Islands with senior government and political levels, including embedding key documents such as the PRWHAP 2021-2025 more visibly for decision makers.	'Heritage working group' UNESCO		Late 2022
Funding Ensure there is full awareness of all funding opportunities relating to WH and heritage management more generally, and known opportunities are accessed and mobilized wherever possible.	Ministry of Cultural Development National Environment Service		
Ministries responsible for funding submissions to significant sources such as GEF and GCF, to be made aware of the connections to heritage protection and management and to seek to identify portions for heritage funding from within these larger allocations	National Environment Service		Ongoing from 2022

3.2 FIJI

Challenges in implementing World Heritage actions, 2016 – 2020

Fiji was the first Pacific country to ratify the WH Convention in 1990 and has had over 30 years of experience with implementing the convention. There have been key lessons along the way, notably the need to promptly establish a national WH implementation framework along with guiding policy and associated legislation. In Fiji these fundamental support frameworks have been slow to occur. As has been the case with other Pacific countries that have ratified the WH Convention, there was incomplete understanding initially of the full scope of duties that come with this Convention.

Initially driven by the WH Committee's advice for preparing support legislation associated with the Levuka WH inscription, the development of a Heritage Bill⁸ began in 2013 in the form of a Decree. The Heritage Bill N.3 2021 is now before Parliament's Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights. Lengthy periods for legislative drafting and final endorsement are not uncommon in the region due to the extensive consultation and information provision required; political and bureaucratic changes; reluctance to set up new structures that will stretch available funds; priority toward more pressing issues; required expertise in the drafting of specific legislation, and availability of funds to pay for the legislative work and process.

Fiji has a wide range of Government ministries, statutory bodies and key stakeholder organizations each with specific mandates, responsibilities or interests in natural and cultural matters. These bodies work under an array of legislation with specific priorities including different approaches to the management and use of natural resources. There is an existing Fiji WH Committee, however, it has not convened since 2013. NGOs or communities may choose to work independently of

⁸ An Act to give effect to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and to provide for the recognition and management of places in Fiji having world heritage values based on the operational guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention and for related matters

government to initiate and progress work associated with potential WH interest. The Department of Heritage and Arts hosts the World Heritage Unit and operates an office in Levuka to assist with site management.

Work on existing tentative listed sites or consideration of new sites for tentative listing has been patchy. As an inscribed WH site, Levuka Historical Port Town has been the primary emphasis, while attention to tentative sites has waned. Further, communities need to have a clear understanding about any restrictions that may occur with WH as well as any benefits that may result.

A key challenge in progressing WH in Fiji is that resource allocation in terms of both funding and personnel is low compared to the scale of work required for both nomination and site management. WH implementation requires a multi-sectoral and coordinated approach with an appropriate budgetary allocation.

High turnover of staff at all levels, including people who have previously benefited from heritage training opportunities, leaves knowledge and institutional memory gaps. UNESCO has facilitated some good networking platforms over the years and many cross-regional relationships have been formed.

Increasing numbers of destructive cyclones have caused damage to natural and historic sites and greatly impacted local communities. The scale of these cyclones has prompted allocation of Heritage Emergency Fund (e.g., for repairs to Levuka buildings). Covid19 border closures temporarily halted tourism, affecting funding and the conventional revenue stream available to historic sites and subsequently their management and regular guardianship. Clearly, Covid19 also caused widespread internal disruptions and changes to many activities across Fiji.

Review of implementation of national priorities - PRWH Action Plan 2016 to 2020

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (by interview, Sept - Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Protection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promulgation, implementation and enforcement of the Fiji Heritage Bill • Management Plan implementation (Levuka World Heritage site) 2. Capacity Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training local community to engage in management • Professional heritage conservation training 3. Sustainable tourism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site facilities and services for education and awareness • Visitor management 	<p>3rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting for Fiji and Levuka Historical Port Town could not be accessed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress toward finalization of the Fiji Heritage Bill (which is focused on WH) • Initiatives through NGOs examining the potential of a number of significant natural and cultural land/seascapes for tentative WH listing • Various heritage focused workshops convened in Fiji • Levuka Historical Port Town WH site remains a national focus for management (including post natural disaster reparations) and local training and awareness programs • A professional heritage certificate with focus on cultural heritage offered through the Pacific Studies program at USP and taken up by a cohort from the Fiji Museum and Fiji Arts Council • Completed the UNESCO 3rd periodic report for Fiji and Levuka Historical Port Town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If WH is to be progressed more effectively it will require greater awareness building across government and embedding in national policy and legislative frameworks • Review and reprioritization of potential sites for Tentative Listing • Improve collaboration between the responsibilities for natural and cultural streams within government ministries and key organisations

Looking forward

The WH process itself has value in leading to improvements in financing and management and in working with communities to improve sites. It provides a structure and enabling mechanism for engaging with the community.

A passing of the Fiji Heritage Bill into law would provide an important platform laying out most of the critical procedures for advancing WH at a national level. Importantly, it would provide a mechanism to enable a more coordinated collective approach to WH by bringing together the key government bodies and stakeholders in a WH Heritage Council. WH planning and management of sites is multi-sectoral, thus coordination, including budget allocation, is essential. Passing this Bill as law is the most pivotal action to see achieved for Fiji's WH ambitions over the next few years.

While the focus has been on Levuka Historical Port Town for many years, some NGOs and INGOs and their partners have been working closely with communities and partners on ways to protect and manage other important areas and in some cases examining whether WH is a future option (i.e. WCS and the Vatu-i-ra Seascape; WWF and the Great Sea Reef and Bouma National Heritage Park;

Conservation International and the Lau Seascape; NTF and Sovi as a long standing initiative). With this array of sites being considered, it is timely for the current tentative list submitted in 1999 to be reviewed to determine if priorities have changed and a refreshed tentative list established. The process of reviewing tentative WH listings is an opportunity for bringing key stakeholders together.

One action area that is not highly reliant on the impetus of the Heritage Bill, is capacity development. As UNESCO has historically had a main role in convening training and forums for WH in the region, Fijian stakeholders with WH interests and responsibilities need to advocate to UNESCO their desire for a greater range of opportunities. Virtual platforms are being used more commonly and provide an efficient option for conducting workshops, training, discussions, webinars and the like and can allow important heritage partners (e.g. ICOMOS, CRIHAP, WHITRAP, SPC, USP) to be more accessible due to the reduced costs and logistical challenges of physical interfacing.

There is an important role for WH in Fiji in raising awareness and understanding of WH. This needs to be reflected in Fiji development planning processes, including the National Development Plan, the Green Growth Framework and in the NBSAP along with other relevant policies and frameworks.

Countries are encouraged to continue to seek and advocate for specific funding needs.

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025, # many actions are reliant on the passing of the Fiji Heritage Bill into law	Lead	Funding	Timing
<p>Legislation</p> <p>Finalize the Fiji Heritage Bill to enable: establishment of a WH Heritage Council with broad national membership to lead and oversee consideration of potential WH sites for Fiji; a WH register for Fiji; the process for nominations for sites to the WH Committee; operational funding; management of sites, and; monitoring and reporting progress.</p>	<p>Fiji Office of the Attorney General Office</p>		<p>2022</p>
<p>Make representations for the Fiji Heritage Bill to include provisions that establish collaboration mechanisms between ministries and national councils that have interests and roles associated with WH (e.g. between the proposed Heritage Council and the National Environment Council).</p>	<p>Department of Heritage and Arts (Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts)</p> <p>Department of Environment</p> <p>National Trust Fiji</p>		<p>2022</p>
<p>Review and reprioritize potential sites for WH Tentative Listing</p> <p>Review natural and cultural sites on the WH Tentative Listing and determine whether they remain preferred sites.</p> <p>Consider natural, cultural and mixed sites, that were not originally identified for their potential to be submitted for WH Tentative Listing but have since emerged as potential sites to be submitted (e.g.; Lau Seascape, Great Sea Reef, Vatu-i-ra Seascape, Taveuni/Bouma National Heritage Park)</p> <p>Give consideration to how natural and cultural values can be mutually considered, promoted and managed through potential WH recognition.</p> <p>Undertake an assessment of the relative priority of potential sites being considered for submission as Tentative Listings, and based on 'reality-check' factors such as: 'fit' with Fijian values of culture, governance, communities and nature; WH OUV criteria; existing</p>	<p>Heritage Council (once in place)</p>	<p>UNESCO</p>	<p>From late 2022</p>

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025, # many actions are reliant on the passing of the Fiji Heritage Bill into law	Lead	Funding	Timing
<p>site documentation; baseline site information and research needs; funding and human resources availability; intra-government collaboration arrangements; level of landowner and community interest and support; political interest and support; awareness raising required; capacity to fulfill future management requirements including expectations on community and/or landowners; potential for sustainable funding streams.</p> <p>Oversee the preparation and submission of a revised and prioritized set of sites for submission to either the WH Tentative List or the WH List.</p>			
<p>Based on decisions by the Heritage Council, prepare submissions for sites to either the WH Tentative List or the WH List.</p>	<p>Department of Heritage and Arts (Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts)</p> <p>Department of Environment</p> <p>National Trust Fiji</p>	<p>UNESCO Pacific Office</p>	<p>From 2024</p>
<p>Capacity development</p> <p>Maintain a regular program of training for the Levuka management authorities, local communities and site workers to facilitate understanding of WH values, the cultural values of Levuka, the regulations around management, site management, implementation of WH and legal obligations.</p>	<p>Department of Heritage and Arts (Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts)</p>	<p>Various regional and international partners in WH</p>	<p>Ongoing from 2022</p>
<p>Ensure that all training and educational opportunities relating to WH are known about and that suitable people are supported to participate, particularly those who are establishing their careers or roles in heritage or have critical roles such as government staff, site managers, site workers, NGOs and CBOs and community leaders.</p>	<p>Department of Heritage and Arts (Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts)</p> <p>Department of Environment</p> <p>National Trust Fiji</p>	<p>Various regional and international partners in WH</p>	<p>Ongoing from 2022</p>
<p>Engagement and information sharing</p> <p>Establish a coordinated approach to developing and sharing information about WH.</p> <p>Refresh and reposition the notion of a WH program for Fiji with senior government and political levels, including embedding key documents such as the PRWHAP 2021-2025 more visibly for decision makers.</p>	<p>Heritage Council (once in place)</p>		<p>Mid 2022</p>
<p>Prepare and conduct an information program with key stakeholders, government agencies and decision-makers about the provisions and implications of the Fiji Heritage Bill/Act.</p> <p>On the basis of this program, build in a broader set of information to strengthen understanding of WH more generally including its relationship with Fijian values and aspirations and potential opportunities and benefits.</p>	<p>Department of Heritage and Arts (Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts)</p>		<p>2023</p>

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025, # many actions are reliant on the passing of the Fiji Heritage Bill into law	Lead	Funding	Timing
Review any communication materials currently available or used for informing on WH, assess their scope, purpose, and effectiveness with various target audiences, and determine any new products that should be developed.	Department of Heritage and Arts (Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts)		2022
Develop contextualized 'plain language' information about WH and Fiji for sharing at community and government levels – ie; heritage values, benefits, opportunities, WH Convention and processes, management, support and relationships with allied Conventions such as the ICH Convention	Heritage Council (once in place)		Late 2022
Funding Ministries responsible for funding submissions to significant sources such as GEF and GCF, to be made aware of the connections to heritage protection and management and to seek to identify portions for heritage funding from within these larger allocations.	Heritage Council (once in place)		Ongoing from 2022
Make representations for the Fiji Heritage Bill to ensure the inclusion of provisions for sufficient funding budget and identification of how and where external funds are to be sought.	Department of Heritage and Arts (Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts)		2022
Ensure there is full awareness of all funding opportunities relating to WH and heritage management more generally, and known opportunities are accessed and mobilized wherever possible.	Department of Environment National Trust Fiji		Ongoing from 2022
Levuka Historical Port Town WH site Undertake preliminary steps in revision of the current Management Plan in advance of specific requirements for a revised management plan that would come with the passing of the Fiji Heritage Bill into law.	Department of Heritage and Arts (Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts)		2022
Lau Seascape Commence specific preliminary steps for consideration of the Lau Seascape for inclusion on the Fiji WH Tentative List, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> obtaining advice and guidance about: tentative listing and justifications; comparative experiences, and; expectations and requirements associated with WH. conveying clear information to Lau stakeholders and partners on the advice and guidance obtained above understanding the implications of the Fiji Heritage Bill due to its central functions (if passed into law) in progressing the Lau Seascape as a tentative WH listing or eventual WH listing 	Conservation International	Blue Nature Alliance Ocean 5 Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership GEF	From 2022 and ongoing

3.3 FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

Challenges in implementing World Heritage actions, 2016 – 2020

The FSM ratified the WH Convention in 2002 and since then it has had the Yapese Disk Money Regional Sites (cultural) added to the WH Tentative List in 2004 and the Nan Madol: Ceremonial Centre of Eastern Micronesia (cultural) inscribed on the WH List in Danger in 2016. Nan Madol, in the state of Pohnpei, is an extremely significant inscription site and the main rationale for its direct

inclusion on the WH List in Danger was that conservation work was required urgently and that funding for this work could occur more quickly with an ‘in danger’ designation. While funding from the US Ambassador was provided for ‘LiDaR’ surveying of the site (a remote sensing method using light detection and ranging), funding for site conservation work has not progressed and there is work that needs urgent attention.

The governance, ownership and management of resources is multi layered within FSM at a national level and across its four states of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae. Heritage responsibility interlinks between various national government ministries and offices (Office of National Archives, Culture & Historic Preservation [current WH focal point], Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management and the Department of Resources & Development being the main ones). Each State has their own somewhat parallel mix of government departments, agencies, authorities, and offices. While the national government has responsibilities for nomination and reporting for the WH convention, state government is responsible for issues and management concerning specific sites. There is no (structured) mechanism to facilitate linkages and collaboration across the national level and between national and state levels. There are also several conservation societies, NGOs and CBOs that play key roles in management of sites. Local communities and landowners are critical stakeholders in any WH considerations. FSM has had experience with cultural WH at this point, but is yet to substantially progress any aspects of natural WH.

FSM has recently completed its first UNESCO Periodic Reporting process, and this required a sharp capacity building curve for the WH focal point. Given the learning and effort that is put into this task, it is important that periodic reporting results in a useful roadmap for charting where WH priorities lie for the next 5 years. WH is a relatively new endeavour for FSM and not yet well-established with information and awareness required at a broad level. The UNESCO regional office is seen as an important point of guidance and assistance for awareness actions as well as in helping to improve understanding of WH processes, site management and what it means to achieve ‘world heritage’, through specific advice and training.

Review of implementation of national priorities - PRWH Action Plan 2016 to 2020

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (notes provided Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
1. Coordinate the completion and submission of the Yap Stone Money nomination. 2. Continue educational awareness programme in Pohnpei and Yap about the benefits of preserving cultural and natural heritage. 3. Assist in drafting and submitting to the FSM Congress a resolution for adoption and ratification of the Underwater Heritage Convention.	3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting for FSM could not be accessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited dialogue between FSM/Yap State and Palau on the Yapese Disk Money Regional Sites • ‘LiDaR’ surveying of Nan Modal with funding support from US Ambassador • Completed the UNESCO 3rd periodic report for both Palau and the RISL WHS • Some progress on nomination dossiers for a site to be tentatively listed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen collaboration between the responsibilities for natural and cultural streams within national and state government ministries and key organisations • Develop awareness and promotional campaigns for WH • Reaching out to UNESCO and the WH Centre for greater assistance in facilitating capacity development and funding

Looking forward

FSM has had some important initial experience with WH and these need to be built on and strengthened, not only at the individual level, but across the full range of national and state governments, NGOs, and communities. The strengthening would require primary external support from UNESCO and WHCT on an awareness program combined with close capacity development support for key individuals responsible for WH. Capacity development could progressively extend to a wider range of people over time.

Three sites are currently being considered for the Tentative List of World Heritage - one actively (a nomination dossier for the Yap-Palau Mangyol Stone Money Bank [cultural]) and the other two possibly (Mahkontowe Conservation Area [Kosrae] and Chuuk Lagoon, both as natural sites). With the existing FSM tentative WH list now two decades old, it is timely for a review of tentative listing priorities to be conducted to determine where available capacity and resources should be most optimally deployed. This could be founded on the practical lessons and experiences gained from Nan Madol as a WH Site in Danger and from current work associated with tentative listings.

A mechanism for bringing together those with interests or responsibilities for heritage is needed. A springboard opportunity for this to occur could be the convening of a cross-agency forum bringing key stakeholders together to consider tentative listings and how natural and cultural values may be intertwined rather than one or the other. Critically, such a forum would consider how funding allocations may be found and mobilised to support WH work.

Countries are encouraged to continue to seek and advocate for specific funding needs

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
Capacity development Undertake a targeted program of training for key government staff on the core elements of WH (WH processes, site management, assistance available, reporting).	UNESCO Office of National Archives, Culture & Historic Preservation		Ongoing from 2022
Ensure that all training and educational opportunities relating to WH are known about and that suitable people are supported to participate, particularly those who are establishing their careers or roles in heritage (egs; government staff, site managers, NGO's and CBO's, community leaders).	Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management Department of Resources & Development Office of National Archives, Culture & Historic Preservation		Ongoing from 2022
Cross-government collaboration Use the opportunity provided through a review of tentative WH listing to convene a collaboration forum between the responsibilities for natural and cultural heritage streams within government departments.	Office of National Archives, Culture & Historic Preservation		Late 2022
Establish a structured meeting forum - a 'heritage working group' (with Congress support) that enables representatives for natural environment and cultural heritage to have regular and collaborative discussion, planning, implementation and reporting of actions associated with the WH Convention.	Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management		2023

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
	Department of Resources & Development Office of National Archives, Culture & Historic Preservation		
<p>Review and reprioritize existing and potential sites for WH Tentative Listing</p> <p>Progress the cultural / transnational serial site of Mangyol on the WH Tentative Listing and determine whether it remains a transboundary proposal or is submitted only by Yap/FSM without Palau.</p> <p>Consider the potential for any other natural, cultural, mixed, serial or transnational sites, that were not originally identified for their potential to be submitted for WH Tentative Listing but have since emerged as potential sites to be submitted.</p> <p>Give consideration to how natural and cultural values can be mutually considered, promoted and managed through potential WH recognition.</p> <p>Undertake an assessment of the relative priority of potential sites being considered for submission as Tentative Listings, and based on 'reality-check' factors such as: 'fit' with Micronesian values of culture, governance, communities and nature; WH OUV criteria; existing site documentation; baseline site information and research needs; funding and human resources availability; intra-government collaboration arrangements; level of landowner and community interest and support; political interest and support; awareness raising required; capacity to fulfill future management requirements including expectations on community and/or landowners; potential for sustainable funding streams.</p>	<p>a 'heritage working group'</p>		<p>2023 and ongoing</p>
<p>Preparation and submission of a revised and prioritized set of sites for submission to either the WH Tentative List or the WH List.</p>	<p>Office of National Archives, Culture & Historic Preservation</p>	<p>UNESCO Pacific Office</p>	<p>2025</p>
<p>Awareness and information sharing</p> <p>Embed key documents, such as the PRWHAP 2021-2025, more visibly for decision makers, including those in each State of the FSM.</p>	<p>Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management</p> <p>Department of Resources & Development</p> <p>Office of National Archives, Culture & Historic Preservation</p>		<p>Mid 2022</p>
<p>Establish a coordinated approach to developing and sharing information about WH.</p>	<p>a 'heritage working group'</p>		<p>2023 and ongoing</p>
<p>Develop contextualized 'plain language' information about WH and FSM for sharing at community and government levels – ie; relationship with Micronesian heritage values, benefits, opportunities, WH Convention and processes, management,</p>	<p>Department of Environment, Climate Change</p>		<p>2023 and ongoing</p>

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
support and relationships with allied Conventions such as the ICH Convention and the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage	and Emergency Management Department of Resources & Development Office of National Archives, Culture & Historic Preservation		
Funding Ministries responsible for funding submissions to significant sources such as GEF and GCF, to remain aware of the connections to heritage protection and management and to seek to identify portions for heritage funding from within these larger allocations, and with particular focus on the Nan Madol site due to cumulative impacts associated with climate change.	Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management Department of Resources & Development	GEF GCF UNESCO emergency funding	From 2023 and ongoing
Ensure there is full awareness of all funding opportunities relating to WH and heritage management more generally, and known opportunities are accessed and mobilized wherever possible.			

3.4 KIRIBATI

Challenges in implementing World Heritage actions, 2016 – 2020

Kiribati is an archipelagic nation comprising 33 islands with a total land area of only 810 sq. km. but with a surrounding EEZ of about 3.5 million sq. km. and comprised of three major island groups - the Line Islands, Gilbert Islands and Phoenix Islands. The national population is around 120,000 with some 40,000 living in the capital of Tarawa. Kiribati ratified the WH Convention in 2000 and had the Phoenix Islands Protected Area PIPA inscribed as a WH site in 2010 (natural site) and which has an area of 408,250 sq km (11.34% of Kiribati's EEZ)

Remote and widely spaced outer islands across a vast ocean territory means that significant planning and resources are required to conduct consultation and research in these locations. Landowners and resource users have rights for their lands and adjoining water. In general, financial, and technical capacity is lacking to understand, absorb and implement strategy. While the PIPA itself has benefited from a range of specific external funding inputs, the World Heritage Fund is also looked to as a key source to provide both technical and financial assistance for wider national needs.

Note. As this Review Report was being finalised, information emerged that the Government of Kiribati was considering lifting the fishing closure and apply a Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) arrangement to sustainably use marine resources in the PIPA. It is understood that various agencies (including the World Heritage Committee, UNESCO and IUCN in its role as an Advisory Body to the World Heritage Committee), funding bodies and management support stakeholders, will be officially engaging with the Government of Kiribati to clarify these intentions and to offer support in planning for outcomes that assist in ensuring that the outstanding universal values will not be impacted by potential future use changes in the MPA. This is a significant decision for Kiribati and the notion of World Heritage listing. It also has potential ramifications across the Pacific in terms of how other countries may consider how they wish to continue using, protecting and managing their natural resources while seeking to meet their financial interests and needs.

Review of implementation of national priorities - PRWH Action Plan 2016 to 2020

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (Sept - Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
1. Te Nnabakana (stone warrior) Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be launched to the Island Council and the community of Tabiteuea Meang Technical Assistant needed to conduct scientific research purpose (Carbon dating of Te Nnabakana) National consultation & Awareness training on procedures & processes to include Te Nnabakana (stone warrior) in the World Heritage site 		No interviews conducted or notes obtained	
2. Cultural Mapping Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proper & quality equipment for Cultural mapping Transcribe, Editing & Publishing Cultural mapping report Completion of Cultural Mapping to Tarawa (Teinainano Urban Council) & Phoenix islands Launching of the report to be used as a National Cultural Mapping report for Kiribati Culture Technical Assistance to assist in Database & Cultural Heritage Inventory 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed the UNESCO 3rd periodic report for both Kiribati and the PIPA The PIPA underwent a conservation assessment by the IUCN World Heritage Program with outcomes reported in IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2020. The PIPA maintained its 2017 conservation outlook level of 'good with some concerns'. 	TBA
3. Capacity Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training on appropriate knowledge and skills for Culture & Museum staff (propose staff exchange on Cultural mapping in Fiji) Training awareness to the community on safeguarding and protection of Cultural Heritage sites and Intangible Cultural Heritages in Kiribati Training awareness on Cultural World Heritage Conventions and procedures and processes for World Heritage nomination and listing TA on Professional Cultural heritage conservation training Community outreach training- climate change & Human nature to destroy cultural heritage sites Risk preparedness training- climate change and human action towards their heritage and culture Inter-agency, inter-organization, inter-community and inter-country dialogue 	<p>General awareness of world heritage is good for communities in and around heritage sites</p> <p>Awareness raising and outreach for communities was identified as not applicable as part of identifying priority training target audiences</p> <p>Risk preparedness rated as a high priority for culture and Nature as part of prioritizing capacity building needs.</p> <p>There are heritage education programs to improve understanding of cultural and natural heritage, promote diversity, and foster intercultural dialogue but there are deficiencies in implementation</p>		

Looking forward

Kiribati committed to a wide range of actions in the PRWHAP 2016-2020. It will require further input from the WH focal point in Kiribati to determine what progress has been made on these actions and what actions are being considered for the period from 2021 to 2025. Any issues relating to legislative needs or activities and progress on cultural mapping and the Nnabakana (stone warrior) project, is not yet known.

What, if any, connections are in place between the Ministry of Internal Affairs and its culture functions, the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development and its Environment and Conservation Division and the management of the PIPA are not yet clarified for this report. Apart from aligning the natural and cultural streams, an important aspect of having these bodies

working collaboratively is that it provides scope for joint discussion and planning around capacity and funding needs and consideration of how Kiribati may wish to see WH proceed in future, whether for the PIPA or other sites.

As a vast expanse of largely pristine mid-ocean environment, replete with a suite of largely intact uninhabited atolls, truly an oceanic wilderness, the PIPA is a superlative natural phenomenon of global importance. Although listed as a natural site, the concept of the protection of the PIPA has been enmeshed with Micronesian cultural values found across the Kiribati archipelago. PIPA has been well funded from a variety of sources enabling a wide range of experience to be gained in WH planning, partnerships, and management. Funding has contributed to monitoring and enforcement, research, oversight of tourism ventures, communication and promotion, regional and international partnering and networks and effective relationships with other sectors at a national level. Site managers for PIPA have been linked to a ‘managers of very large marine protected areas’ network and useful relationships have been formed with similar ‘sister’ sites proposed with other Pacific countries and overseas territories.

This collective activity for the PIPA has formed an extensive body of experience and management and resources knowledge which should be used to inform all future decisions regarding the status and management of the PIPA under any new regimes determined by the Government of Kiribati. A further critical aspect of any new management regime for the PIPA is how national ministries will continue to work effectively together in planning and implementing sustainable management arrangements. Key partners to remain closely involved in future planning for the PIPA include the Phoenix Islands Protected Area Management Committee, Conservation International, the New England Aquarium and the Board of the PIPA Trust Fund.

Countries are encouraged to continue to seek and advocate for specific funding needs

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
Action Focus Embed key documents, such as the PRWHAP 2021-2025, more visibly for decision makers.	Ministry of Internal Affairs Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development		Mid 2022
Awareness and promotion Prepare a ‘plain language’ information package for government about WH and Kiribati— ie; heritage values, global recognition and expectation, benefits, opportunities, WH Convention and processes, management and support	Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development		2022
Review of the PIPA Establish a collaborative planning framework and processes to support any review of, or changes to, the current management system for the PIPA and to ensure that planning aims to sustain the outstanding universal values that the PIPA has been recognized for through its listing as a WH site.	Phoenix Islands Protected Area Management Committee		From 2022 and ongoing
Bringing natural and cultural heritage together as one Review the connections and relationships between the main government bodies responsible for heritage and consider ways that links could be strengthened and particularly in terms of collaborating on any new planning and management arrangements for the PIPA.	Ministry of Internal Affairs Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development		2022 and ongoing

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
<p>Review and reprioritize potential sites for WH Tentative Listing</p> <p>Review any sites that have previously been identified for their potential to be submitted for WH Tentative Listing and determine whether they remain preferred sites.</p> <p>Consider any natural, cultural and mixed sites, that were not originally identified for their potential to be submitted for WH Tentative Listing but have since emerged as potential sites to be submitted.</p> <p>Give consideration to how natural and cultural values can be mutually considered, promoted and managed through potential WH recognition.</p>	<p>Ministry of Internal Affairs</p> <p>Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development</p>		from 2024
<p>Undertake an assessment of the relative priority of potential sites being considered for submission as Tentative Listings, and based on 'reality-check' factors such as: 'fit' with Micronesian (Kiribati) values of culture, people, communities and nature; OUV criteria; existing site documentation; baseline site information and research needs; funding and human resources availability; intra-government collaboration arrangements; level of landowner and community interest and support; political interest and support; awareness raising required; capacity to fulfill future management requirements including expectations on community and/or landowners; potential for sustainable funding streams.</p>			from 2024
<p>Capacity development</p> <p>Ensure that all training opportunities relating to WH and heritage management more generally, are known about and that suitable people are able to participate, particularly those who are establishing their careers or roles in heritage (e.g. government staff, site managers, community members, tour guides).</p>	<p>Ministry of Internal Affairs</p> <p>Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development</p>		Ongoing from 2022
<p>Cultural mapping</p> <p>Maintain the cultural mapping program.</p>	Ministry of Internal Affairs		Ongoing from 2022
<p>Funding</p> <p>Ministries responsible for funding submissions to significant sources such as GEF and GCF, to be made aware of the connections to heritage protection and management and to seek to identify portions for heritage funding from within these larger allocations</p>	Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development	GEF GCF	Ongoing from 2022
<p>Ensure there is full awareness of all funding opportunities relating to WH and heritage management more generally, and known opportunities are accessed and mobilized wherever possible.</p>	<p>Ministry of Internal Affairs</p> <p>Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development</p>		Ongoing from 2022
<p>Review all funding arrangements in place for the PIPA and determine if and how they may continue to be accessed and mobilized.</p>	Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development		2022
<p>Legislation</p> <p>Review the needs for policy and legislation and identify the resources required to address those needs and particularly in terms of any new planning and management arrangements for the PIPA under any new management arrangements for the PIPA.</p>	<p>Ministry of Internal Affairs</p> <p>Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development</p>		Ongoing from 2022

3.5 REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

Challenges in implementing World Heritage actions, 2016 – 2020

The RMI ratified the WH Convention in 2002 and since then it had three sites added to the WH Tentative List in 2005 - Likiep Village Historic District (cultural), Mili Atoll Nature Conservancy and Nadrikdrik (natural) and the Northern Marshall Islands Atolls mixed natural and cultural). The Bikini Atoll Nuclear Site was inscribed on the WH List in 2010. Remote and widely spaced outer islands across a vast ocean territory means that significant planning and resources are required to conduct consultation, research, and management in these locations.

A Historic Preservation Plan (5-year Plan that is a requirement of the US National Park Service) was commenced in 2015 by the Historic Preservation Office, with a final draft completed in recent years.

As is the case for most Pacific countries, the administration, governance, ownership, and management of heritage is multi layered and widespread. For example, in the RMI these duties and interests will span: the Ministry of Culture & Internal Affairs (the Historic Preservation Office); the Ministry of Natural Resources & Commerce (Environmental Protection Authority, Office of Environment, Policy, Planning & Coordination, Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority, Climate Change Directorate); the Coastal Management Advisory Committee; the Marshall Islands Conservation Society; the Customary Law and Language Commission; Alele Museum; the Local Government Division of Internal Affairs; the Ministry of Education; local atoll authorities; Women United Together Marshall Islands (WUTMI), and the various atoll communities and key stakeholders and representatives for Bikini Atoll site management interests. There is no (structured) mechanism to facilitate linkages and collaboration across these sectors.

Review of implementation of national priorities - PRWH Action Plan 2016 to 2020

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (via interviews or notes Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Continue building awareness of the RMI residents and raise the level of understanding on the importance of preserving their heritage and coordinate with government agencies, NGO's and private sector involved in heritage-based projects. Improve the political will of leaders on the importance of streamlining issues and agencies to prevent duplication. Implement World Heritage Action Plan into the Historic Preservation Plan (5 year Plan) that is being drafted by the Historic Preservation Office. 	<p>3rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting for RMI and Bikini Atoll Nuclear WH site could not be accessed</p>	<p>No interviews conducted or notes obtained</p>	<p>TBA</p>

Looking forward

It would be useful to develop a mechanism for bringing together the numerous bodies and individuals with interests or responsibilities associated with WH. This action would not need to be formal initially, rather it could be done on the sidelines of another key annual event where these groups may typically be coming together. The motivation is that it would be a starting point for dialogue and provide a basis for information sharing, clarifying roles and activities, awareness across sectors, some discussions around funding, broad 'looking ahead' opinions on WH, and capacity

development needs. The lead responsibility for WH may primarily sit within the Ministry of Natural Resources & Commerce and the Ministry of Culture & Internal Affairs.

Countries are encouraged to continue to seek and advocate for specific funding needs

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
Cross-sector collaboration			
Convene a cross-sector forum to bring together representatives for natural environment and cultural heritage to discuss and identify possible actions associated with WH, including: clarifying sectoral roles and activities; awareness and capacity development needs, funding issues and opportunities; tentative sites; Bikini Atoll management, and; general WH priorities	Ministry of Culture & Internal Affairs (Historic Preservation Office)		Late 2022
From this forum, determine the need for, and benefits of, a more structured forum - a 'heritage working group' that enables representatives for natural environment and cultural heritage to have regular and collaborative discussion, planning, implementation and reporting of actions associated with the WH Convention.	Ministry of Culture & Internal Affairs (Historic Preservation Office) Ministry of Natural Resources & Commerce		2023
Capacity development			
Undertake a targeted program of training for key government staff on the core elements of WH (WH processes, site management, assistance available, reporting).	UNESCO Pacific Office		Ongoing from 2022
Ensure that all training and educational opportunities relating to WH are known about and that suitable people are supported to participate, particularly those who are establishing their careers or roles in heritage (egs; government staff, NGO's and CBO's), community leaders.	Ministry of Culture & Internal Affairs (Historic Preservation Office) Ministry of Natural Resources & Commerce	UNESCO Pacific Office	Ongoing from 2022
Review and reprioritize existing and potential sites for WH Tentative Listing			
Review the cultural, natural and mixed sites on the WH Tentative Listing and determine whether they remains preferred sites and if so, determine what needs to be done to progress it toward WH. Consider the potential for any other natural, cultural or mixed sites that were not originally identified for their potential to be submitted for WH Tentative Listing but have since emerged as potential sites to be submitted. Give consideration to how natural and cultural values can be mutually considered, promoted and managed through potential WH recognition. Undertake an assessment of the relative priority of potential sites being considered for submission as Tentative Listings, and based on 'reality-check' factors such as: 'fit' with Marshallese values of culture, governance, communities and nature; WH OUV criteria; existing site documentation; baseline site information and research needs; funding and human resources availability; intra-government collaboration arrangements; level of landowner and community interest and support; political interest and support; awareness raising required; capacity to fulfill future management requirements including expectations on community and/or landowners; potential for sustainable funding streams.	Ministry of Culture & Internal Affairs (Historic Preservation Office) Ministry of Natural Resources & Commerce Potentially at an informal level via a 'heritage working group' should one be established	UNESCO	2023 and ongoing

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
Preparation and submission of a revised and prioritized set of sites for submission to either the WH Tentative List or the WH List.		UNESCO	2025
Awareness and information sharing Embed key documents, such as the PRWHAP 2021-2025, more visibly for decision makers and all sectors.	Ministry of Culture & Internal Affairs (Historic Preservation Office)		Mid 2022
Establish a coordinated approach to developing and sharing information about WH.	Potentially via a 'heritage working group' should one be established		2023 and ongoing
Develop contextualized 'plain language' information about WH and RMI for sharing at community and government levels – ie; relationship with Marshallese heritage values, benefits, opportunities, WH Convention and processes, management, support and relationships with allied Conventions such as the ICH Convention and the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage	Ministry of Culture & Internal Affairs (Historic Preservation Office) Ministry of Natural Resources & Commerce		2023 and ongoing
Funding Ministries responsible for funding submissions to significant sources such as GEF and GCF, to remain aware of the connections to heritage protection and management and to seek to identify portions for heritage funding from within these larger allocations.	Ministry of Natural Resources & Commerce (Environmental Protection Authority, Office of Environment, Policy, Planning & Coordination, Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority, Climate Change Directorate)	GEF GCF	From 2023 and ongoing
Ensure there is full awareness of all funding opportunities relating to WH and heritage management more generally, and known opportunities are accessed and mobilized wherever possible.	Ministry of Culture & Internal Affairs (Historic Preservation Office) Ministry of Natural Resources & Commerce		From 2022 and ongoing

3.6 NAURU

Challenges in implementing World Heritage actions, 2016 – 2020

Nauru is the world's smallest island country and one of three great phosphate rock islands in the Pacific. It has limited natural freshwater resources and intensive long term phosphate mining has left the centre of Nauru quite bare. With a population around 11,000 the challenges for Nauru in implementing duties under a range of international conventions are enormous given its small economy, funding and human resources base. Nauru has not yet ratified the WH Convention, although it has the intention to do so as identified in the PRWH Action Plan 2016 to 2020. This Action Plan also indicated the national interest in sustaining Nauruan heritage.

Responsibilities or interests for WH, even at convention ratification level, appear to be spread across the Department of Commerce, Industry & Environment (Agriculture, Renewable Energy and Climate Change), the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Directorate of Culture and Language.

Review of implementation of national priorities - PRWH Action Plan 2016 to 2020

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (by interview or notes Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
1. National debate to be initiated to generate discussion on the future of Nauru. 2. A nation-wide awareness campaign for addressing issues of protection and conservation of Nauruan Heritage. 3. Nauru to ratify the World Heritage Convention	N/A	No interviews conducted or notes obtained	TBA

Looking forward

For the PRWHAP 2016-2020, Nauru committed to a targeted set of three realistic actions. It will require further input from the WH focal point in Nauru to determine what progress has been made on these actions and what actions are being considered for the period from 2021 to 2025.

Countries are encouraged to continue to seek and advocate for specific funding needs

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
Engagement and information sharing Embed key documents, such as the PRWHAP 2021-2025, more visibly for decision makers.	Department of Commerce, Industry & Environment Ministry of Home Affairs		Mid 2022
WH Convention ratification Develop a discussion paper that provides clear explanation of the benefits, expectations and possibilities that may come from ratification of the WH Convention and progress this through senior government channels for consideration. If approved at ministerial level, submit a final paper with recommendations for ratification, to the Cabinet of Nauru.			2023

3.7 NIUE

Challenges in implementing World Heritage actions, 2016 – 2020

With one of the smallest populations in the world (around 1600) the challenges for Niue in implementing duties under a range of international conventions, including the WH convention, are enormous given its small economy, funding and human resources base. Having ratified the WH Convention in 2001, there has been little progress, at least at the level of undertaking and completing nominations work. Niue consists of only one terrestrial area of 269 km² (one of the world's largest coral islands) with no other islands across its EEZ. The Huvalu Forest Conservation Area is the most important terrestrial natural area in Niue.

Niue is a self-governing state in free association with New Zealand, and New Zealand conducts most diplomatic relations on its behalf. A main source of government income is foreign aid from NZ. Niueans are citizens of New Zealand which has created a flow of migration from Niue to NZ and a steadily lowering population base.

Responsibilities for natural and cultural heritage lie across different government Ministries and departments - Ministry of Natural Resources, Department of Environment and with Taoga Niue (Department of Niue Cultural Heritage) being responsible for the preservation of culture, tradition and heritage. Recognising its importance, the Government has added Taoga Niue as the sixth pillar of the Niue Integrated Strategic Plan (NISP). Niue has become a leader in green growth in policy and in practice. Destructive cyclones have hit Niue in the past causing immense damage and holding back work on many national initiatives considerably.

Review of implementation of national priorities - PRWH Action Plan 2016 to 2020

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (by interview or notes Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update Inventory of Niue heritage assets (natural, cultural and historical significance). 2. Engage World Heritage specialist to review Niue obligations and status in connection to the World Heritage Convention ratified in 2001. 3. Promotion and awareness of world and Niue heritage matters through school programs/excursions and community workshops. 	3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting for Niue could not be accessed	No interviews conducted or notes obtained	TBA

Looking forward

For the PRWHAP 2016-2020, Niue committed to a targeted set of three realistic actions. It will require further input from the WH focal point in Niue to determine what progress has been made on these actions and what actions are being considered for the period from 2021 to 2025.

Countries are encouraged to continue to seek and advocate for specific funding needs

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
Engagement and information sharing Embed key documents, such as the PRWHAP 2021-2025, more visibly for decision makers.	Taoga Niue		Mid 2022

3.8 PALAU

Challenges in implementing World Heritage actions, 2016 – 2020

The governance and ownership of resources is multi layered within Palau. Heritage responsibility interlinks between various national government ministries (Bureau of Cultural and Historic Preservation, National Environmental Protection Council), state governments, traditional chiefs, and local communities, each with specific powers, mandates or interests in natural and cultural heritage matters. For example, the Rock Islands Southern Lagoon WHS belongs to Koror State, yet the management authority is partially reliant on national agencies for technical, financial, and other support. National government has responsibilities for and interests in the site, including for nomination and inscription aspects, representing Palau at the World Heritage Committee (sometimes with Koror State), doing periodic reporting, and accessing funding, yet is not directly responsible for site management. While the various agencies have respect for the ‘space and reach’ of each other’s areas of authority and responsibility, there is no structured mechanism to facilitate linkages and collaboration across the national level and between national and state levels. There is a need for a connecting instrument to keep many active partners in communication about the many heritage-related activities underway.

The Rock Islands Southern Lagoon WHS is one of the more successful WH sites in the region. However, it remains subject to an array of challenges and pressures requiring continual planning responses, funding allocations, external support, specific management actions, infrastructure, and research. Challenges include it being a large and complex geographic site with difficult communications; management of visitor numbers (e.g. dive tourism, tourism support needs—seafood, freshwater, hotel development); the threat posed by invasive species; unreliable funding (e.g.; funding decline due to visitor downturns - Covid19, international travel changes from China); typhoons; coastal erosion; poaching; localized crown-of-thorns outbreaks and susceptibility to coral bleaching events. A key issue, and a fundamental objective, particularly for the Koror State management team, is making and maintaining connections with partners and other organizations and key stakeholders.

Palau is a small country with a population of around 18,000 and with limited human resourcing capacity for staff in heritage planning and management roles. This can lead to slow progress of initiatives such as Koror State not yet having finalized its Heritage Register Bill; delays in the establishment of the desired visitor centre for nature (land and sea) and culture at the Belau Museum; gaps in awareness raising initiatives, especially on recognition of and appreciation for the significance of having a WH site in Palau; lagging WH tentative listing submissions; the deterioration of certain heritage sites that are on the tentative list or on the pre-tentative list proposals and emerging development pressures.

Palau is currently finding it challenging to translate global values associated with WH level recognition at the local household and community levels. Importantly, local communities can hold

concerns if their areas are being considered for a PAN site or being included in a WH site, because of the potential for threats or changes to their ownership and control of resources. However, at a higher level, having WH status for the RISL played a key role in stopping and revising a resort proposal and ensuring that WH violation did not occur due to the recognized heritage values and pristine resources at stake.

WH listing (tentative or inscription) and implementation and management of sites requires coordination of funding sources and budget allocations. The tentative listing process itself was originally intended to portray a representation of different types of heritage sites and landscapes across Palau. However, this aspiration requires realistic deliberation about the human and financial capacity that is involved in progressing submissions of multiple sites for WH tentative listing, eventual additions to WH inscriptions and management implication associated with both (i.e., avoiding being ‘spread too thin’). This can be viewed considering the relatively significant, and justifiable, levels of resourcing already required to maintain the values of the RISL. Further, tentative listing at the detailed level requires an array of activities such as links with related national designation initiatives (e.g. PAN); resolving boundary and land tenure issues; obtaining approvals from various authorities; contributions from academic research; cross country dialogue and agreements (e.g.; Yapese stone money transnational site with Yap/FSM); creating nomination dossiers; international repatriation of lost artifacts, and gaining approvals from the WH Committee.

It is important that sites that are gaining recognition through internal measures such as becoming a PAN site or registration as a property on the Palau register of historic places, are then appropriately protected, and managed on an interim basis while any potential WH processes occur. On the international stage, Palau could be utilizing its WH values and management successes (along with its National Marine Sanctuary and the Green Fee) as positive examples of sustainable development).

More regular and increasingly destructive typhoons (including recent ‘super-typhoons’) have caused damage to natural and historic sites and greatly impacted, if not completely devastated, local communities. The scale of these typhoons has prompted allocation of Heritage Emergency Fund from UNESCO.

Review of implementation of national priorities - PRWH Action Plan 2016 to 2020

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (by interview, Sept - Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
<p>1. Climate Change and Natural Disaster: Pacific World Heritage Action Plan can include in its objective to address assessment and technical assistance toward restoring historical, cultural, natural sites threatened by natural disaster.</p> <p>2. Intangible Cultural Heritage: Establish a regional dialogue to enhance links between the World Heritage Convention and the Convention for the Protection of the Intangible Cultural</p>	<p>Did not use Filling the gaps- An Action Plan for the future of ICOMOS in the process of preparing tentative list</p> <p>Inscription of properties on the World Heritage list was identified as having a high extent to contributing to strengthening resilience to natural hazards and climate change</p> <p>There is limited integration of the conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage as a strategic element in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application of a visitor fee to provide Koror State with funds for management of the RISL TNC assisted in developing an updated RISL 3rd edition of the management plan (for approval by Koror State Legislature and Governor in late 2021) Numerous specific and successful management interventions for the RISL and also some tentatively listed sites Completed the UNESCO 3rd periodic report for both Palau and the RISL WHS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen collaboration between the responsibilities for natural and cultural streams within government ministries and key organisations Review and reprioritization of potential sites for Tentative Listing and current tentatively listed sites Develop awareness and promotional campaigns for WH Reaching out to UNESCO and the WH Centre for

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (by interview, Sept - Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
<p>Heritage (by establishing a project on traditional navigation and seafaring, canoe building and management of associated heritage places) Include: traditional architecture, agriculture, and associated practices with Pacific World Heritage sites.</p> <p>3. Educational Sustainable Development: Develop World Heritage educational material for communities and schools including the expansion of World Heritage in Young Hands Programme throughout the region and linking it to the Pacific Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Programme/ NB include: Web 2.0 - interaction and exchange and endorsed Cultural and Education Regional Strategy for the Pacific.</p>	<p>national sustainable development policies and strategies in strengthening resilience to natural hazards and climate change</p> <p>An extensive array of positive management initiatives were planned, developed and undertaken by Koror State for the RISL, and involving local, state, national and international partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koror State Heritage Register Bill is pending • Interim protection and site management activity for some tentatively listed sites • Specific grants obtained for WH nomination through Australian support and the WH Centre gave an emergency grant for removal of feral cats and rats on selected Rock islands • The Bureau continues to link with UNESCO's Participation Programme program every 2 years for various priority training needs identified by Palau • Palau hosted a regional workshop 2017 on management plans • In 2020, ICCROM reached out to Koror State regarding piloting the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessment in a World Heritage Context with partners invited to be involved • The RISL underwent a conservation assessment by the IUCN World Heritage Program with outcomes reported in IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2020. The RISL maintained its 2017 conservation outlook level of 'good with some concerns'. 	<p>greater assistance in facilitating capacity development and funding</p>

Looking forward

The green (and blue) economy is recognised as a central platform for sustainable development in Palau – the Palau National Marine Sanctuary and the Green Fee (for international visitors) being two important initiatives demonstrating this focus. Heritage involves histories and living treasures that are highly meaningful for Palauans. This a highly supportive scenario for progression of WH ambitions. At the most recent national environment symposium, the Minister for the National Environmental Protection Council highlighted the importance of culture. At the site level, Koror State has focussed on cooperation, collaboration, and partnerships for managing a site with many complexities, and this approach is now showing results. The recently completed UNESCO 3rd

periodic report for Palau and the RISL was a shared learning experience and a useful opportunity to bring some of Palau's WH partners together. Honouring and respecting roles and relationships is critical, as has been shown in the lessons learned from many projects.

Against this positive momentum, it is important that the national and state levels look at ways to strengthen collaboration across science, education, culture, funding, communication, and capacity development.

Palau has one significant natural and cultural mixed WH site, four tentative sites and some other sites with more than passing consideration for their potential WH value. With this array of sites being managed and protected, it is timely for a site review to be conducted to determine if and where priorities have changed and where available resources can be most optimally deployed. Any process of reviewing tentative WH listings is a good opportunity for bringing key stakeholders together.

The WH process itself has value in creating structure and it forces improvements in financing and management and in working with communities to improve sites - it provides a structure and enabling mechanism for engaging with the community and between government agencies and partners. A solid national WH base provides avenues for global level partnerships to be explored. Other opportunities for building positive connections, information sharing, awareness and engagement, and even a strategic campaign around WH include: featuring WH in the biennial Palau environmental conference; providing for a WH section in the biennial Palau State of the Environment report; making connections with ICH activities and explaining the key links and distinctions with WH; WH being incorporated into the annual Cultural Awareness week; and capitalising on International WH Day to celebrate Palauan WH. WH periodic reports and other more specific information about RISL should be on the Koror state web site, so they are more publicly available in one place and accessible, to assist the success of management actions, and to identify strengths and weaknesses.

Palau has 10 years of experience with the Rock Islands Southern Lagoon as a Mixed Natural and Cultural WHS and has an extensive body of monitoring information about the condition of this area and the impacts of management activities. The site was rated as 'good with some concerns' by IUCN's World Heritage Outlook 3, November 2020 and overall, the conservation outlook for the Rock Islands Southern Lagoon remains optimistic with Koror State having put in place several excellent management practices to protect the sites' values. Since the inscription in 2012, the Koror State Government has continued to build on a range of existing effective management approaches for the property, including: visitor fees; surveillance and patrol; monitoring and tour guide certification. Further innovative improvements that have occurred since 2012 include installation of repeater towers for the improvement of communication and rapid response for marine safety preparedness and response to emergencies; installation of cameras to monitor wildlife as well as illegal activities; surveillance outposts that provide 24/7 monitoring and policing; ongoing marine and terrestrial research by local, regional, and international organizations; ongoing archaeological and ethnographical reconnaissance survey to document, map, and record cultural and archaeological sites and assets of the property as well as the collection of oral history and information of sites; and updating management plans establishing different conservation areas and zones, entry permit requirements and designated tourist activity areas. For Palau and the Pacific region, this body of experience provides an important resource for reflection, learning exchange and ongoing planning.

A big challenge is the lack of capacity at the state level and Koror State wishes to continue and strengthen approaches to achieve better management. UNESCO is also being looked at for greater support in terms of its role in facilitating funding opportunities, capacity development including the Participation Programme, explaining the role of the WH Centre, and even with guidance on the issues of internal engagement between the main agencies and sectors. National partners such as the Belau Museum and NGOs such as the PCS and PaddlingPalau have provided support for bird

monitoring and management and species identification. The GEF programme has also proved to be an important funding ally for progressing WH site management needs. There is also opportunity to explore and identify sustainable funding options including from the Green Fund, again another area for improved collaboration.

Virtual platforms are being used more commonly and provide an efficient option for conducting workshops, training, discussions, webinars, site exchanges and the like and can allow important heritage partners (e.g. ICOMOS, ICCROM, CRIHAP, WHITRAP, SPC, USP) to be more accessible due to the reduced costs and logistical challenges of physical interfacing.

Countries are encouraged to continue to seek and advocate for specific funding needs

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
<p>Cross-government collaboration</p> <p>Use the forum opportunity of the next Palau Environment Conference to convene a national collaboration summit to chart a way forward for strengthened cross-government and cross-partner collaborations for WH.</p>	<p>Bureau of Cultural and Historic Preservation</p> <p>National Environmental Protection Council</p> <p>State governments</p>		2022/2023
<p>Review and reprioritize potential sites for WH Tentative Listing</p> <p>Review the cultural, mixed and transnational serial sites on the WH Tentative Listing and determine whether they remain preferred sites.</p> <p>Consider the potential for any other natural, cultural, mixed, serial or transnational sites, that were not originally identified for their potential to be submitted for WH Tentative Listing but have since emerged as potential sites to be submitted.</p> <p>Give consideration to how natural and cultural values can be mutually considered, promoted and managed through potential WH recognition.</p> <p>Undertake an assessment of the relative priority of potential sites being considered for submission as Tentative Listings, and based on 'reality-check' factors such as: 'fit' with Palauan values of culture, governance, communities and nature; WH OUV criteria; existing site documentation; baseline site information and research needs; funding and human resources availability; intra-government collaboration arrangements; level of landowner and community interest and support; partnership opportunities, political interest and support; awareness raising required; capacity to fulfill future management requirements including expectations on community and/or landowners; potential for sustainable funding streams.</p>	<p>Bureau of Cultural and Historic Preservation</p> <p>National Environmental Protection Council</p> <p>State governments</p>	UNESCO	2022
<p>Preparation and submission of a revised and prioritized set of sites for submission to either the WH Tentative List or the WH List.</p>	<p>Bureau of Cultural and Historic Preservation</p> <p>National Environmental Protection Council</p>	UNESCO	Ongoing from 2023
<p>Capacity development</p> <p>Ensure that all training and educational opportunities relating to WH are known about and that suitable people are supported to participate, particularly those who are establishing their careers or roles in heritage or have critical roles such as government staff, site managers, rangers, NGO's and CBO's, community leaders).</p>	<p>Bureau of Cultural and Historic Preservation</p> <p>National Environmental Protection Council</p>		Ongoing from 2022

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
	Koror State		
Be aware of, and utilize, important guideline resources such as Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties; World Heritage Resource Manual Preparing World Heritage Nominations; Enhancing our Heritage Toolkit - Assessing management effectiveness of natural World Heritage Sites	Bureau of Cultural and Historic Preservation National Environmental Protection Council Koror State		Ongoing from 2022
Continue to build a more strategic capacity development approach around the proven successful processes of participative community involvement.	Koror State		Ongoing from 2022
Engagement and information sharing Establish a coordinated approach to developing and sharing information about WH, including capitalizing on the exchange and promotional opportunities associated with important national and state events. Embed key documents, such as the PRWHAP 2021-2025, more visibly as a roadmap for decision makers. On the basis of this program, build in a broader set of information to strengthen understanding of WH more generally including its relationship with Palauan values and aspirations and potential opportunities and benefits. Review any communication materials currently available or used for informing on WH, assess their scope, purpose and effectiveness with various target audiences, and determine any new products that should be developed. Develop contextualized 'plain language' information about WH and Palau for sharing at community and government levels – ie; heritage values, benefits, opportunities, WH Convention and processes, management, support and relationships with allied Conventions such as the ICH Convention and the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage	Bureau of Cultural and Historic Preservation National Environmental Protection Council State governments		Ongoing from 2022
Funding Obtain funding guidance and funding facilitation inputs through UNESCO	Bureau of Cultural and Historic Preservation National Environmental Protection Council	UNESCO	From 2022 and ongoing
Ministries responsible for funding submissions to significant sources such as GEF and GCF, to remain aware of the connections to heritage protection and management and to seek to identify portions for heritage funding from within these larger allocations.	National Environmental Protection Council	GEF GCF	From 2022 and ongoing
Ensure there is full awareness of all funding opportunities relating to WH and heritage management more generally, and known opportunities are accessed and mobilized wherever possible.	Bureau of Cultural and Historic Preservation National Environmental Protection Council		from 2022 and ongoing
Legislation Finalize the Koror State Heritage Register Bill and pass into law.	Koror State		2022

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
Rock Islands Southern Lagoon WH site			
Undertake a monitoring and evaluation program applying the 'Enhancing our Heritage' toolkit and with findings made available to all WH partners in Palau and regionally.	ICCROM	UNESCO IUCN	2022-2023
Improve stakeholder consultation and continue to ensure all stakeholders are involved in planning and management.	Koror State		From 2022 and ongoing
Complete the revision and updating of the Management Plan.	TNC	Koror State	2022

3.9 PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Challenges in implementing World Heritage actions, 2016 – 2020

Papua New Guinea has a highly unique profile that generates multiple challenges for the development and implementation of heritage planning and management. At nearly 463,000 square kilometres, PNG's terrestrial land mass is significantly larger than that of any other Pacific Island country. It also has the largest population at over 9 million people. PNG has a vast and acute topography, extremely remote and isolated areas, high rainfall, and a dispersed and diverse population with a multitude of languages, local dialects, and customs. This creates major challenges for site access, transportation, telecommunications, and engagement with, and communication with, local communities. For example, there is no proper road connection between PNG's only WH site (Kuk Early Agricultural site) and the national capital of Port Moresby, with air travel being the only realistic option to travel the 500-kilometre direct flight distance.

PNG has a rich resources base of minerals, timber and land area which drives mining, logging, and agricultural expansion. A large population pushes a need for food, water, power and transport. The cumulative effects of these activities affect many aspects of PNG life including natural and cultural heritage, sometimes in positive ways and sometimes with negative outcomes. Politically there has historically been relatively high turnover of elected officials, at least at a national level, leading to issues around momentum for funding of projects, policy development and legislation. Land ownership and local politics play a significant role in decisions about land use in PNG. Tribal disputes are not uncommon and further influence how decisions may be made and how projects may proceed.

PNG ratified the WH Convention in 1997, has had seven sites on the WH Tentative List since 2006 and has had one inscribed WH site, the Kuk Early Agricultural Site, since 2008. There is currently no legislation in place to support WH. However, there is a current Bill for PAs (including addressing WH) which, when passed into law, will provide a legislative base for the current Protected Areas (PA) Policy, and will assist in maintaining political support. The Conservation and Environment Protection Agency (CEPA) can only provide interim protection and management support for PAs using previous legislation or the PA Policy.

Despite a lack of legislative protection, there are several natural areas that have management systems in place with implementation and funds procurement occurring via NGOs and community effort. Local time and efforts can often be spent in working to avert competing or incompatible land uses.

Predominating challenges to ongoing implementation of the WH actions have been limited access to required finance and lack of technical resources for full implementation. There are also complex governance issues around the requirement to work with provincial governments and their communities in isolated regions in tandem with national level government on policy development. There can be disconnects between systems, processes, requirements, and priorities at national level

regarding fulfilling international agreements and the traditional governance, cultural approaches, interests and needs at the local level of communities, landowners, and resource custodians.

Systemic issues of low/nil funding, limited resources, and available capability, along with remote sites and working with local communities, make efforts on WH difficult. Some NGOs from the conservation sector have observed that the topic of WH does not arise very often (at least in their circles) leading to the presumption that awareness about WH may not be widespread.

Review of implementation of national priorities - PRWH Action Plan 2016 to 2020

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (by interview, Sept - Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Protection and Gazettal of Kuk AGS Under Conservation Areas Act (1978) 2. Review threats and recommendations for sites on PNG's Tentative List 3. Prepare a nomination dossier for Kokoda and Owen Stanley Ranges and Nakanai Ranges 	<p style="text-align: center;">3rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting for PNG and Kuk Early Agriculture WH could not be accessed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Heritage is included in the PNG Protected Areas (PA) Policy. • A PA Bill is in progress and will address WH • A review of WH Tentative List sites was undertaken in 2016 (Hitchcock) • Kuk Early Agricultural WH Site has a site manager in place • Examining benefit sharing with community and sustainable livelihoods at a TL site • Specific site management work on some TL sites as well as progress on nomination dossiers, and with the active support of key partners 	<p>Increased protection of the WH site Kuk and more effective management</p> <p>Existing TL sites need to be protected under PA law and policy.</p> <p>Develop 'roadmaps' for the TL sites, potentially based on the Kokoda Trail or Milne Bay models</p> <p>Progress discussions on conservation issues, including WH, with provincial governments</p> <p>Connect with GEF or similar large funding to support WH</p>

Looking forward

CEPA, within the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Climate Change, is responsible for overseeing all obligations under the WH Convention, all WH sites and is where the WH focal point is based. Unlike most Pacific countries where responsibilities for heritage are spread across several government ministries and departments, primary leadership for WH in PNG appears to lie with a single government body. The PA Bill requires CEPA to implement WH and this includes natural and cultural aspects of sites. All TL sites in PNG are mixed natural and cultural sites. There are, however, many important partners that have been actively involved in WH projects and in supporting CEPA, including: the PNG National Museum and Art Gallery, the Australian government (Department of Environment, Australian Marine Safety Authority, military), WWF, James Cook University and notably the late Peter Hitchcock. Where there has been a high level of external support, there have generally been successful outcomes for sites. There is also a UNESCO office in PNG that has potential to play a bigger role with WH. Funds for WH have been obtained through the GEF program and there are opportunities for funds to be sought through the GCF in collaboration with the PNG Climate Change and Development Authority.

CEPA has been active in its attention to TL sites, either with specific management work or with progressing on various stages of the WH nomination process. However, it is now 15 years since they were tentatively listed, and a review point is now timely. The use of tourism through a benefit sharing framework or an Integrated Conservation and Development Project (ICDP) whereby the community is involved in site management generating sustainable, alternative livelihoods, has also been examined for some sites. Advising and working with local communities about potential benefits is a key and time-consuming aspect of the WH processes. CEPA is engaging with provincial governments to support the mainstreaming of nature conservation into their development plans (and required at national government level). Once finalized, the pending PA legislation will substantially support this work.

The Tenkile Conservation Alliance has an interest in looking at the potential for progressing the Torricelli Ranges as a WH site (subject to TCA Board consideration) and would like to understand more about the processes. TCA already has excellent relationships with many villages, so that's a good basis. It is recognized that WH status can be a source of national pride and therefore is a useful tool for maintaining good management activity.

Countries are encouraged to continue to seek and advocate for specific funding needs

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
Legislation Provide high level support to the Attorney General's office to assist the PA Bill being passed into law.	Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Climate Change (CEPA)		
Review and prioritization of potential sites for WH Tentative Listing Review all mixed sites that are currently on the WH Tentative Listing and determine whether they remain preferred sites (referring to Hitchcock report, 2016). (Huon Terraces Stairway to the Past; Kikori River Basin / Great Papuan Plateau; Kokoda Track and Owen Stanley Ranges; Milne Bay Seascape (Pacific Jewels of Marine Biodiversity); The Sublime Karsts of Papua New Guinea; Trans Fly Complex; Upper Sepik River Basin)	CEPA Relevant NGO's Key partners		2022
Consider any natural, cultural or mixed sites, that were not originally identified for their potential to be submitted for WH Tentative Listing but have since emerged as potential sites to be submitted (e.g. Torricelli Ranges) Give consideration to how natural and cultural values can be mutually considered, promoted and managed through potential WH recognition.			
Undertake an assessment of the relative priority of potential sites being considered for submission as Tentative Listings, and based on 'reality-check' factors such as: 'fit' with Papua New Guinean values of culture, people, communities and nature; OUV criteria; existing site documentation; baseline site information and research needs; funding and human resources availability; intra-government collaboration arrangements; level of landowner and community interest and support; political interest and support; partnership opportunities; awareness raising required; capacity to fulfill future management requirements including expectations on community and/or landowners; potential for sustainable funding streams.			2023
Develop 'roadmaps' for TL sites and potentially using models built from the Kokoda Trail and Milne Bay TL experiences.			2023

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
Prepare submission/s for a revised and prioritized set of sites for submission to the WH Tentative List.			2024 - 2025
Capacity development			
Maintain an active communication program with WH partners regarding capacity development opportunities.	CEPA		2022 and ongoing
Ensure that all training opportunities relating to WH and heritage management more generally, are known about and that suitable people are able to participate, particularly those who are establishing their careers or roles in heritage (e.g. national and provincial government staff, site managers, community members).	CEPA	UNESCO	Ongoing from 2022
Review the outcomes of work being done on community benefit sharing and sustainable livelihoods and tourism could add value, one of the TL sites they have been looking at Australia is supporting Kokoda.			
Engagement			
Continue to progress discussions on conservation issues, including WH, with provincial governments.	CEPA		
Focus on actions			
Embed key documents such as the PRWHAP 2021-2025 more visibly for decision makers.	CEPA	UNESCO	Mid 2022
Funding			
Funding submissions to significant sources such as GEF and GCF, to be made aware of the connections to heritage protection and management and to seek to identify portions for heritage funding from within these larger allocations	CEPA	GEF GCF	Ongoing from 2022
Ensure there is full awareness of all funding opportunities relating to WH and heritage management more generally, and known opportunities are accessed and mobilized wherever possible.			Ongoing from 2022
Specific sites			
Strengthen and improve protection and management of the Kuk Early Agriculture WH site.	CEPA		Ongoing from 2022
Commence preliminary steps toward consideration of tentative listing of the Torricelli Ranges in collaboration with CEPA and UNESCO for guidance.	Tenkile Conservation Alliance		Ongoing from 2022

3.10 SAMOA

Challenges in implementing World Heritage actions, 2016 – 2020

Heritage responsibilities in Samoa lie across various national government ministries (Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and Ministry of Education, Sports, and Culture) as well as with traditional chiefs / local communities and each has specific powers, mandates or interests in natural and cultural heritage matters. While positive relationships exist at the government level there's been limited opportunity for cross government cooperation on WH since the initial surge of joint work on tentative listing in the immediate few years after Samoa ratified the WH Convention in 2001. The early period of WH work in Samoa was supported by a 'heritage committee' and involved the

consideration of, or detailed assessment of, numerous natural and cultural sites as possible WH nominations.

The consideration of tentative listing sites stalled in part due to issues such as: the sites being too small; sites being too large or complex (due to land tenure factors), and sites such as Fagaloa Bay being considered as potential transnational sites with American Samoa (under the Two Samoa's Initiative). Additionally, cabinet directives to change ministerial responsibilities for heritage around 2014, and then changes in ministerial leadership positions, contributed to interrupting the early momentum. As such, there has been only modest action on tentative listings for the last 15 years.

The initial nomination work involved an extensive, concerted program of community engagement, information sharing and consultation to ensure they were fully involved and supportive. Local people need accurate information about what WH might involve, what benefits may emerge for local people and reassurance that there is no intention to compromise on customary rights and uses. WH related work at this level of intensity and quality requires significant support. As considerable time has passed since the initial high-profile work on WH in Samoa, picking up on this work would now require a focused re-engagement programme.

Over more recent times, there has been successful delivery of awareness of ICH in communities followed up by specific activities which has helped gain and maintain community interest. Samoa's ratification of the ICH Convention has resulted in positive community response due to its focus on cultural aspects that are more relevant and closer to peoples' day-to-day lives than WH. By comparison, the WH Convention is harder to implement than the ICH Convention and the criteria can be difficult to understand or match smoothly with Pacific perspectives. ICH is generally seen as a better fit for communities. There is low awareness of WH in Samoa, although cultural heritage awareness is generally good due to initiatives like the Nei Galo publications (book series of Samoan cultural stories) and because cultural practices are a regular and important part of community life.

While the process of UNESCO's 3rd periodic reporting is, in theory, a useful exercise in bringing different sections of government together to review their heritage work, it may not always occur this way in practice. There are also several stakeholders that are involved in heritage matters: National University of Samoa, Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development, Samoa Tourism Authority and Women in Business and the distribution of roles and interests across these participatory roles is fragmented and often occurs independently.

The twin challenge of staffing and funding is always present. Staff turnover and change is high, resulting in knowledge and institutional memory disruptions and gaps. The preparation of nomination dossiers is a large task and requires specific funding allocations and technical inputs that are not fully available within government. UNESCO has provided some funding support however the amounts have not been substantial, and the assistance has occurred irregularly with an underlying reason being that government staff may not have the skills for developing successful funding submissions, or always know of all the funding opportunities available. Those who work in heritage roles express a strong desire for capacity development opportunities, however this is countered by the situation of regular turnover of staff into different positions.

There has been a National Heritage Policy in place since 2004 and a report was done by the Samoa Law Reform Commission in 2013 looking at establishing a National Heritage Authority. The responsibility for drafting national heritage legislation sits with the Attorney General's office. However, the process and timing for any legislative drafting is currently uncertain leaving legislative frame-working for heritage in Samoa in a stalled situation.

More regular and increasingly destructive cyclones in the region have also tracked over Samoa causing significant national disasters and tsunamis and extensive flooding events have also occurred in recent years.

Review of implementation of national priorities - PRWH Action Plan 2016 to 2020

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (by interview, Sept - Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
No actions identified	3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting for Samoa could not be accessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural sites register documenting sites including use of GIS and software, a database of natural and cultural landscape information and oral histories, presentation of site stories in the Nei Galo publications used in schools at primary and secondary levels. • BIORAPs completed and Key Biodiversity Areas identified, providing a scientific basis for potential natural WH sites. • Completed the UNESCO 3rd periodic report for Samoa • Interim protection and site management activity for some sites with potential to be tentatively listed (eg; Pulemelei Mound and heritage trail establishment) • UNESCO support for ICH training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen collaboration between the responsibilities for natural and cultural streams within government ministries and with key organisations • Review and reprioritization of potential sites for Tentative Listing and current tentatively listed sites • Develop awareness and promotional campaigns for WH • Reaching out to UNESCO and the WH Centre for greater assistance in facilitating capacity development and funding

Looking forward

The two main government ministries responsible for heritage acknowledge the benefits of collaboration in helping to shift the momentum forward on WH that has been languishing for some years. If a refreshed collaboration structure can be formed with the government ministries, then it will be an opportune time to refocus on potential and existing WH tentative listings, where priorities might lie and the community engagement that this will involve. The BIORAP, KBA and Cultural Register documentation work undertaken over recent years provides a sound base of information from which to work. There are strong linkages between natural and cultural sites in Samoa and these could potentially be considered for nomination as mixed sites. Any process of reviewing tentative WH listings is a good opportunity for bringing key stakeholders together.

The focus in Samoa of strengthening the tourism economy (an ecotourism directory about cultural sites is in progress), the strong basis of ICH and broad cultural awareness, and the new Cultural Museum, collectively provide opportunity for stronger collaboration on heritage. Samoa's financial and human resources are not large, and the ability to capture regular external funding support will be an essential action for any furthering of WH ambitions. Virtual platforms are being used more commonly and provide an efficient option for conducting workshops, training, discussions, webinars, site exchanges and the like and can allow important heritage partners (e.g. ICOMOS, ICCROM, CRIHAP, SPC, USP) to be more accessible due to the reduced costs and logistical challenges of physical interfacing.

Countries are encouraged to continue to seek and advocate for specific funding needs

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
<p>Collaboration</p> <p>The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture convene for the purposes of agreeing to re-establish a structured meeting forum - a 'heritage committee' – (with Cabinet support) that enables the two bodies that address the natural environment and cultural heritage to have regular and collaborative discussion, planning, implementation and reporting of actions associated with the WH Convention.</p>	<p>Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment</p> <p>Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture</p> <p>'heritage committee'</p>		<p>Early 2022</p>
<p>Legislation</p> <p>Clarify the status and needs of the current draft heritage legislation.</p>	<p>Office of the Attorney General</p>		<p>2022</p>
<p>Funding</p> <p>Obtain funding guidance and funding facilitation inputs through UNESCO.</p>	<p>UNESCO</p>		<p>2022</p>
<p>Ministries responsible for funding submissions to significant sources such as GEF and GCF, to remain aware of the connections to heritage protection and management and to seek to identify portions for heritage funding from within these larger allocations.</p>	<p>Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment</p>		<p>From 2022 and ongoing</p>
<p>Ensure there is full awareness of all funding opportunities relating to WH and heritage management more generally, and known opportunities are accessed and mobilized wherever possible.</p>	<p>Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment</p> <p>Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture</p> <p>'heritage committee'</p>		<p>From 2022 and ongoing</p>
<p>Review and reprioritize potential sites for WH Tentative Listing</p> <p>Review the cultural and mixed sites on the WH Tentative Listing and determine whether they remain preferred sites.</p> <p>Consider the potential for any other natural, cultural, mixed, serial or transnational sites, that were not originally identified for their potential to be submitted for WH Tentative Listing but have since emerged as potential sites to be submitted (egs; Pulemelei Mound, Upland forests on Savaii)</p> <p>Give consideration to how natural and cultural values can be mutually considered, promoted and managed through potential WH recognition.</p> <p>Undertake an assessment of the relative priority of potential sites being considered for submission as Tentative Listings, and based on 'reality-check' factors such as: 'fit' with Samoan values of culture, governance, communities and nature; WH OUV criteria; existing site documentation; baseline site information and research needs; funding and human resources availability; intra-government collaboration arrangements; level of landowner and community interest and support;</p>	<p>Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment</p> <p>Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture</p> <p>'heritage committee'</p>		<p>From late 2022</p>

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
political interest and support; partnership opportunities; awareness raising required; capacity to fulfill future management requirements including expectations on community and/or landowners; potential for sustainable funding streams.			
Preparation and submission of a revised and prioritized set of sites for submission to either the WH Tentative List or the WH List.	'heritage committee'		2023 - 2024
Capacity development Ensure that all training and educational opportunities relating to WH are known about and that suitable people are supported to participate, particularly those who are establishing their careers or roles in heritage.	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture		Ongoing from 2022
Engagement and information sharing Establish a coordinated approach to developing and sharing information about WH.	'heritage committee'		2022
Embed key documents, such as the PRWHAP 2021-2025, more visibly for decision makers.			Mid 2022
Review any communication materials currently available or used for informing on WH, assess their scope, purpose and effectiveness with various target audiences, and determine any new products that should be developed.	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture		2022
Develop contextualized 'plain language' information about WH and Samoa for sharing at community and government levels – ie; heritage values, benefits, opportunities, WH Convention and processes, management, support and relationships with allied Conventions such as the ICH Convention and the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage			2023

3.11 SOLOMON ISLANDS

Challenges in implementing World Heritage actions, 2016 – 2020

The Solomon Islands ratified the WH Convention in 1992 and was successful in having East Rennell (ER) inscribed as a natural WH site in 1998. It was the first natural property under customary ownership and management inscribed on the World Heritage List. However, concerns raised at the time were that the practical modalities of customary land tenure (cooperative decision-making and accommodating different opinions), lack of adequate legal protection and the necessity for livelihood development in order to maintain local support for conservation, would prove to be difficult to reconcile with maintaining WH values, and would be particularly compounded if major external pressures occurred. There has now been some 30 years of experience with implementing the convention and managing this WH site and these early reservations have proved to have been accurate.

At the local level on ER there was high expectation from landowner groups about the benefits that would come with WH listing. Furthermore, many landowner groups (around 80) with different opinions have been known to be dealing directly with international organizations and speaking on behalf of the World Heritage site, which can result in confusion and prevent much needed programs that focus on sustainable socio-economic development for the local communities. The high landowner numbers can also complicate achieving total consent on issues such as allowances for logging activity.

Somewhat unfortunately, but also beneficially, there have been many lessons (some hard ones) in how to sustain exceptional WH values in: a highly remote area with traditional governance, customary land tenure and cooperative decision-making; addressing external pressures such as commercial logging and mining (and impacts that come from these such as habitat alteration, water quality decline and invasive species), and; meeting the desire for income generating livelihoods and helpful services such as water and sanitation, road access and health facilities. A key lesson from 1998 is that all stakeholders needed to be more engaged, informed and involved and with realistic expectations more clearly established about what WH inscription means. There should have been better understanding about how the site should be managed to meet WH requirements. There have been key lessons along the way, notably the need to establish early a national WH implementation framework along with guiding policy and associated legislation and these fundamental support frameworks have been slow to occur. As for other Pacific countries that have ratified the WH Convention, there was incomplete understanding initially of the full scope of duties that come with this Convention.

These issues have resulted in ER remaining on the List of World Heritage in Danger since 2013 in recognition of a growing number of significant threats to its conservation. The site was rated as 'critical' by IUCN's World Heritage Outlook 3, November 2020.

There is a wide gap between the expectations of the WH Committee and those of the Council of Chiefs (who also must deal with local political issues that impact on ER). There is also a disconnect between the Council of Chiefs and Honiara-based committees, with geographical remoteness heightening this disconnect in normal times and even more so with the COVID19 pandemic travel restrictions. The sustainability of the customary governance system is in some doubt. For example, the Council of Chiefs has not met formally in many years, as the Paramount Chief lives elsewhere. The development of a cash economy and the demand for modern conveniences are forcing local people to find sources of income, which in turn increases pressure on local resources. In fact, one of the most significant threats to the WH site is the lack of alternative income generating mechanisms to commercial logging and mining. Without sustainable livelihoods, local support for the World Heritage designation will erode.

Consequently, the Solomon Islands government is understandably wary of committing to additional WH sites. Fundamentally the Solomon Islands is a developing country, and its considerable economic and social challenges register as a higher priority than heritage conservation. With ER having absorbed a significant portion of available funding and human resources due to its standing and the amount of international attention (including support) it has attracted, any focus on other sites has been minimal. There are some other potential nomination sites – the Marovo Tetepare Complex being one, yet this site has experienced levels of development that may preclude its ability to meet WH criteria, with logging being one of the significant issues. Resources for proposing any new site and revising the existing Tentative List are relatively substantial and the government simply does not have these resources. At a national level, the focus is on identifying potential key sites for designation as Protected Areas under the PAN Act rather than moving toward WH listing. At this time the WH focus in the Solomon Islands is almost solely on managing and sustaining ER.

The Environment and Conservation Division within the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology Environment and Conservation Division, has only one staff member for WH and their focus has necessarily mostly been on ER for communication with UNESCO, stakeholder liaison, implementation of activities, and engagement with local communities. There is no technical officer / 'site manager' for on-ground activities and communication on ER. Further, focal points for WH and associated partner agencies (individuals and Ministries) change regularly causing lack of consistency, disruption and lag time and loss of knowledge and institutional memory.

A key area for capacity development in government is the need for information about what financial and technical resources are available through WH, or from elsewhere, and acquiring the skills to make funding submissions. This need also flows down to the ER WH site Management Committee.

Despite having been a States Party to the WH Convention for 30 years, general awareness about WH is low. Frameworks like the CBD and UNFCCC are better known and understood at all levels, including at the community level (such as the ER Management Committee) than the WH Convention. GEF funding is implementing CBD and UNFCCC which is one main reason for the awareness of these programs, due to the financial resources mobilized. Ideally, UNESCO needs to be able to aim toward that level to popularize and generate support, to build awareness and to implement programs.

COVID19 has meant that progress on many actions, including many of those recommended by the 2019 IUCN Reactive Monitoring Mission to ER, have been delayed. The specter of destructive cyclones is an increasingly concerning threat and with significant ramifications for causing widespread natural disasters.

Review of implementation of national priorities - PRWH Action Plan 2016 to 2020

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (by interview, Sept - Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
<p>1. Development of sustainable income generating mechanisms that derive benefits from the conservation of the East Rennell World Heritage property for the local communities (for example ecotourism, small businesses)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization of a roundtable in Honiara to collect commitments from the Lake Tegano World Heritage Site Association (LTWHSA), relevant line ministries, NGOs and (international) partners and to agree on an action plan to remove the East Rennell World Heritage site from the list of World Heritage in Danger <p>2. Reinforcement of the LTWHSA so that the customary owners have the necessary, long-term technical and financial resources to protect the property to World Heritage standards and in accordance with traditional management practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LTWHSA has reflected on its structure to ensure maximum ownership of all local communities and its constituencies; and has made internal arrangements to restore trust with Governments and international partners • National government has allocated a fixed, annual amount of money for the LTWHSA. Extra resources and training from international partners will be attracted for particular projects <p>3. All areas within the World Heritage property and the surrounding areas that support the ecological functioning of the World Heritage property are excluded from commercial logging operations and mining</p>	<p>3rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting for Solomon Islands could not be accessed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed the UNESCO 3rd periodic report for Solomon Islands • Development of a Management Plan for ER. • Establishment of a new ER local management committee • Establishment of a Telecom Tower which will improve local access to the internet for ER. • A small grant UNDP programme supporting local livelihood community programs in ER • Birdlife International is supporting a programme to support rat eradication associated with ER • East Rennell underwent a conservation assessment by the IUCN World Heritage Program with outcomes reported in IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2020. East Rennell maintained its 2017 conservation outlook level of 'critical'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressively implement the recommendations from the 2019 IUCN Reactive Mission Report to the State Party • Maintain support for the newly established ER local management committee • Review of the two existing Tentative Listing sites • Provide specific capacity development support to the WH government focal point and the newly established ER local management committee

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (by interview, Sept - Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of legal framework • Monitoring of existing / approved operations 			

Looking forward

To the credit of the Solomon Islands government, they have continued to support ER over lengthy and complex processes.

Even though there has been no Management Plan or funding for activities in the ER WHS, the local people in ER still uphold and support the concept of WH and want to see the WH work “proceed” on the ground. Although they face many challenges from their own people and limited support from the government, they want to maintain the programme and to have legislation for the site so it can be fully protected from development pressures (with the PAN Act being looked at closely for its application in this objective). There is also an international desire to see ER succeed as a WH site by UNESCO, the WH Centre, IUCN and others.

A Management Plan for ER is well into development and a new and sound ER local management committee is in place – two important bases for a refreshed approach to improved management for ER. Other recent positive developments include the establishment of improved telecommunications for ER and funding grants for local livelihood community programmes in ER and invasive species management associated with ER. UNESCO is providing regional funding to support the new ER Management Committee in engaging with relevant government authorities and committees, and to discuss current issues. These initiatives demonstrate the commitment by partner organisations to invest in sustaining ER and its local communities as a WH site.

The IUCN Reactive Monitoring Mission in 2019 recommended a suite of critical actions that could see ER move beyond its current status if they were implemented. These recommendations provide the fundamental roadmap for ER. A Cabinet Paper that was passed in 2017 and included the proposal to ban logging which, very importantly, still stands.

As a pivotal and well known WH site in the region, as well as being a site that is experiencing considerable difficulties, there is scope for UNESCO to increase financial and technical support for ER. The future prospect for ER largely revolves around the local communities, the Council of Chiefs, the ER local management committee and the government’s WH focal point in the Environment and Conservation Division of the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology. These groups and individuals need specific capacity development support and recognition for their key roles. Strengthened links across government agencies for culture, tourism, and environment, is also required. Tourism, even at low levels, has some degree of potential to generate a flow of cash sufficient to counterbalance the allure of commercial logging and mining. There is opportunity for UNESCO to support the States Party in improving awareness about WH, the WH Centre and UNESCO itself, and how and where these bodies can help countries and communities.

Countries are encouraged to continue to seek and advocate for specific funding needs

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
<p>East Rennell WH site Implement priority recommendations from the 2019 IUCN Reactive Mission Report to the State Party, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request a realistic timeframe extension from the World Heritage Committee for implementing the Desired State of Conservation for the Removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (was due to be completed by 2021) 	WH site local management committee		2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reaffirm all Round Table Ministerial commitments for East Rennell and the timelines and budgets for their implementation. 	National government / SI's Cabinet		2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress an application for National Protected Area status for the ER World Heritage property under the SI's PAN Act 	WH site local management committee	National government	2022-2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek long-term technical and financial support from the international community Prioritize the development of sustainable livelihoods for the local communities, recognizing the important role played by women in East Rennell. Improve access to basic community services and facilities 	WH site local management committee	GEF GCF World Heritage Trust Fund Rennell-Bellona Constituency Development Fund National government	Ongoing from 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the WH site local management committee with the support needed to manage the World Heritage property to international standards, including an office, on-site technical support and funding to implement the Management Plan 	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology	National government	Ongoing from 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the World Heritage property is actively promoted, including on the website of the Solomon Islands Visitors Bureau and on all relevant maps and promotional leaflets. 	Solomon Islands Visitors Bureau		Ongoing from 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that EIAs are carried out for all proposed developments within the property and its vicinity Develop a scientific research programme 	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology WH site local management committee	National government	Ongoing from 2022
<p>Funding</p> <p>Ministries responsible for funding submissions to significant sources such as GEF and GCF, to remain aware of the connections to WH protection and management and to seek to identify portions for WH funding from within these larger allocations</p>	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology		Ongoing from 2022

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
Ensure there is full awareness of all funding opportunities relating to WH and heritage management more generally, and known opportunities are accessed and mobilized wherever possible.	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology		Ongoing from 2022
Commence consideration of the potential for consideration of changing the ER natural WH site to a Mixed WH site and the processes, challenges and benefits that this may involve.	Ministry of Culture & Tourism		from 2023
Review and reprioritize potential sites for WH Tentative Listing Record and map local culture, traditional and living knowledge, customary governance, genealogies and language of the East Rennell communities while they are still being practiced, with a view of possibly re-nominating the property, in the long term, as a cultural landscape. Give consideration to how natural and cultural values can be mutually considered, promoted and managed through potential WH recognition in other sites in the Solomon Islands.	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology WH site local management committee	UNESCO	Ongoing from 2022
Review natural and mixed sites on the WH Tentative Listing and determine whether they remain preferred sites.	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology Ministry of Culture & Tourism	UNESCO	Ongoing from 2023
Capacity development Implement a focussed capacity development program for ER local communities, the Council of Chiefs, the ER local management committee and the WH government focal point in the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology to ensure they are well supported in their key roles with the ER WH site.	UNESCO	UNESCO	Ongoing from 2022
Engagement and information sharing Ensure that the PRWHAP 2021-2025 is known about, and referred to by, decision makers.	UNESCO		2022

3.12 TOKELAU

Challenges in implementing World Heritage actions, 2016 – 2020

Tokelau is a dependent territory of New Zealand (although it operates as a free and democratic nation) and it has the fourth-smallest population of any sovereign state or dependency in the world at around 1,500 people. No significant land is more than two metres above high water of ordinary tides meaning Tokelau is particularly vulnerable to sea level rise and the likelihood of more regular and increasingly destructive cyclones such as the 2005 cyclone that had significant impact. Its three main islands groups extend over a large oceanic area, and each is inhabited by Tokelauans. Isolation and lack of resources greatly limits economic development and confines agriculture to the subsistence level. There is no airport in Tokelau with international access only by sea from Samoa.

Tokelau is a UNESCO Associate Member State. New Zealand statutory law does not apply to Tokelau unless it is expressly extended to Tokelau. International treaties are applied only with the consent of the Government of Tokelau. New Zealand's ratification of conventions does not apply automatically to Tokelau.

Review of implementation of national priorities - PRWH Action Plan 2016 to 2020

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (by interview or notes Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
No actions identified	N/A	No interviews conducted or notes obtained	TBA

Looking forward

It will require further input from the WH focal point in Tokelau, and possibly also in NZ, to determine how Tokelau intends to progress any initiatives associated with WH in future.

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
TBA			

3.13 TONGA

Challenges in implementing World Heritage actions, 2016 – 2020

Like most Pacific countries, Tonga's land tenure system provides landowners with rights to determine the final outcomes of any designation, use or activity proposed for their land including in any area that may be nominated under WH. This has a particular effect on the tentatively listed Lapita Pottery Archaeological Sites. Under Tongan law the government can force owners to vacate but they are reluctant to do this and prefer to discuss options through traditional ways. Financial assistance is required as compensation for landowners who may have to move because of a site being nominated and restrictions applied.

Although compensation has potential to be a positive incentive to landowners, this is offset by reluctance to vacate due to traditional connections. This has meant that progress on the two tentatively listed sites from 2007 has been slow as consultations with private landowners have not resulted in any clear agreements. WH requirements for buffer areas make this situation even more complicated. As one of the tentative sites has less land tenure issues, it has been possible to undertake some partial site maintenance work and basic protection of cultural elements.

Other main challenges for Tonga concerning WH, and heritage generally, are low funding and human resources. There are only two staff focussed on heritage in the Culture Division of the Ministry of Tourism and both are relatively new at heritage work and require further specific training. There has been some financial assistance internally for general heritage work and UNESCO has provided modest sums to support tentative listing and nomination work (through international experts), training and post-cyclone reparation.

The Ministry of Environment in Tonga is responsible, by legislation, for the protection and management of all heritage sites as the sites are part of the 'environment'. However, in daily reality, the Ministry of Tourism through the Culture Division is responsible for "heritage", including coordination and links with UNESCO, and generally takes a lead on Tongan heritage issues whether cultural or otherwise.

The division of heritage duties between ministries means that the lines of responsibility are sometimes blurred which limits and pro-active initiative. Heritage legislation, currently in draft form,

may provide a useful mechanism to clarify respective duties and to enhance cross-sectoral collaboration.

WH awareness in Tonga is low and needs to be enhanced so that people become more aware of their citizenship role in safeguarding heritage. Generally speaking, and not uncommonly, people focus on their livelihoods. Younger generations don't see their elders giving heritage attention and as a result the importance of heritage is not being passed along as well as it could be.

A key challenge in progressing WH in Tonga is that funding is very low compared to the scale of work required either for nomination activity or for specific site management, thus progress can be very slow. WH implementation and management of sites involves cross-government mandates, therefore coordination, and budget allocation are essential. That the government changes every four years does not help this situation.

Climate change is having its effects on vulnerable heritage areas near the coastline, with the occurrence of more regular and stronger storms causing natural disasters.

Review of implementation of national priorities - PRWH Action Plan 2016 to 2020

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (by interview, Sept - Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
<p>1. Protection of heritage places</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Register and Database • Legislation for Safeguarding of heritage sites • Legislation to identify/declare and protect the so-called 'traditional building' <p>2. Heritage Site Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop management plan • Climate Change Impacts and mitigation • Risk reduction and risk preparedness • Assessment of Post disaster Impacts of Hazards • Public Adaptation Awareness Programmes <p>3. National Awareness and Capacity Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-agency, inter-organisation, inter-community and inter-country dialogue • Heritage conservation training • Training local community to engage in the management of heritage sites • Awareness amongst local communities, politicians, government officials, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A database for heritage sites has been established • Tonga is a state party to the 2003 Convention for Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage • The property (Ancient Capitals) is currently not protected under any legal designation but is protected under customary, traditional ownership of the Estate Holder, Prince Kalaniuvalu Fotofili. The Kingdom of Tonga does not have a legal or systematic protection for cultural heritage sites. Tonga is in the process of developing comprehensive National Heritage Site Legislation. • Ministry of Tourism responsible for management of all heritage sites (both cultural and natural). • A management plan is in place for The Ancient Capital: The Ancient Royal Tombs as a tourist destination. Under the Management Plan, two employees are required to work full time caring for the property and a fence is planned to protect it from pigs and other animals and to stop people from trespassing on property. A tourist facility including a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parts of the Ancient Capitals of the Kingdom of Tonga (tentative list site) have been cleaned up with some of the cultural values relating to ancient chiefs restored (site is large and split into two sections). A first draft of the WH nomination for this site has progressed through UNESCO positively • Heritage legislation is being drafted • Government heritage staff have participated in regional and international training forums (nomination preparation, prepare nominations, management planning, disaster risk management) • UNESCO provided post cyclone support for heritage damaged in cyclone Kita in 2018. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for funding to complete inventory process • If WH is to be progressed more effectively it will require greater awareness building across government and embedding in national policy and legislative frameworks • Review and reprioritization of potential sites for Tentative Listing • Improve collaboration between the responsibilities for natural and cultural streams within government ministries • Leaflets are being produced to inform the communities of their role and to raise their awareness about protection,

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (by interview, Sept - Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
<p>decision makers and the general public</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School curriculum and programmes • Risk preparedness training <p>4. Developing and updating Tentative Lists</p> <p>5. Developing successful World Heritage nominations</p>	<p>bathroom is under construction at the property.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State identified strengthening resilience to natural hazards and climate change: adaptation and mitigation as a high priority for both culture and nature for capacity building needs • State identified risk preparedness and disaster risk management as a high priority for both culture and nature for capacity building needs • State is using the Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties • There are no strategies to raise awareness about the conservation, protection and presentation of World Heritage but this is being done on an ad hoc basis. • There are no heritage education programs to improve understanding of cultural and natural heritage, promote diversity, and foster intercultural dialogue but this is being done on an ad hoc basis. • There is no national strategy for capacity development in the field of heritage conservation, protection, preservation and management but this is being done on an ad hoc basis. The State Party is using the Capacity Building Strategy by raising awareness about the need to conserve and manage cultural and natural heritage. • A training conducted in February 2020 to improve the capacity of local communities and to collect information for the design of a national strategy for capacity development • Community based protection and conservation of the Royal Tombs has proved to be a very good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed the UNESCO 3rd periodic report 	<p>conservation and management of heritage sites. This could be ready by 2022.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radio programme to stir dialogue on a national level to continue • Design national strategy for capacity building • World Heritage Resource Manual 'Preparing World Heritage Nominations' was used in preparation of the tentative list

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (by interview, Sept - Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
	<p>practice whereby community is involved in all steps of the project. They are the direct descendants of the Tu'i Tonga dynasty and they still have that pride with identifying themselves with the property. Two conservation works, carried out by the community itself, are being completed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General awareness of communities, the general public and decision makers was identified as poor • There is a low level of activity frequency for courses/activities for students within school program. • World Heritage Resource Manual 'Preparing World Heritage Nominations' was used in preparation of tentative list 		

Looking forward

A shift in perception regarding heritage in the general community is required and awareness of heritage also needs to be developed within Government, and across sectors. Ad-hoc awareness activities and products have been used as allowed by time and resources, and community and national awareness activities have been undertaken with some good results where communities are active participants in the dialogue. However, a more strategic approach needs to be adopted.

Tonga is currently working on legislation covering heritage, which will assist in clarifying heritage responsibilities within ministries and improve cross-government awareness of how different ministries share these responsibilities. With regular changes to government (every four years) heritage legislation may assist in maintaining continuity for heritage issues through these regular governance changes. Currently, the Ministry of Tourism is working with the Attorney General's Office to write the legislation, which is now in its first draft. Public consultation will start in early 2022. Climate change effects, which are contributing to an increasing number of natural disasters and impacts on vulnerable coastal areas, must be considered in future heritage planning.

Possible cultural sites that may be considered for future WH potential include fortress sites in Ha'apai and Vava'u. Some work has been undertaken on these sites. Natural sites, could include Vava'u, linked to whale watching. As the processes for WH tentative listing and WH nomination can be lengthy and onerous, there is always the option of using Tonga's own internal heritage protection measures such as the application of management guidelines and through improving awareness and sensitivity for heritage for important sites.

Countries are encouraged to continue to seek and advocate for specific funding needs.

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
Legislation	Office of the Attorney General		Mid 2022

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
Finalize the first draft of the heritage legislation including clearly delineating the respective heritage roles and responsibilities of the different ministries			
Undertake public consultation and cross-government consultation on the draft heritage legislation.	Culture Division of the Ministry of Tourism		Late 2022
Cross-government collaboration Use the opportunity provided through the drafting of heritage legislation to strengthen an ongoing approach to collaboration between the responsibilities for natural and cultural heritage streams within government ministries.	Culture Division of the Ministry of Tourism Ministry of Environment		2022
Funding Ministries responsible for funding submissions to apply to significant sources such as GEF and GCF, to be made aware of the connections to heritage protection and management and to seek to identify portions for heritage funding from within these larger allocations	Culture Division of the Ministry of Tourism	GEF GCF	From 2022 and ongoing
Ensure there is full awareness of all funding opportunities relating to WH and heritage management more generally, and known opportunities are accessed and mobilized wherever possible.	Culture Division of the Ministry of Tourism Ministry of Environment		From 2022 and ongoing
WH nomination Continue with the nomination process for the Ancient Capitals of the Kingdom of Tonga site.	Culture Division of the Ministry of Tourism	UNESCO Pacific Office	Ongoing from 2022
Review and reprioritize potential sites for WH Tentative Listing Review cultural sites on the WH Tentative Listing and determine whether they remain preferred sites. (ie: assess the challenges associated with current tentative sites and consider whether it is still feasible to move them to WH listing or whether land tenure issues will prove too difficult to resolve) Consider the potential for any other natural, cultural, mixed, serial or transnational sites, that were not originally identified for their potential to be submitted for WH Tentative Listing but have since emerged as potential sites to be submitted (e.g. Vava'u [linked to whale watching], Vatthe Island) Give consideration to how natural and cultural values can be mutually considered, promoted and managed through potential WH recognition. Undertake an assessment of the relative priority of potential sites being considered for submission as Tentative Listings, based on 'reality-check' factors such as: 'fit' with Tongan values of culture, governance, communities and nature; WH OUV criteria; existing site documentation; baseline site information and research needs; funding and human resources availability; intra-government collaboration arrangements; level of landowner and community interest and support; political interest and support; awareness raising required; capacity to fulfill future management requirements including expectations on community and/or landowners; potential for sustainable funding streams.	Culture Division of the Ministry of Tourism Ministry of Environment	UNESCO Pacific Office	From late 2022

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
Oversee the preparation and submission of a revised and prioritized set of sites for submission to either the WH Tentative List or the WH List.			
Capacity development Continue to build a more strategic capacity development approach around the proven successful processes of participative community involvement.	Culture Division of the Ministry of Tourism Ministry of Environment		Ongoing from 2022
Ensure that all training and educational opportunities relating to WH are known about and that suitable people are supported to participate, particularly those who are establishing their careers or roles in heritage such as government staff, site managers, NGOs, CBOs and community leaders.			Ongoing from 2022
Be aware of, and utilize, important guideline resources such as Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties; World Heritage Resource Manual Preparing World Heritage Nominations; Enhancing our Heritage Toolkit - Assessing management effectiveness of natural World Heritage Sites	Culture Division of the Ministry of Tourism Ministry of Environment		Ongoing from 2022
Refresh and reposition the notion of a WH program for Tonga with senior government and political levels, including embedding key documents such as the PRWHAP 2021-2025 more visibly for decision makers.	Culture Division of the Ministry of Tourism Ministry of Environment		Late 2022
Prepare and conduct an information program with key stakeholders, government agencies and decision-makers about the provisions and implications of the draft heritage legislation. On the basis of this program, build in a broader set of 'plain language' information to strengthen understanding of WH more generally including its relationship with Tongan values and aspirations, potential opportunities and benefits, WH Convention and processes, management, support and relationships with allied Conventions such as the ICH Convention.	Culture Division of the Ministry of Tourism Ministry of Environment		Late 2022
Conduct information and engagement programs with identified target stakeholders and audiences.	Culture Division of the Ministry of Tourism Ministry of Environment		From 2023 and ongoing

3.14 TUVALU

Challenges in implementing World Heritage actions, 2016 – 2020

Tuvalu is one of the smallest countries on earth by population (around 12,000) and land mass, consisting of 9 low lying atolls comprising only 26 square kilometres in area. This contrasts greatly to their Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) at approximately 900,000 square kilometres. The geography of Tuvalu and the high degree of remoteness presents issues for progressing its ambitions for WH and mostly because of the need to consult with, inform, and gain support from, all citizens including the many living on the numerous, distant island groups. Inter-island sea transport can be irregular and unreliable.

The Director of Culture in the Ministry of Local Government and Agriculture is the single staff member of this one-person department and the one responsible for all heritage matters, including

WH. This extremely low resource base greatly limits the capacity to manage and progress projects. Budget and financial mechanisms have been nil to minimal. At a 2019 meeting in Paris⁹, Tuvalu was able to settle debts that, up until that time, had stopped its eligibility for obtaining financial assistance from UNESCO.

Restrictions brought about by Covid-19 have slowed or halted many activities leading to delayed project schedules. Climate change-driven events including cyclones and sea level rise with coastal inundation has also created issues with heritage site degradation. Funding and local capacity are the weakest areas for culture and heritage goals. Tuvalu is one of only a small handful of UNESCO Member States that has not yet ratified the WH Convention, largely due to its significant challenges, rather than a lack of desire.

Review of implementation of national priorities - PRWH Action Plan 2016 to 2020

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (by interview, Sept - Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. World Heritage Convention consultation to outer island 2. Review Cultural Policy and Structure 3. Prepare a nomination for the Tentative List 	N/A	<p>An awareness program on WH including consultation aspects, has occurred in the main centre of Tuvalu population (Funafuti) and involving government officials, community representatives, NGOs and civil society.</p> <p>A national heritage register is in place however it is yet to be populated with any information and work remains to be done on the digital platform.</p> <p>Tuvalu has a Culture Policy which guides site management and informs government decisions - there is good support for this policy, and it gives local heritage sites a level of 'internal' protection.</p> <p>The National Sustainable Development Plan mandates to preserve and manage heritage and culture is in the top 5 national priorities in this Plan.</p>	<p>Tuvalu has an ongoing commitment to ratifying the WH Convention, as its resources allow.</p> <p>A policy is intended to be developed to help contextualize the reality for Tuvalu of ratification of the WH Convention.</p> <p>A 'moving forward' plan including budget forecasts, and the steps to ratification of the WH Convention, has been intended, but not achieved as yet.</p>

Looking forward

Tuvalu has an ongoing commitment to ratifying the Convention, however the pre-requisite awareness and endorsement program on WH including consultation aspects, has only been able to be undertaken in the main centre of Tuvalu population, in Funafuti. This occurred in 2015 with funding assistance via the Japanese Funds-in-Trust, through the "Capacity Building to Support the Conservation of World Heritage Sites and Enhance Sustainable Development of Local Communities in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)" and with the assistance of the World Heritage Centre and UNESCO Apia office. It enabled the engagement of a UNESCO technical specialist to be on the

⁹ (<https://en.unesco.org/generalconference/40>)

ground for the activities in Tuvalu. The aim was to assist Tuvalu with WH awareness raising with key stakeholders and with a main focus on the safeguarding of Tuvaluan cultural and natural heritage and building capacity of the Tuvalu national authorities and various stakeholders in topics including the process and procedures of the WH Convention.

The general response to this 2015 engagement on WH was positive, as Tuvaluans place great value and pride in their heritage, and the spirit of the WHC aligns with these values. As these last awareness activities were some years back, there is a need for a refresher awareness process, and especially now that funding assistance opportunity has been cleared with UNESCO. Extending this process to outer island communities is an essential element of moving toward convention ratification. Awareness should also cover related conventions such as the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, 2001 and the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2003.

There are several site types that are being considered for their special heritage value including ancient habitation sites (the old sites of the old people). Christian religion sites are also considered very important in Tuvalu and church and chapel sites are often the key cultural sites in each community. There is opportunity to begin populating the national heritage register. A national cultural committee can be initiated to conduct initial screening of heritage lists however they would require specific technical support for this process. For the PRWHAP 2016-2020, Tuvalu committed to a targeted set of three key actions, and these remain relevant for the 2021-2025 period.

Countries are encouraged to continue to seek and advocate for specific funding needs

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
Ratification of the WH Convention			
Develop a program and workplan with budget and timing, for a refreshed WH awareness campaign, including the creation of effective communication resources.			2022
Conduct a WH awareness campaign for all eight atoll communities to build understanding of WH including its relationship with Tuvaluan values and aspirations, potential opportunities and benefits, WH Convention and processes, management, support and relationships with allied Conventions such as the ICH Convention. Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage.	Ministry of Local Government and Agriculture	UNESCO Pacific Office	From 2022
Capacity development			
Ensure that all training opportunities relating to WH and heritage management more generally, are known about and pursued.	Ministry of Local Government and Agriculture		Ongoing from 2022
Bringing natural and cultural heritage together			
Review the connections and relationships between the main government bodies and community organisations with responsibilities for, or interests in, heritage and consider ways that links across natural and cultural heritage could be strengthened.	Ministry of Local Government and Agriculture		2022
Give consideration to how natural and cultural values can be mutually considered, promoted and managed through potential WH recognition.			
Cultural mapping			
	Ministry of Local Government and Agriculture		Ongoing from 2022

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
Maintain the cultural mapping program and consider how this may be extended to natural heritage and which partners would be involved.			
Funding Ministries responsible for funding submissions to significant sources such as GEF and GCF, to be made aware of the connections to heritage protection and management and to seek to identify portions for heritage funding from within these larger allocations	Ministry of Justice, Communications and Foreign Affairs Ministry of Home Affairs and Rural Development Ministry of Local Government and Agriculture	GEF GCF	Ongoing from 2022
Ensure there is full awareness of all funding opportunities relating to WH and heritage management more generally, and known opportunities are accessed and mobilized wherever possible.	Ministry of Local Government and Agriculture		From 2022
Action focus Embed key documents, such as the PRWHAP 2021-2025, more visibly for decision makers.	Ministry of Local Government and Agriculture		Mid 2022

3.15 VANUATU

Challenges in implementing World Heritage actions, 2016 – 2020

Vanuatu ratified the WH Convention in 2002, had 2 natural sites and 3 cultural sites listed as Tentative List sites by 2005 and had one property (Chief Roi Mata's Domain cultural site) inscribed as a WH site in 2008. With the noteworthy exception of the WH site and its ongoing management, that initial period of quite successful WH activity has declined over the past decade.

The Vanuatu Cultural Center (Kaljoral Senta-VKS) is the focal point for the WH and it has generally taken a lead on heritage issues, including WH and natural sites, even though its mandate is primarily cultural. There is no explicit ministry for cultural affairs in Vanuatu. The VKS is a statutory body whose core role is to protect, preserve and promote cultural heritage in Vanuatu but it is not a policy setting body. The Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation has also had, and continues to have, key roles associated with WH, including the preparation of Tentative List nomination dossiers and in consideration of other sites with potential for WH recognition. They have also been involved as observers to the inscribed WH site process. This ministry has had a more recent focus on the protection and management of the tentatively listed sites, and other important sites, via the Environment Protection and Conservation Act or through alternative international designations such as Ramsar listing or UNESCO Geoparks. Sites they have assessed include wetlands (traditional taro irrigation systems/gardens) that are integrated with conservation areas in Vanuatu, and highlighting the natural/cultural connection. The Vanuatu Department of Forestry has also been involved in work on sites being assessed for their biodiversity conservation needs and potential. The Fisheries Department and Geology and Mines Department have also been involved in site protection initiatives for specific sites, including UNESCO Geopark considerations and other types of protected area designation.

As is the case for all Pacific countries, natural and cultural values in Vanuatu are intertwined and various government agencies find themselves working together for similar purposes around WH, yet without clear mandates on roles and responsibilities. With this informal, multi-sectoral situation, and the lack of a recognized lead point with legislative authority, and any formalized structure for collaboration and communication, there is a need for national heritage legislation to provide a clear

regulatory framework to assist in a more focused, coordinated, and better funded approach to heritage, including WH.

Vanuatu is a signatory to numerous conventions, including the UNCBD and the UNFCCC, both of which are seemingly well understood in Vanuatu. However, the WH Convention is not nearly as well known and does not have the same level of promotion and communications or information sharing and especially on topics such as WH listing processes. This may be due to the smaller funding attached to WH, the relatively smaller scale and reach of WH projects, lower communication generally, and the lack of a formal government lead for heritage.

Low human resources are a main challenge. The VKS has only two staff focusing on heritage and people in these positions can change or sometimes find themselves in 'limbo' situations due to organisational shifts. VKS staff are responsible for every aspect of cultural heritage work done by government in Vanuatu – from EIAs to festivals to site recording and with WH being only a small portion of their roles. Staff changes mean that institutional knowledge and memory can be lost. This also affects the rate of progress on WH work such as public awareness and site documentation.

Land ownership is a fundamental component to be recognised and accommodated in any land use and/or land designating in Vanuatu. In the case of the Chief Roi Mata WH site, it was the community who sought WH status, and this was very positive towards its listing and subsequent management. However, for other potential or tentative WH sites, landowner concerns or needs must be effectively addressed to gain support for any level of WH recognition. Once financial benefits are perceived, it can create a range of reactions and frictions within communities and between landowners about the way sites should be managed. Although there is often good local understanding about recognised cultural sites, there is a lack of public awareness about the importance of sites in a WH context including the formalisation processes associated with WH. Capacity development and technical support is required in the areas of WH nomination processes, legislative drafting, funding, reporting, management plans and WH requirements generally.

Regarding the Chief Roi Mata Domain WH site, there is no allocated funding by government for the site manager (the site is community-managed, so the site manager is a community member). Funding for a valuable Field Workers Network that was originally a highly supportive resource for the management of the Chief Roi Mata Domain WH site and a main contributor to its success as a WH site, has unfortunately waned.

There can be a lack of understanding by other parties, whether private or government, about WH site requirements and natural or cultural values of sites (e.g., pressure by a major cruise ship company to develop a large infrastructure at Lelepa Island which is part of the WH site). With the drop in tourism due to COVID19 the WH site management committee has been unable to derive income. COVID19 has also stalled most cultural work, including outside technical support. Some tentative or potential tentative sites are subject to general deterioration or impacts if intervention does not occur. Tentative sites were proposed some time ago and this list is now outdated and potentially not aligned with current situations. Some sites face land tenure issues that mean they may be too difficult to move ahead with. A view from the tour operators that utilize the President Coolidge shipwreck TL site is that they do not want WH recognition as it may result in overly restrictive provisions, and they see their efforts as largely being complementary to the sites' values.

Review of implementation of national priorities - PRWH Action Plan 2016 to 2020

National priority actions (Pacific Regional WH Action Plan 2016 – 2020)	Record of actions taken (3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting)	Record of actions taken (by interview, Sept - Oct 2021)	Other priority actions (arising during 2016 – 2020)
No actions identified	3 rd Qtr. Periodic Reporting for Fiji and Levuka Historical Port Town could not be accessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the Field Workers Network (recently waning) • Tourism sector of government (if well aligned) has proved to be an aid to WH aspirations • Community interaction with tourism is positive • Government departments have worked well on an informal basis to progress recognition of important natural and cultural sites • Completed the UNESCO 3rd periodic report for Vanuatu and the Chief Roi Mata Domain WH site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If WH is to be progressed more effectively, including access to sufficient resources, it will require greater awareness building across government and embedding in national policy and, preferably, legislative frameworks • Strengthen collaboration between the responsibilities for natural and cultural streams within government ministries via a more structured approach, such as through a ‘heritage taskforce’ • Review and reprioritization of potential sites for Tentative Listing

Looking forward

A range of government ministries with responsibilities for natural resources, biodiversity, fisheries, and forestry, and the VKS with its cultural heritage focus, work well together at officer level on joint initiatives. However, a more structured approach, such as through a ‘heritage taskforce’ would be helpful for strengthening collaboration, information sharing and joint funding proposals. If the funding and capacity were available for commencing work on heritage legislation, this would help to add a further level of formality, leadership, role delineation, collaboration, and funding focus to the idea of ‘combined forces’ for heritage.

The Chief Roi Mata Domain WH site has been an important example of the benefits of local initiative, dedication, awareness, and participation for a WH site and in seeing livelihood and social benefits that can come with a well-managed site. The local community has been central to the site nomination and its management and functions well with the tourism industry in a co-supportive arrangement. Community interaction with tourists is positive but could benefit from some specific capacity development to ensure this interaction continues to be positive. The tourism sector of government and the private tourism sector (if well aligned) has proved to be an aid to WH aspirations in Vanuatu.

The Field Worker Network has been very useful for heritage work as they act as important local organisers, coordinators, facilitators, connectors, researchers, and observers. This network, established via the VKS, has been especially fundamental to the effectiveness of management for the WH site and requires financial support.

There is a strong need for building more engaging awareness platforms rather than provision of technical style information (i.e. attention grabbing videos produced with inputs from both environment and heritage streams). While capacity development is often best done in a hands-on format, virtual workshops, exchanges, webinars, at national level have potential for engaging a wider audience, and perhaps more effectively, more regularly and to wider audiences.

There are potential new sites that could be considered for WH tentative listing. For example, the Teouma Lapita site has all the hallmarks for WH recognition in many ways – unique and high cultural significance, a single (and supportive) landowner, an actively engaged local community, a good working relationship with Shefa provincial authorities, ample existing documentation, a focus for cultural festivals and close to the capital and major port of Port Vila (tourism). An existing tentatively listed site - Lake Letas, also has good documentation in place, is a proposed Geopark site and soon to become a Ramsar site, has a management plan and committee in place and consultations have occurred with landowners. However, and despite their solid potential, these sites still require significant and concerted efforts to move them to WH listing if that is the objective. The Lake Letas site was considerably assisted in moving forward in association with the FAO/GEF Forestry and Protected Area Management (FPAM) project. However, the conclusion of this project in 2018 and the subsequent end of strong external technical and funding support, has effectively deferred most work on this initiative as internal resources are simply too low to proceed with any pace.

Countries are encouraged to continue to seek and advocate for specific funding needs.

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
<p>Collaboration</p> <p>The Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation and the Vanuatu Cultural Center (Kaljoral Senta-VKS) convene for the purposes of agreeing to establish a structured meeting forum - a 'heritage taskforce' – (with Cabinet support) that enables the two key bodies that address the natural environment and cultural heritage to have regular and collaborative discussion, planning, implementation and reporting of actions associated with the WH Convention.</p>	Vanuatu Cultural Center (Kaljoral Senta-VKS)		2022
<p>Legislation</p> <p>Commence preliminary discussion on the idea of establishing national heritage legislation.</p>	'heritage taskforce' (once in place)		2023
<p>Funding</p> <p>Ministries responsible for funding submissions to significant sources such as GEF and GCF, to be remain aware of the connections to heritage protection and management and to seek to identify portions for heritage funding from within these larger allocations.</p>	Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation, Meteorology, Geo-Hazards, Energy, Environment and Disaster Management	GEF GCF	From 2022 and ongoing
<p>Ensure there is full awareness of all funding opportunities relating to WH and heritage management more generally, and known opportunities are accessed and mobilized wherever possible.</p>	Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation, Meteorology, Geo-Hazards, Energy, Environment and Disaster Management Vanuatu Cultural Center (Kaljoral Senta-VKS)		From 2022 and ongoing
<p>Recognize the key role of the Field Worker Network for its support to natural and cultural management and allocate sufficient budget for its continuation.</p>	Vanuatu Cultural Center (Kaljoral Senta-VKS) Department of Environmental		From 2022 and ongoing

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
	Protection and Conservation		
<p>Review and reprioritize potential sites for WH Tentative Listing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review natural and cultural sites on the WH Tentative Listing and determine whether they remain preferred sites. Consider natural, cultural and mixed sites, that were not originally identified for their potential to be submitted for WH Tentative Listing but have since emerged as potential sites to be submitted (eg; Takuma Lapita site) Consider how natural and cultural values can be mutually considered, promoted and managed through potential WH recognition. Undertake an assessment of the relative priority of potential sites being considered for submission as Tentative Listings, and based on 'reality-check' factors such as: 'fit' with Ni-Vanuatu values of culture, governance, communities and nature; WH OUV criteria; existing site documentation; baseline site information and research needs; funding and human resources availability; intra-government collaboration arrangements; level of landowner and community interest and support; political interest and support; awareness raising required; partnership opportunities; capacity to fulfill future management requirements including expectations on community and/or landowners; potential for sustainable funding streams. Oversee the preparation and submission of a revised and prioritized set of sites to the WH Tentative List. 	<p>Vanuatu Cultural Center (Kaljoral Senta-VKS)</p> <p>Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation</p>	UNESCO Pacific Office	From late 2022 to 2025
<p>Capacity development</p> <p>Maintain a regular program of training for the Chief Roi Mata Domain WH site management committee, local communities and site workers to maintain understanding of WH values, the cultural values of the site, the regulations around management, site management, implementation of WH and legal obligations.</p> <p>Design and implement a specific capacity development program for communities that interact with the tourism industry on TL sites or the WH site.</p>	<p>Vanuatu Cultural Center (Kaljoral Senta-VKS)</p>	UNESCO	Ongoing from 2022
<p>Ensure that all training and educational opportunities relating to WH are known about and that suitable people are supported to participate, particularly those who are establishing their careers or roles in heritage (natural and cultural) or have critical roles (egs; government staff, site managers, site workers, NGO's and CBO's, community leaders) and capitalize on the potential for using virtual workshops, exchanges, webinars, etc..</p>	<p>Vanuatu Cultural Center (Kaljoral Senta-VKS)</p> <p>Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation</p>		Ongoing from 2022
<p>Engagement and information sharing</p> <p>Embed key documents, such as the PRWHAP 2021-2025, more visibly for decision makers.</p>	<p>Vanuatu Cultural Center (Kaljoral Senta-VKS)</p> <p>Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation</p>		Mid 2022
<p>Establish a coordinated approach to developing and sharing information about WH.</p>	'heritage taskforce' (once in place)		
<p>Review any communication materials currently available or used for informing on WH, assess their scope, purpose and effectiveness with various target audiences, and determine any new products that should be developed.</p>	<p>Vanuatu Cultural Center (Kaljoral Senta-VKS)</p>		2022

Priority actions for World Heritage 2021-2025	Lead	Funding	Timing
Develop contextualized 'plain language' information about WH and Ni-Vanuatu for sharing at community and government levels – ie; heritage values, benefits, opportunities, WH Convention and processes, management, support and relationships with allied Conventions such as the ICH Convention and Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage	Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation		Late 2022