Red footed booby, Fiji © Steph Borrelle

He rau ringa e oti ai – many hands make light work

Seabird Action Plan

BirdLife INTERNATIONAL

Partnership for nature and people

SPREP

Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

42

seabird species are known or suspected to breed in the Pacific

>10 are Endemic*

*taxonomic uncertainty of some

Endemics

Fiji petrel
Phoenix petrel
Collared petrel
Murphy’s petrel
Tahiti petrel
Beck’s petrel
Henderson petrel
Polynesian storm petrel

Heinroth’s shearwater
Christmas shearwater
Rapa shearwater

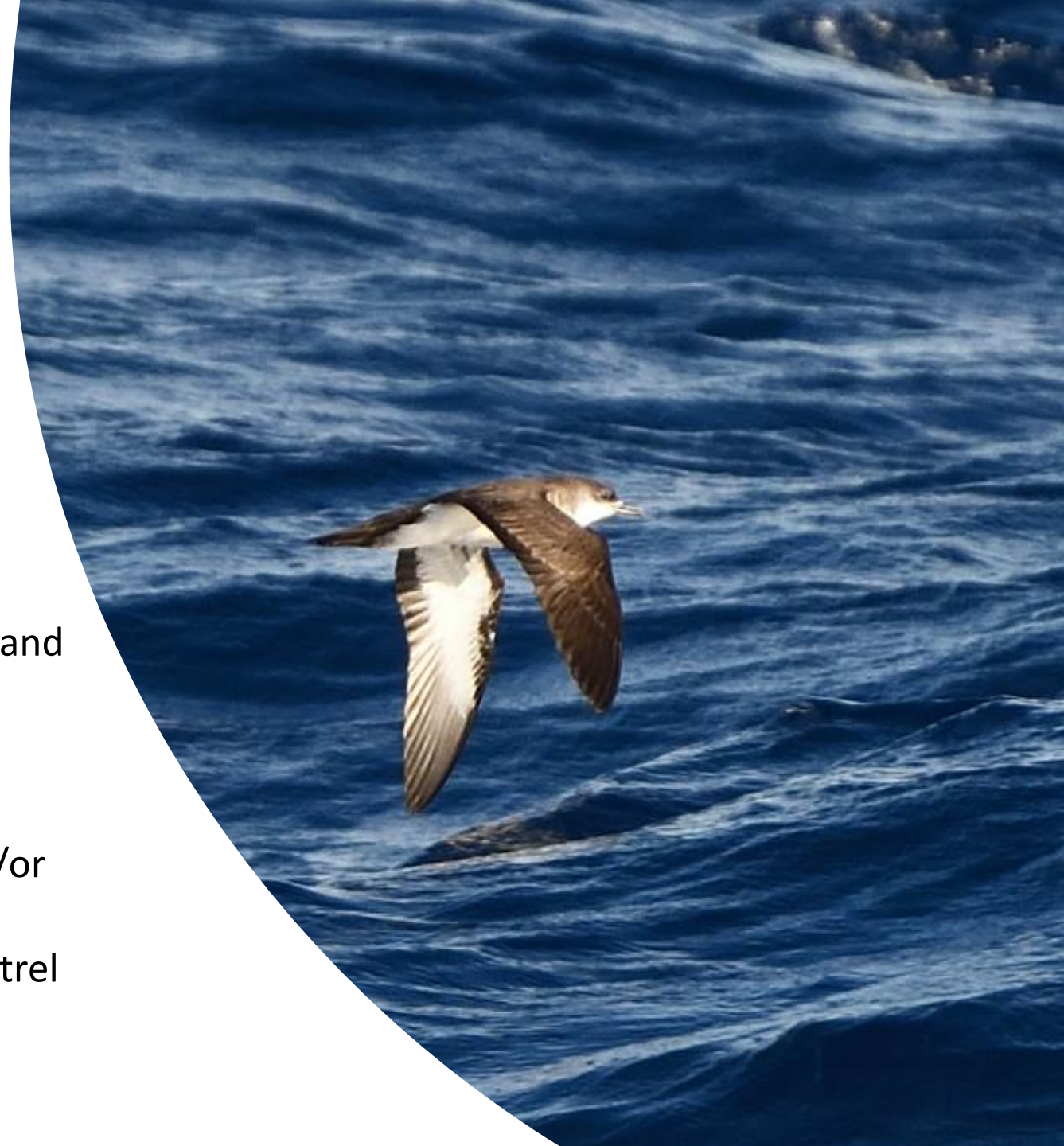
Grey-backed tern
Little white tern
New Caledonian fairy tern

At least three potentially undescribed streaked storm petrel taxa:

- ‘Coral Sea’ or ‘New Caledonian’ Storm-petrel,
- ‘Marquesas’ Storm-petrel and
- ‘Samoan’ storm petrel

**Taxonomic uncertainty over several taxa*

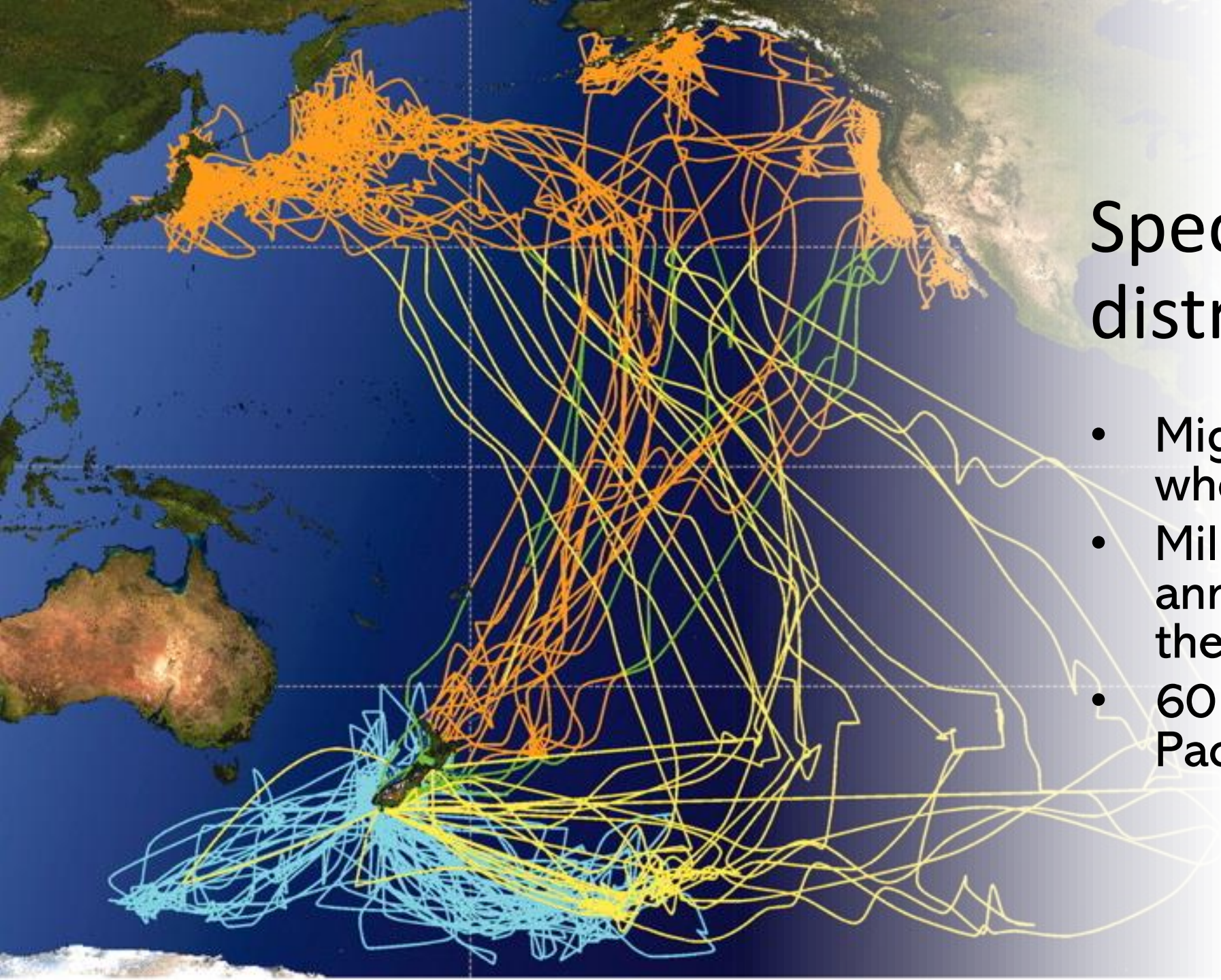
- Tropical Shearwaters // Melanesian, Micronesian and Polynesian
- White-necked Petrel and/or Vanuatu Petrel
- Collared Petrel and/or Magnificent Petrel
- White-winged Petrel and/or New Caledonian and/or Gould’s Petrel
- White-bellied Storm Petrel and/or Titan Storm-petrel
- Fairy Tern



Species distribution

Country	Seabirds
American Samoa	18
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	**34**
Cook Islands	20
Federated States of Micronesia	**34**
Fiji	30
French Polynesia	**40**
Guam	26
Kiribati	22
Marshall Islands	35
Nauru	9

Country	Seabirds
New Caledonia	?
Niue	9
Palau	26
Papua New Guinea	?
Samoa	9
Solomon Islands	?
Tokelau	4
Tonga	22
Tuvalu	9
Vanuatu	?
Wallis and Futuna	21



Species distribution

- Migrations can cover whole oceans
- Millions of seabirds annually migrate across the Pacific ocean
- 60 species recorded in Pacific Island countries

Cultural & Social importance

Traditionally harvested species :

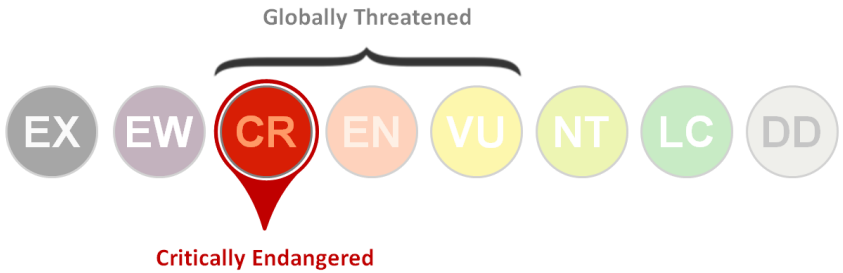
- Collared petrel
- Tern eggs
- Wedge-tailed shearwater…

Navigation and culturally significant totems

Tourism & income generation

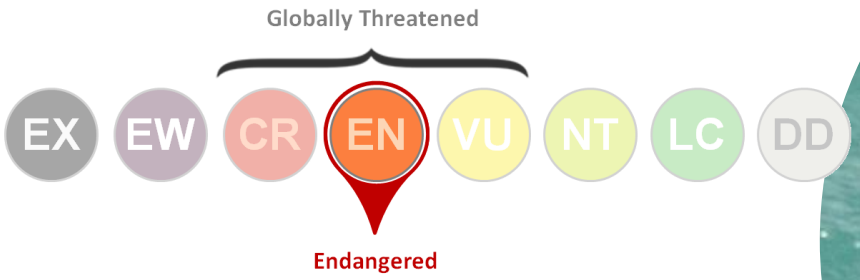
Ecosystem engineers

- Alter soil qualities (guano & burrowing)
- Influence island vegetation
- Influence biological communities
- Improve nearshore marine & coral reef health and productivity
- Climate resilience



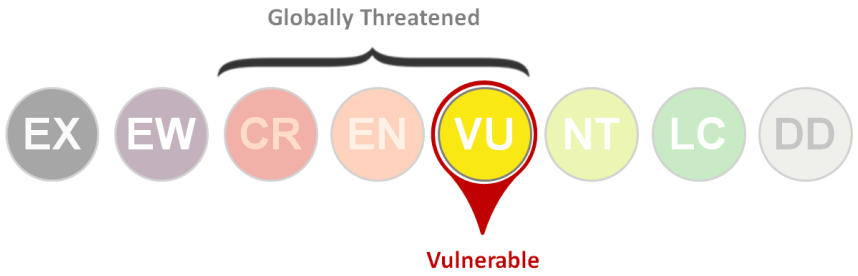
THREE species are Critically Endangered

- Fiji petrel (*Pseudobulweria macgillivrayi*)
- Beck's Petrel (*Pseudobulweria becki*)
- Rapa Shearwater (*Puffinus myrtae*)



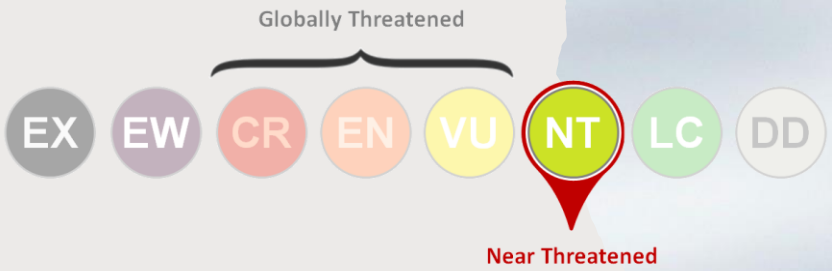
THREE species are Endangered

- Henderson petrel (*Pterodroma atrata*)
- Phoenix petrel (*Pterodroma alba*)
- Polynesian storm petrel (*Nesofregetta fuliginosa*)



FIVE species are Vulnerable

- White-necked Petrel (*Pterodroma cervicalis*)
- Collared Petrel (*Pterodroma brevipes*)
- White-winged/Gould's Petrel (*Pterodroma leucoptera*)
- Heinroth's Shearwater (*Puffinus heinrothi*)
- New Caledonian Fairy Tern (*Sternula nereis exsul*)



ONE species is

Near Threatened

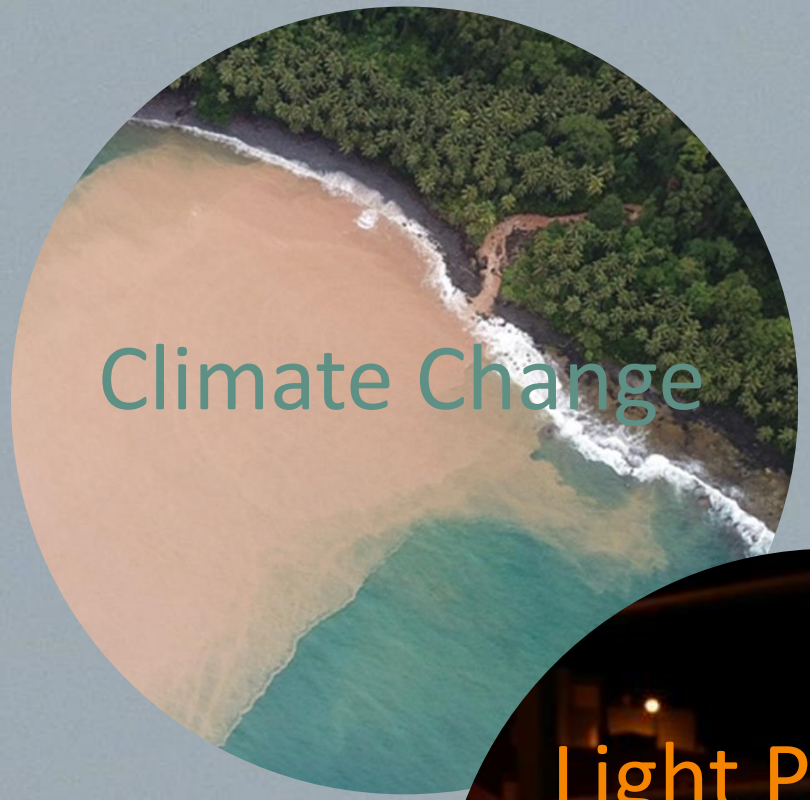
- Tahiti Petrel (*Pseudobulweria rostrata*)

BirdLife Pacific has successfully cleared 33 sites of invasive predators

Working with communities to evaluate sustainability of harvests

Long-term port-based outreach program to support implementation of mitigation measures

Working with communities to assess plastic ingestion in harvested species


Climate Change


Light Pollution


Disease

Research and Monitoring Actions:

1. Data is collected, centralised and accessible.

- Identify existing datasets on Pacific seabirds, update and expand the Regional Seabird Colony and Tracking Database and ensure access through SPREP's Pacific Environment Portal.
- Promote **access and data submission to the portal** amongst members and partners.

2. Knowledge on seabird breeding, population, trends, diet and foraging distributions, ecosystem impacts, and threats is improved.

- **Survey known colonies for population estimates and confirm colony status of suspected breeding sites**.
- Develop projects to **locate breeding locations** for species currently unknown.
- Identify priority species for **tracking projects** to determine at sea foraging distribution and migration
- Identify **priority species and sites for demographic and diet studies**.
- Assess colony-scale threats.
- Develop and publish a guide on standardised research and monitoring methodology.
- Encourage **Pacific island nationals to undertake post graduate studies on seabird conservation/management**

Climate change Actions:

1. Vulnerable seabird breeding sites are protected.

Investigate options for protection and/or mitigation of risks to species breeding on low-lying islands at risk from rising sea level and storm events.

2. Seabird conservation is incorporated into nature-based solutions to build ecosystem resilience.

Develop **evidence-based management plans incorporating seabird conservation to build ecosystem resilience** in both terrestrial and near-shore/coral reef environments.

Ecosystems and Habitat protection Actions:

1. Critical habitats for seabirds are protected.

- Identify and/or **restore suitable alternative seabird habitat.**
- Nationally protect these areas and/or **Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs),** and target for protection through national/regional planning processes.
- **Develop capacity within local communities to undertake and monitor conservation management and restoration work.**
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) processes take account of seabird breeding sites and flyways.
- **Implement the Conservation and Management Plan of the Convention on Migratory Species** (CMS) for seabirds and their habitats.

2. Prioritise marine areas for protection to align with seabird foraging and migration hotspots.

- **Identify priority marine areas for protection** using information from seabird tracking projects.
- Develop a network of dynamic marine protection zones for key seabird foraging areas.

Threat Reduction Actions:

1. Reduce direct and indirect land-based threats to seabirds.

- Control or **eradicate invasive alien species**
- Seabird and egg **harvest levels are appropriate** under traditional or legislative frameworks to promote recovery of depleted and declining populations.
- **Infrastructure and industry to take account of seabird attraction to lights**
- Investigate potential **stressors on seabird populations** that can contribute to outbreaks of disease.

2. Reduce marine-based threats to seabirds, including in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction.

- **Enforce regulations** around seabird by-catch in Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs)
- Undertake **port-based outreach with fishing vessels** on required conservation and management measures for mitigation of seabird by-catch
- **Monitor the effectiveness of provisions within RFMOs**
- Investigate potential **indirect effects from fisheries on seabird populations**
- Monitor the nature and **incidence of plastic ingestion** in seabirds
- Quantify the **impacts of lights on seabirds** attracted to vessels and marine structures operating at night and develop methods of mitigation.

Cultural Significance and Value Actions:

1. Traditional knowledge, stories and customs about seabirds and their place in the PI cultural landscape are incorporated appropriately.

- **Work with traditional knowledge holders** to understand historical and current distribution of seabirds, long-term trends, and potential for restoration.
- **Preserve and protect the traditional knowledge** and values associated with seabirds
- Artists and artisans within the region to incorporate the significance of Pacific seabirds within their work

2. Traditional knowledge informs management systems

Integrate cultural practices, values and knowledge associated with seabirds into management plans, national policies and legislation.

Legislation, Policy, and Management Actions:

1. Legislation, policy and management plans include measurable outcomes for seabird conservation

- **Legislative mechanisms for conservation are reviewed** to assess where seabird conservation actions can be applied within existing frameworks and identify gaps.
- **Integrate seabird conservation into regional and international initiatives including the Convention of Migratory Species (CMS)**

Ecotourism and Livelihoods Actions:

1. Seabird related marine-based ecotourism contributes to the local economy

- Review marine-based tourism including **economic benefits/value** and level of interest in the region's seabirds
- Identify **opportunities to support wildlife tourism** for seabirds at the community level
- Encourage tour operators to **train and employ PI nationals** as nature guides, and as boat drivers with respect to seabirds
- **Pacific island nationals to start and run marine wildlife ventures**

2. Restored seabird colonies improve local fisheries

Collaborate with fishers to develop adaptive fishing practices where seabird restoration is occurring to demonstrate impacts on nearshore and reef fish productivity.

Capacity Building and Collaboration

Actions:

1. Capacity at national and community level for monitoring and management of seabird populations is increased.

- **Build skills and knowledge** in mapping, recording and monitoring of seabird populations, and participate in conservation programmes
- Develop **practical training modules** and/or workshops for survey methods
- Investigate options for providing **scholarships in marine science and social science relating to Pacific seabird ecology**
- Develop workshop programmes for **effective research, conservation, and management** drawing on expertise from throughout the region.
- Develop **in-country capacity to monitor existing harvesting** of seabirds to ensure sustainability.

2. National, regional, and international collaboration is enhanced.

- Encourage the **transfer of knowledge and expertise** about seabirds between projects through exchange opportunities for conservation workers
- Establish a **Pacific seabird expert advisory group**
- Enhance international cooperation for the protection of Pacific seabirds through the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and the Agreement for the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP).

Waiho i te toipoto, kaua i te toiroa

- Let us keep close together, not far apart


Happy 29th
SPREP!