



# **Pacific Progress on ICT Development**

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# Outline

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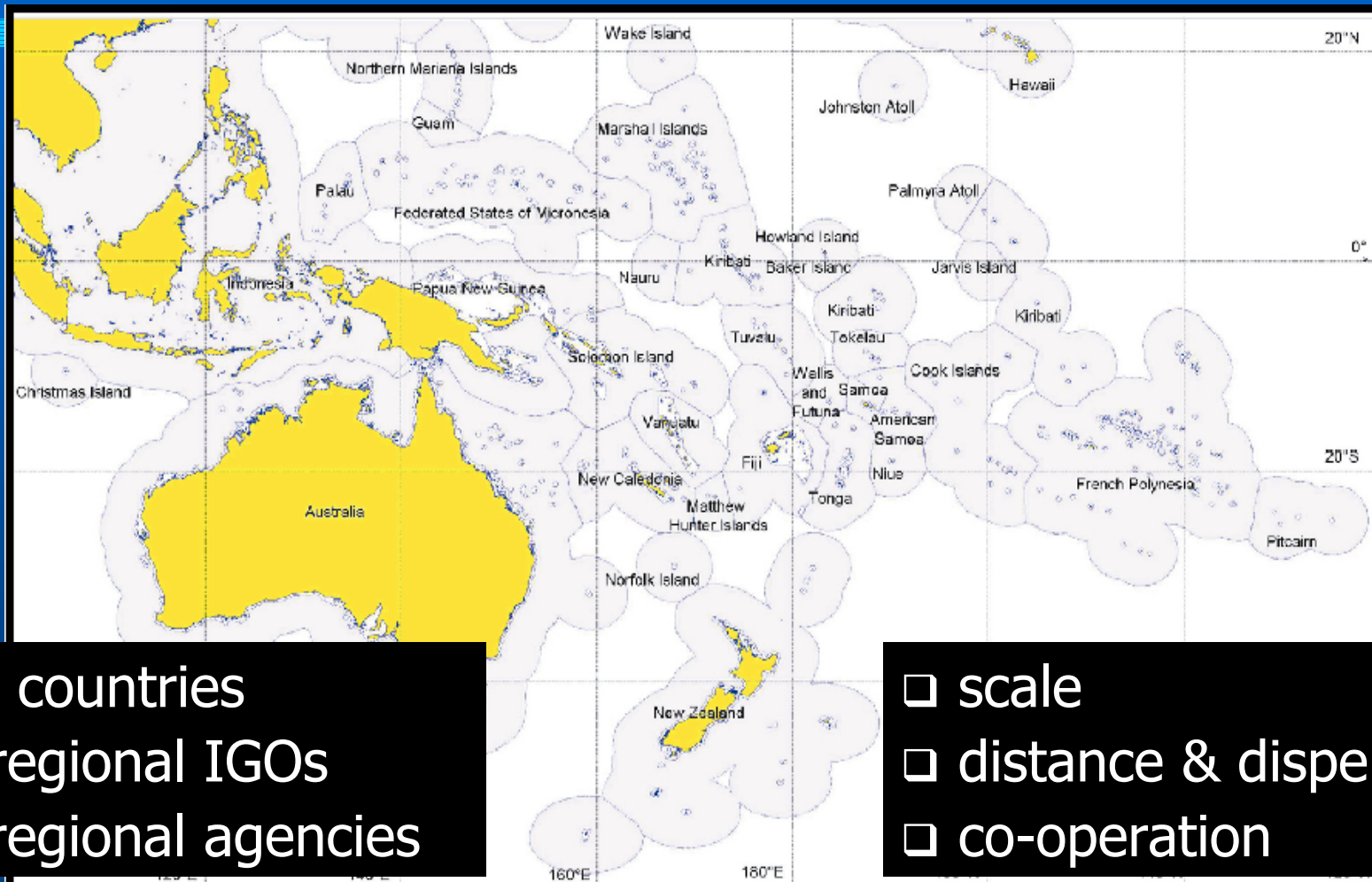
- **The Pacific context and progress**
- **Current regional cooperation**
- **A framework for coordination**
- **Priority activities and proposals.**

# Why regional cooperation?

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- National plans in health, education, economic development require rational development of ICT
- Ministers directed improved efficiency, enhanced business environment, support for development
- Regional coordination, combined with national guidelines, will increase efficiency and impact
- Member countries and regional organisations together can leverage resources.

# Regional diversity, commonality



- ❑ 22 countries
- ❑ 7 regional IGOs
- ❑ 3 regional agencies

- ❑ scale
- ❑ distance & dispersion
- ❑ co-operation

# The Pacific context

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- Very small populations, mostly rural
- Per capita incomes average a few hundred US\$
- Users counted in hundreds or thousands at most
- Costs and human resources the main constraints to development
- Pacific island countries are individually small, but together equal a US\$1.8 billion market.

# Context: the Pacific ICT Survey

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- Telecommunications markets and infrastructure
- Human resources and institutional capacity
- Networked economies
- Policy and regulatory frameworks

*The complete report of the Pacific ICT Survey is now available*

# The Pacific ICT Survey

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- **Telecommunications markets and infrastructure**
  - Telephone penetration from 3/100 to 70/100
  - Vast differences between urban and rural areas
  - Less than 25% have internet access
  - Access mainly from work or school, not home
  - Monopoly service providers in internet, telephony

# The Pacific ICT Survey

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- **Human resources and institutional capacity**
  - Severe constraints in ICT professionals
  - Limited budgets and support for training
  - Difficult retention problems
  - Little ICT awareness in school curricula
  - Modern ICT has not yet transformed business or the public sector



# The Pacific ICT Survey

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- **Networked economies**
  - Portals, directories, news sites most prevalent
  - e-Commerce slowly expanding from advertising and tourism sector bookings to small retail
  - e-Government generating most interest

# The Pacific ICT Survey

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- **Policy and regulatory frameworks**
  - Outdated regulation and legislation
  - National regulatory reform proceeding
  - National ICT policies and strategies still in development
  - Regional policy and regulatory framework now guiding cooperation

# The Pacific response: cooperation

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- National and regional policies moving in tandem
- Regional cooperation through working groups
- Development partners, international agencies, and industry working together.

# Regional co-ordination through the CROP ICT Working Group

- FFA Forum Fisheries Agency
- FSM Fiji School of Medicine
- PIDP Pacific Islands Development Program at EWC
- PIFS Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (*chair*)
- PITA Pacific Islands Telecommunication Association
- SOPAC South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission
- SPC Secretariat of the Pacific Community
- SPREP South Pacific Regional Environment Program
- SPTO South Pacific Tourism Organisation
- USP University of the South Pacific

*CROP is the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific*

# Areas of regional cooperation

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- National strategic planning project
- Sector governance programme
- Development partner projects: ADB, ESCAP, EU, ITU, UNDP, UNESCO, World Bank
- The Pacific ICT Policy and Plan
- The *Pacific I4D Initiative* at WSSD and WSIS.

# Regional meetings and WGs

- CROP ICT Working Group
- PITA: Pacific Islands Telecommunications Assoc.
- PTC: Pacific Telecommunications Conference
- APT: joint working group meetings in the Pacific
- FEMM: Forum Economics Ministers Meeting
- FCPM: Forum Communications Policy Meeting

*Regional policy is built incrementally through these regular cooperative activities, alongside ad hoc APT, ITU, and other initiatives, to ensure that plans are consistent and complementary.*

# PIIPP: a framework for coordination

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- **Vision**

- ▣ **Information and Communication Technologies for every Pacific Islander**

- **Guiding principles**

- ▣ **Human resources: inform, connect, educate**
- ▣ **Development: supportive ICT infrastructure**
- ▣ **Cooperation: government, business, civil society**
- ▣ **Regulation: an appropriate ICT framework**

*The Pacific Islands ICT Policy and plan should **facilitate** regional coordination and **offer** national guidelines*

# From policy to implementation

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- Principles → Strategies → Activities
- Each activity has a lead actor and a time frame
- Logical framework matrix facilitates monitoring and regular updates

*Supporting integration across sectors and fostering partnerships are key features of strategy development*



# Regional priorities

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- Tele-health
- Community access
- Human resources
- International initiatives

*Priorities were set by Pacific island countries in the Forum Communication Policy meetings in April 2002*

# Priority activities: 1

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- **The Pilot Tele-health Project**
  - Providing remote diagnosis and consultation
  - Partnership between Fiji School of Medicine, Telecom Cook Islands, and PITA
  - Service partners include hospitals and clinicians in Pacific islands and USA
  - Awards and funding

# Priority activities: 2

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- **Multipurpose community telecentres**
  - Providing access to telecommunications, internet, and community services to rural and underserved urban areas
  - Partnership between ITU, PITA, regional organisations, development partners
  - Proposal and funding ongoing

# Priority activities: 3

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- **Human resources development**
  - Main constraint is lack of qualified and experienced IT professionals and users
  - University of the South Pacific USPnet
  - PITA TCDC programme
  - Forum Basic Education Action Plan
  - Forum Secretariat, SPREP, SPC programmes
  - Many small efforts under coordination

# Priority activities: international

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- ***The Pacific I4D Initiative***
  - International partnership initiative drafted for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Rio+10) in September 2002
  - Further elaboration for the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in December 2003
  - Overall goal is to implement and coordinate the PIIPP at the regional level
  - Endorsement by Heads of Government at Forum Leaders Meeting in August 2002

# Areas for Asia-Pacific co-operation

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## How the PECC PIN IT Task Force and the CROP ICT Working Group can cooperate:

- Short-term training courses in basic technical areas such as ISPs, network administration, ICT literacy, appropriate low-tech applications, basic e-commerce
- Best-practice case studies in telecentres, rural universal access to Internet, telehealth, ICTs in basic education
- Models to develop private-sector partnerships

# The results for the Pacific . . .

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**The rapid growth of the Global Information Infrastructure and convergence of media, communication and IT provide opportunities:**

- to reduce the cost of telecommunication services
- for new forms of economic and social development
- to reduce disadvantages of remoteness and size.

*Envisioned by Ministers in Forum Communication Action Plan 1999*

# Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat



- An international governmental organisation with a regional policy focus
- Mission to ensure sustainable development throughout the region through co-operation
- Programmes in economic development, trade and investment, and international affairs

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