

Review of relevant Line Island Development Plans, National/Regional Fisheries Legislation and Obligations – Final Report

REPORT FOR MINISTRY OF FISHERIES AND MARINE RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT (MFMRD)



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Acronyms

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBFM	Community-based fisheries management
CDF	Coastal Fisheries Division
CMM	Conservation and Management Measure
COP	Conference of the Parties
CPPL	Central Pacific Producers Limited
EAFM	Ecosystem approach to fisheries management
EEZ	Exclusive economic zone
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation
FFA	Forum Fisheries Agency
FIC	Forum Island Countries
GEWD	Gender Equality and Women's Development Policy
GIS	Geographic information system
ICT	Information and communication technology
IUU	Illegal, unregulated and unreported
KDP	Kiribati Development Plan
KPA	Key priority area
LPI	Line and Phoenix Islands
MCS	Monitoring, control and surveillance
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEA	Multilateral environmental agreement
MELAD	Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development
MEP	MacAlister Elliott & Partners Limited
MFMRD	Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resource Development
NGO	Non-government organisation
PIC	Pacific Island Country
PIPA	Phoenix Islands Protected Area
PNA	Parties to the Nauru Agreement
PROP	Pacific Islands Regional Oceanscape Program
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SID	Small island developing states

SPC	Pacific Community
SSF	Small-scale fisheries
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
WHC	World Heritage Convention
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

1 Introduction

The Republic of Kiribati comprises three island chains – the Gilbert Islands in the West, the Phoenix Islands in the centre and the Line Islands in the East. They collectively form one of the most fisheries dependent countries in the world, contributing significantly to the country’s economy and livelihoods. Kiribati’s fisheries are characterised by the hugely productive and vast Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), which is one of the largest in the world. The EEZ encompasses the waters surrounding the Gilbert, Phoenix and Line Islands, providing ample opportunities for fishing activities. Tuna is a major focus of Kiribati’s fisheries industry. Species that can commonly be found in their surrounding waters include skipjack (*Katsuwonus pelamis*), yellowfin (*Thunnus albacares*), albacore (*T. alalunga*) and bigeye tuna (*T. obesus*)¹². These species attract both domestic (local) and international fishing fleets that capitalise on the abundant marine resources. Other important species for the Republic of Kiribati fisheries are spiny lobster (family *Palinuridae*), snappers, bonefish (*Albula glossodona*), milkfish (*Chanos chanos*), groupers, sea cucumber and giant freshwater prawns

The tuna fishery has historically led fisheries policy to be focused on the offshore sector with less attention paid to coastal fisheries. Kiribati has amongst the highest offshore tuna production of all Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) members. This pattern is also evident regarding the insufficient allocation of resources for management, monitoring and enforcing of coastal fisheries which have historically been considered of lower importance. Coastal and nearshore fisheries play a crucial role in providing direct livelihood benefits such as employment and income, as well as providing food security, contributing to the overall well-being of coastal communities. Kiribati’s fisheries are facing increasing challenges, including overfishing, climate change, Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, which coupled with weak monitoring, control and enforcement, inadequate infrastructure and technology, lack of data, imperfect access rights and conflict, and population growth have led to a significant decrease in fish production.

In recognition of this, the Kiribati Fisheries (Conservation and Management of Coastal Marine Resources) Regulation of 2019 now provides a framework for improved coastal fisheries management the aim to ensure the long-term viability of coastal fisheries resources. Furthermore the ‘vision’ from the Kiribati National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap (2019 – 2036) is “by 2036, a resilient, healthy, and prosperous Kiribati through sustainable coastal fisheries, underpinned by inclusive, collaborative and innovative approaches between communities and the Government”. Therefore, the commitment and acknowledgement from the Government of the importance of healthy and productive coastal fisheries against the backdrop of effective management in combination with empowered communities, is apparent.

Implementation of the Pacific Islands Regional Oceanscape Program (PROP), led by the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resource Development of the Government of Kiribati (MFMRD), in cooperation with the World Bank is timely in further progressing the effective management of Kiribati’s oceanic and coastal fisheries. Within the PROP program is the

¹ FAO (2021)

² Campbell & Hanich (2014)

aim to promote diversified sustainable fisheries supply chains in the Line Islands. MFMRD’s Coastal Fisheries Division (CFD) is responsible for ensuring the sustainable management, development, and conservation of coastal fisheries resources in Kiribati, including in Kiritimati Island (as part of the Line Islands). A big driver in diversifying the sustainable fisheries supply chains in the Line Islands, is the domestication of the offshore fishery whereby fishing vessels (mostly purse seiners) operated by the partly government owned joint venture fishing companies are scheduled to land their catches at a new fisheries processing centre that is planned to be built in Kiritimati in the near future.

Kiritimati Island is an atoll located in the northern Line Islands and forms the focus of this assignment, specifically as component 2D of the PROP which seeks to accelerate the development and diversification of sustainable fisheries supply chains in the Line Islands and aims to specifically provide the following three technical assistance activities:

- A study to evaluate the economic viability of small-scale fisheries supply chains within the Line Island and barriers to such viability.
- A needs assessment and costing exercise for a small-scale fisheries development and production centre to be operated by Central Pacific Producers Limited (CPPL).
- A needs assessment and costing exercise for cold storage, packaging and holding facility at Cassidy Airport in Kiritimati with inputs from relevant stakeholders.

2 Scope and methodology

The purpose of this report is to provide a high-level review of the Line Island development plans, national legislation and associated regional and international obligations. The review also includes international best practice, in relation to fisheries and ocean management. In doing so, the report will establish an understanding of the strategic priorities for Kiribati, and the alignment, or not, with the work being undertaken as part of this consultancy. This report therefore provides the second project deliverable (Deliverable 1.2) as part of Phase 1 (Inception). The project is split into two phases, where Phase 1 is the Inception Phase and Phase 2 is the preparation of supply chain development economic viability study and Central Pacific Producers Limited (CPPL) needs assessment pre-feasibility study. Phase 2 also includes developing a suitable concept design for a cold storage (seafood) and live holding facility for aquarium fish/commodities at Cassidy Airport, to support the export market.

This study is desk-based consisting of reviews of various national and international plans, strategies, policies and guiding documents, which are summarised in Table 1 and categorised on a national, sub-national, regional and international basis.

Table 1: Documents reviewed as part of the assignment.

National Planning Instruments
Kiribati Development Plan 2020 – 2023 ³

³ Government of Kiribati (2020)

Kiribati National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap 2019 – 2036 ⁴
Kiribati National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan 2016 – 2020 ⁵
The Kiribati Gender Equality and Women’s Development (GEWD Policy) 2019 – 2022 ⁶
Sub-national Planning Instruments
Line and Phoenix Islands Integrated Development Strategy 2016 – 2036
The Phoenix Islands Protected Area Management Plan 2015 -2020
Regional Planning Instruments
Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries
WCPFC Conservation and Management Measures
Parties to the Nauru agreement strategic plan 2019-2025
The Noumea strategy: A new song for coastal fisheries – pathways to change 2015
International Conventions and Best Practices
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication
UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
Regulatory Framework
Fisheries (Amendment) Act 2021
Coastal Fisheries Regulation 2019
Local Government Act (Amended) 2013
Shark Sanctuary Regulations 2015
Domestic Fishing Zone Limit Regulations 2015
Marine Zones (Declaration) Act 2011
Closing Lines Regulations 2014
Contiguous Zone Outer Limits Regulations 2014
Seabed Minerals Acts 2017
Environment (General) Regulations 2017
Fish Export Regulations 2012

⁴ Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources Development & Pacific Community (2019)

⁵ Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development (2016)

⁶ Pacific Women (2019)

For each of the documents reviewed, a summary of the vision/mission statement (or other applicable reference), overview of key objectives or priorities and links to relevant international agreements is provided. Where applicable, the regional context is provided, and the relevance and alignment to MEPs project.

3 National perspectives

3.1 Kiribati development plan 2020 – 2023

Goals

The Kiribati Development Plan (KDP) 2020 – 2023 is the second development plan to implement the Kiribati Vision 2020 of a sustainable healthier, wealthier, and peaceful nation. There are six Key Priority Areas (KPA) that reflect common issues identified, or referred to as gaps towards desired goals, which include:

- KPA 1: Harnessing our Human Wealth
- KPA 2: Growing our Economic Wealth and Leaving No-One Behind
- KPA 3: Improving our Health
- KPA 4: Protecting our Environment and Strengthening Resilience
- KPA 5: Good Governance
- KPA 6: Developing our Infrastructure.

In setting these six priority areas, Heads of Government Ministries collectively agree to place at the centre of the implementation of the Kiribati Development Plan (KDP), the following principles:

- Motivate ourselves and our teams to fully implement the KDP and support the priorities of the KDP;
- Work collaboratively with each other noting that we share a common purpose and that our goals are interrelated;
- Lead by example in all aspects of our responsibilities;
- Elevate serving our people to the top of our priorities;
- Understand the limitations of our financial resources, endeavour to work smarter and achieve more for the same number of resources.

Relevant international and regional agreements and conventions

Central to the development of the plan is that all national indicators were aligned and mapped to the Pacific Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and that the reporting requirements associated with the SDGs were met by the KDP. In addition, the obligations of Kiribati under certain Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) are recognised as a specific strategy under KPA 4 (protecting our Environment and Strengthening Resilience). This seeks to implement national obligations associated with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement decisions of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP).

Box 1: Alignment to the development and diversification of sustainable supply chains in the Line Islands.

The KDP provides an overarching framework for the development of sustainable supply chains in the Line Islands. This Project specifically supports KPA 2 (Growing our Economic Wealth and Leaving No-One Behind) in that it provides for the sustainable development of the fishing industry by maximising economic returns from marine resources and ensuring that the most vulnerable groups in the population are actively engaged and supported. The Project also supports KPA 6 (Developing Our Infrastructure) by seeking to improve marine and coastal infrastructure to support inter-island and international connectivity. This is an important consideration in the review owing to the potential link with the export market.

3.2 Kiribati National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap 2019 – 2036

The Kiribati National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap 2019 – 2036 aims to sustainably manage coastal fisheries and maximise economic returns to Kiribati’s coastal communities. It outlines a vision of “by 2036, a resilient, healthy and prosperous Kiribati through sustainable coastal fisheries underpinned by inclusive, collaborative and innovative approaches between communities and government”.

Guiding principles

The implementation of the National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap 2019 – 2036 is informed by six guiding principles:

1. Recognise women, youth and vulnerable groups’ contributions to coastal fisheries and promote more inclusive management platforms and livelihoods;
2. Recognise diverse users, their roles and responsibilities in coastal fisheries; promote community-based fisheries management (CBFM), co-management, capacity building, motivation and empowerment of communities;
3. Promote and strengthen partnerships and networking across all stakeholders and key players involved in coastal fisheries at the national, sub-national, regional scale and with international partners;
4. Promote ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries management (EAFM) to ensure a holistic approach to decision-making processes and the improved management of coastal fisheries;
5. Promote good governance, transparency, accountability, and continually updated best practice in coastal fisheries management and sustainable development;
6. Promote innovation and use of information communication technology (ICT) in the management, monitoring, control, surveillance (MCS) and enforcement of coastal fisheries.

Key objectives and priorities

The National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap 2019 – 2036 outlines four overarching outcomes:

1. **Empowered communities.** Communities are well-equipped, connected and have the capacity to monitor, address, withstand and build adaptive capacity to any changing conditions. These changes may vary in terms of time and scale from acute, immediate, and intense shocks to slow shifts in the environment. Community self-sufficiency means dependence on development aid is reduced, in part by developing a high level of local competence.
2. **Effective and conducive coastal governance.** The governance of coastal zones, designated fisheries, fisheries resources, and stocks are well attended to, coordinated, and supported through CFD programs within the various units functioning at multiple scales with continuous support from international and national partners. The roles of civil society in the management, enforcement of rules and regulations and behaviour change activities are highly integrated and mainstreamed into governance frameworks, which provide for an inclusive design and decision-making processes.
3. **Healthy and productive coastal fisheries.** Coastal ecosystems function optimally and provide important ecosystem services despite disturbance under climate change. Economically important species are thriving under responsible harvesting regimes. Resource users understand ecosystem dynamics, connectivity and feedback and recognize the impacts of different practices on coastal resources and ecosystems.
4. **Vibrant, healthy, wealthy, and responsible people.** Social, economic, political, and physical living environments are conducive to maintaining the betterment of I-Kiribati wellbeing. Basic conditions of economic prosperity, security, sustainable food supply, stability and good health are attained through effective resource management (given the centrality of coastal resources in people's lives in Kiribati). Across all levels and different scales, people develop a sense of stewardship of the ocean and actively participate in the management of their local fisheries resources for the benefits of all I-Kiribati.

To achieve these objectives, the National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap identifies six focal action areas:

1. Governance
2. Information, knowledge, and capacity building
3. Coastal fisheries management
4. Sustainable livelihoods
5. Food security and safety
6. Markets

Relevant international agreements and conventions

The National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap provides the framework for implementation of several international instruments:

- **FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.** Many of the actions outlined in the National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap, including its emphasis on inclusive approaches, empowerment of coastal communities, and the development of small-scale fisheries, contribute to objectives of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. In particular, the Code of Conduct's Article 6.18 states "recognising the important contributions of artisanal and small-

scale fisheries to employment, income, and food security, states should appropriately protect the rights of fishers and fish workers, particularly those engaged in subsistence, small-scale and artisanal fisheries, to a secure and just livelihood as well as preferential access, where appropriate, to customary fishing grounds and resources in the waters under their national jurisdiction”.

- **FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication.** The National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap emphasises community-based coastal resource management. Its objectives are strongly aligned with those of the Voluntary Guidelines, including Objective 8 “to contribute to the equitable development of small-scale fishing communities and poverty eradication and to improve the socio-economic situation of fisheries and fish workers”.
- **Sustainable Development Goals.** The National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap addresses issues of poverty reduction, food security and nutrition, equal opportunities, and sustainable coastal resource utilisation, all of which align with SDG objectives. In particular, SDG 14 addresses the sustainable use of the ocean’s seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Regional context

The National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap 2019 – 2036 provides the framework for Kiribati’s implementation of regional principles and commitments to coastal fisheries management, including:

- **Noumea strategy: A new song for coastal fisheries.** The vision of the National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap aligns with the vision outlined in the Noumea Strategy of “sustainable well-managed inshore fisheries, underpinned by community-based approaches that provide food security and long-term economic, social and ecological benefits to our communities”. Furthermore, it contributes to the regional outcomes outlined in the Noumea Strategy of (i) improved wellbeing of coastal communities, and (ii) productive and healthy ecosystems and fish stocks.
- **Future of Fisheries: A regional roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries 2015.** This regional roadmap anticipates a 10-year timeframe for Pacific Island Countries (PICs) to have put in place policies and legislation that provide for the involvement of coastal communities in the management of their fisheries resources. It further anticipates that communities will drive local management regimes with clear user rights, supported by national controls on export commodities. The National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap aims to deliver these objectives in Kiribati.

Box 2: Alignment to the development and diversification of sustainable supply chains in the Line Islands.

The Coastal Fisheries Roadmap recognises the urgent need to boost management regimes and institutional capacity to better address monitoring and enforcement and ensure that coastal fisheries continue to support Kiribati’s coastal communities.

This Coastal Fisheries Roadmap also emphasises the need for collaborative approaches and strong stakeholder engagement to underpin the development of sustainable supply chains in the Line Islands. These needs will be reflected in this Project through the design of participative and inclusive development planning process (to be presented in the form of a stakeholder analysis) and the capacity gaps that need to be addressed through training delivery.

The Coastal Fisheries Roadmap outlines several Focal Action Areas that are relevant to this project, and requirements will be reflected in the project's implementation:

- **Governance.** Coastal fisheries legislation must adequately enable EAFM principles and the integration of input from community stakeholders. New or amended legislation must be transparent, inclusive, and fit for context. Principles of inclusiveness and decentralisation will guide policy and regulatory design processes. These requirements, outlined in the Coastal Fisheries Roadmap, will be reflected in the preparation of management planning documents under this project.
- **Information, knowledge and capacity building.** To enhance learning and local support of management interventions, technical insights from science-based knowledge will be integrated with existing local and traditional ecological knowledge. Under this project MEP brings extensive science-based knowledge, and through a comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategy will integrate local and traditional ecological knowledge.
- **Coastal fisheries management.** The management of coastal fisheries will respect the principles of EAFM, be inclusive and provide equitable benefits to all. MEP are well versed in the application of EAFM, including the consideration of economic outcomes in fisheries management planning.
- **Sustainable livelihoods.** People's livelihood activities and opportunities need to be broadened, diversified, and improved to ensure a reliable and sustainable source of income. Income from marine-based activities can be improved through the observation of proper management. This project will establish management measures for high value but vulnerable marine species, including bonefish and flame angel fish, to safeguard sustainable utilisation and livelihoods.

3.3 Kiribati National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan 2016 – 2020

Vision

The National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan 2016 – 2020 was developed with the following vision statement: “The people of Kiribati continue to enjoy their natural biodiversity that is resilient to the impacts of climate change and supports the socio-economic livelihoods”.

Guiding principles

The National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan 2016 – 2020 is guided by the following principles:

- **Good governance and leadership.** This principle implies upholding good governing practices of transparency, accountability, shared responsibility, and equity in the consideration of environment requirements in development practices. It respects everyone's rights to a clean and healthy environment. It also recognises that the Government will lead national efforts to protect and promote the sustainable use of biodiversity and will always consult the local community.
- **Food security and nutrition.** This principle recognises that biodiversity plays a critical role in meeting the food needs of people, reducing hunger, and improving individual health. It emphasises the need to promote staple local food and sustainable use of Kiribati's land and marine resources.
- **Collective responsibility.** It is generally accepted that to effectively manage, protect and sustainably use the environment and its goods and services, everyone has a responsibility. This principle recognises that each individual holds a key responsibility in managing its environment. It also recognises critical roles of different government sectors and institutions in sustaining the good health of the environment.
- **Respect for traditional knowledge, practices, and skills.** I-Kiribati people have valuable indigenous knowledge and practices that can contribute to the sustainable use and effective management of their natural resources and the environment. The traditions and practices are important elements of their culture and heritage that forms their national identity.
- **Integration of biodiversity in economic development aspirations.** This principle recognises the challenge in reconciling and balancing the need to protect and conserve biodiversity and the development needs. This emphasises the critical importance of credible, relevant, and legitimate scientific investigations and information to the integration of biodiversity into the development planning and implementation.

Key objectives and priorities

The National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan 2016 – 2020 identifies nine priority areas of national concern:

1. Protected and conservation areas
2. Ecosystem management
3. Species conservation and sustainable use
4. Communication and education
5. Capacity building
6. Invasive alien species/ biosecurity
7. Traditional knowledge and practice
8. Environmental governance
9. Research and information.

Relevant international agreements and conventions

The National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan 2016 – 2020 provides a framework to meet Kiribati’s obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the 2020 Aichi Targets. All of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets are adopted in the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan.

The National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan also contributes to other international agreements that Kiribati is a party to, including the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic resources for Food and Agriculture, and the World Heritage Convention. The National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan also aligns with several biodiversity-related conventions that Kiribati is not party to, including the Convention on Migratory Species and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild fauna and Flora.

Regional context

The Regional Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Islands Region 2–14 - 2020 provides guidance to Pacific Island countries and territories, regional organisations and non-government organisations (NGOs), the international donor community and other partners who are working together to achieve the global 2020 Aichi Targets of the Convention on Biological diversity through the implementation of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and other international, regional and local conservation initiatives. The regional framework facilitates coordination, cooperation, synergy and complementarity amongst the numerous national biodiversity strategies and action plans developed and implemented by PICs.

National context

The National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan 2016 – 2020 was prepared by the National Biodiversity Planning Committee and staff of the Environment and Conservation Division of the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development (MELAD). The National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan 2016 – 2020 aligns with and contributes to several policies, including:

- **Kiribati Integrated Environment Policy**⁷ which outlines a sustainable environment vision of “the people of Kiribati continue to enjoy their natural biodiversity that is resilient to the impacts of climate change and supports the socio-economic livelihoods”. This policy provides guidance and direction for government and local communities in protecting, managing and utilising the natural resources and enhances environmental protection.
- **Kiribati Joint Implementation Plan**⁸. This national policy aims at increasing resilience through sustainable climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction using a whole- of-island approach, It also addresses plans for mitigation. Under Strategy 4 it stresses the need for local communities to

⁷ Government of Kiribati. (2013). *Kiribati Integrated Environment Policy*. <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/kir179610.pdf>.

⁸ Government of Kiribati. (2019). *Kiribati Joint Implementation Plan for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management 2019 - 2028*. <https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/NAPC/Documents/Parties/Kiribati-Joint-Implementation-Plan-for-Climate-Change-and-Disaster-Risk-Management-2019-2028.pdf>.

preserve and promote local good, sustainability of marine and water resource management.

- **Kiribati National Fisheries Policy 2013 – 2023**⁹. This policy provides guidelines on the protection, conservation, and management of Kiribati fisheries resources through sustainable practices. The policy also aims to enhance food security, sustainable livelihood and build climate resilient fisheries.

Box 3: Alignment to the development and diversification of sustainable supply chains in the Line Islands.

The current National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan covers the period 2016 to 2020. This Project commenced in 2023 and it is unclear whether this strategy has been updated. However, it is likely that major goals and targets remain relevant at this time.

The National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan 2016 – 2020 identifies nine priority areas, each having specific actions and targets. The following targets have direct relevance for the current project:

- Establish at least 3 community-based management plans for coastal resources (fisheries and mangroves) by 2018;
- Reduce the use of unsustainable fishing practices by 2020 by 30%;
- By 2020, invasive alien species and pathways are identified and prioritized, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and measures are in place to manage pathways to prevent their introduction and establishment.
- Marine stock enhancement program by 2020
- By 2017, national guidelines and policies for the development and management of ecotourism activities will be developed and ready for implementation and use;
- By beginning of 2017, bonefish bylaw for selected islands (e.g., Nonouti Island) will be ready for implementation;
- Strengthen the capacity on fisheries surveys (e.g. scuba dive training); and
- By early 2017, refresher training for Fishing Guides including catch and release fishing techniques conducted.
- Identify potential islands to conduct training on development of products and packages by 2018

3.4 Kiribati Gender Equality and Women’s Development 2019 – 2022

The Kiribati Gender Equality and Women’s Development 2019 – 2022 policy (GEWD) was launched by the Ministry of Women, Youth Sports and Social Affairs in 2019 against

⁹ Government of Kiribati. (2013). *Kiribati National Fisheries Policy 2013 - 2025*.
<https://spccfpstore1.blob.core.windows.net/digitallibrarydocs/files/36/36e601d65fe7167675f1d800e08281bd.pdf?sv=20151211&sr=b&sig=IS3i4tuYBCL1Tjhel4mDgzgaLxH9F6EDUnxNz4VIWU8%3D&se=20240214T22%3A54%3A59Z&sp=r&rsc=public%2C%20max-age%3D864000%2C%20max->

the backdrop that gender equality and women development are the key mechanism to address economic and social disparities.

Vision

All Kiribati men and women reach their full potential.

Mission

Uplifting the status and livelihoods of the Kiribati people through the strengthening of mechanisms within Government and other institutions to mainstream gender and addressing gender inequalities.

Goal

Mainstream gender in government policies, plans, budgets and programs to enhance equal opportunities between men and women, and women empowerment in the development process.

The policy focuses on five priority areas which are:

1. To progressively implement a gender mainstreaming approach to achieve gender equality;
2. To improve the economic empowerment of women;
3. To support stronger, informed families;
4. To improve women's political representation and leadership; and
5. To eliminate sexual and gender-based violence.

Relevant international and regional agreements and conventions

The GEWD links to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women as well as to other gender equity agreements in the region such as those listed below.

- The Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration (2012)
- Sustainable Development Goals (specifically SDG 5)
- Convention on the Rights of persons with Disabilities
- Pacific Platform for Action for Women
- Recommendations of the Pacific Women's Triennial, Outcomes of the Commission on the status of Women meetings.

In addition, the policy also creates a direct linkage to the potential of increased burdens on women and thus refers to the Kiribati Joint Implementation Plan for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management 2014 – 2023.

Box 4: Alignment to the development and diversification of sustainable supply chains in the Line Islands.

In the absence of a new gender policy, this project will integrate all aspects of this policy by taking special care to address inequalities, support economic

empowerment, ensure equal access to engage and participate (e.g. are separate consultations or stakeholder sessions with different timing necessary), and include gender disaggregated data where possible in the analysis. This includes experiences and issues regarding gender exclusion and social inclusion in fisheries, especially women and youth and expansion of income generation activities, livelihoods/income sources, decision-making structure, gender division of roles in collection and management of natural resources, gender-based access to/control over natural resources, gender relations/decision-making power, and available services by the government or NGOs in different regions in Kiribati.

4 Sub-national perspectives

4.1 Line and Phoenix Islands Integrated Development Strategy 2016 – 2036 (LPIDS)

Vision

The people of the Line and Phoenix Islands (LPIs) will enjoy a safe and healthy environment that is resilient to the impacts of Climate Change and that supports productive, enterprise-based livelihoods, human health, and sustainable development within a sound governance framework.

Principles

This policy is guided by the following principles:

1. Sustainable in the long term
2. Enterprise led
3. Climate change aware and responsive
4. Driven by community planning
5. Adaptive to changing circumstances
6. Based on sound Governance, Accountability and Rule of Law.

Three strategic goals were developed in order to operationalise the vision, which are as follows:

- Sustainable development of the LPIs economy: “A vibrant economy providing opportunities for all to participate”.
- Sustainable Inclusive Social Development: “Creating a strong community and family life”.
- Sustainable Environmental Conservation and Management: “Effectively manage the biodiversity and urban settlements of the LPIs”.

Relevant international and regional agreements and conventions

International commitments made by the Government of Kiribati provide the backdrop against the LPIDS development and aim to enhance existing national priorities. Alike several of the documents considered in this review, the Agenda for Sustainable

Development and associated Sustainable Development Goals is inherently linked to the LPIDS. In addition, the Istanbul Plan of Action for Least Developed Countries; Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Accelerated Modalities of Action (S.A.M.O.A) Pathway; outcomes from the Third International Conference on SIDS; and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism all informed the development of the LPIDS.

National relevance

The LPIDS links directly to the Kiribati Development Plan 2020 – 2023 (see Section 3.1), with the high-level goals of the LPIDS feeding into the KDP development indicators.

Box 5: Alignment to the development and diversification of sustainable supply chains in the Line Islands.

The high-level goals of the LPIDS has relevance to this project, particularly given their link with the KDP and wider SDG's in terms of economic growth, and sustainable environmental conservation and management. However, the strategic goals within the LPIDS do not provide specific reference to the marine environment. The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework includes indicators and means of verification at a broad level but does not provide any differentiation between land based or marine based biodiversity and their associated expected results and indicators.

The action plan however refers to baseline Marine Resource and Opportunities Study for the Lagoons under Economic Development themed actions and Environment and Lands actions. It identifies a comprehensive GIS dataset and an urgent need to address environmental issues through ongoing data/ information collection and monitoring system that can be used by a range of partners. The progress towards achieving this action will be explored in detail as the project progresses. The sustainability of supply chains in the Line Islands rely on the robustness of the management plans underpinned by the extent and availability of data to inform the plans. The GIS dataset is particularly of high importance in developing these supply chains, which will also require the current spatial and temporal distribution of existing activities and users of the marine environment to be known.

4.2 Phoenix Islands Protected Area Management Plan 2015 – 2020

While the Phoenix Islands Protected Area Management Plan (PIPA) is not directly linked to the Line Islands, it can provide a useful example of regional protected area management, which will help ensure that marine resources remain a source of ecological as well as economic and social benefits for Kiribati's coastal communities and its broader economy.

'IPA's vision

To conserve the natural and cultural heritage of the Phoenix Islands Protected Area for the sustained benefit of the peoples of the Republic of Kiribati and the world.

Mission

To implement effective integrated and adaptive management that ensures the natural and cultural heritage values of PIPA are maintained, and where necessary restored, to achieve PIPA's vision.

Guiding principles

1. Intergenerational equity
2. Ecological stability
3. Precautionary principle
4. Integrated planning and management
5. Adaptive management
6. Ecosystem approach
7. Resilience
8. Stakeholder consultation and participation
9. Capacity building
10. Technology transfer
11. Transparency of decision making.

The PIPA Regulations (2008)¹⁰ set the long-term management objectives for the PIPA Management Plan:

1. To conserve and manage substantial examples of marine and terrestrial systems to ensure their long-term viability and to maintain genetic diversity;
2. To conserve depleted, threatened, rare or endangered species and populations and, in particular, to preserve habitats considered critical for the survival of such species;
3. To conserve and manage areas of significance to the lifecycles of economically important species such as tuna;
4. To prevent human activities from detrimentally affecting the PIPA;
5. To preserve, protect, and manage historical and cultural sites and natural aesthetic values;
6. To facilitate the interpretation of marine and terrestrial systems for the purposes of conservation, education and tourism;
7. To accommodate within appropriate management regimes a broad spectrum of multi-use human activities compatible with the primary goal of marine and terrestrial conservation and sustainable use, including appropriate fishing, ecologically-sound tourism, and sustainable economic development;
8. To provide for research and training, and for monitoring the environmental effects of human activities, including the direct and indirect effects of development activities; and

¹⁰ https://www.melad.gov.ki/images/pipa/PIPA_Regulations_2008.pdf

9. To ensure consistency between all activities taking place in the PIPA and any third-party conservation contracts into which the Minister may choose to enter with the advice and approval of the Cabinet for the conservation and long-term sustainable use of the PIPA.

Relevant international and regional agreements and conventions

Several international agreements and commitments were met in the development of the PIPA, including the following:

- **World Heritage Convention (WHC).** Kiribati became a party to the WHC in December 2000. PIPA submitted to the WHC for listing as a natural site in January 2009 and inscribed as a natural site in August 2010.
- **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).** Kiribati became party to the CBD in August 1994. The three objectives of the CBD, to conserve biodiversity, promote sustainable use and ensure equitable access to resources are core principles of PIPA.
- **Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.** The shallow coral reefs, lagoons and brackish wetland systems in the Phoenix Islands fall under the convention description of wetlands and could be listed as a site under Ramsar.
- **The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).** Kiribati ratified the UNFCCC in February 1995, and is one of the most vulnerable of all countries to climate change impacts, as a result of sea level rise and impacts to freshwater and groundwater resources. As a natural Climate Change Research Laboratory, PIPA can help Kiribati and the world understand climate change impacts to atolls, and research in PIPA can be of global significance.
- **World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD).** Kiribati was party to drawing up the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) under the WSSD. PIPA helped Kiribati in meeting the MDGs, particularly MDG 8, on environment and sustainability.

Box 6: Alignment to the development and diversification of sustainable supply chains in the Line Islands.

While there are no direct links between the PIPA and this project, the PIPA demonstrates characteristics of good planning including governance; use of science and research; spatial mapping and zonation; licensing; enforcement; reporting. In addition, the guiding principles particularly around ecological stability, participatory approach, adaptive management, ecosystem approach and integrated planning and management are likely to be driving factors of healthy marine stocks.

5 Regional perspectives

5.1 Future of Fisheries Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries and A New Song for Coastal Fisheries – Pathways to Change: The Noumea Strategy

Endorsed in 2015 by the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), the Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries sets out seven clear goals for oceanic and coastal fisheries, with eleven (11) associated strategies to address these goals up until 2025. The Roadmap also requires the delivery of an annual ‘fishery report card’ at the annual meeting of the Ministerial Forum Fisheries Committee. The report card acts as a process to measure success towards achieving each of the strategies.

The Noumea Strategy was developed in 2015 during a regional workshop on the future of coastal fisheries management. Specifically, the Noumea Strategy calls for an enhanced focus on coastal fisheries management and related development activities in the Pacific region, particularly by incorporating community-based ecosystem approaches to fisheries management. It is designed to provide direction and encourage coordination, cooperation, and an effective use of regional and other support services in the development of coastal fisheries management.

The development of the Noumea Strategy preceded the Regional Roadmap thereby allowing the key outcome areas in the strategy to be captured in the coastal fisheries implementation strategies in the Regional Roadmap. The alignment between the two documents have enabled a standardised mechanism for both instruments, and thereby using the annual fishery report card to assess progress for coastal fisheries on a 5 yearly basis for the Noumea Strategy and Regional Roadmap. Table 2 below highlights the alignment between the two instruments overarching outcomes, goals and strategies.

Table 2: Alignment between the Noumea Strategy outcomes and Regional Roadmap goals and strategies (source: Donato-Hunt and Eriksson, 2017).

New Song Outcomes	Regional Roadmap - Coastal fisheries goals and strategies
Overarching Outcome 1. Improved wellbeing of coastal communities	
Overarching Outcome 2. Productive and healthy ecosystems and fish stocks	Goal 2. Resilience Within 10 years, all Forum Island Countries (FICs) will be implementing strategies to manage the various threats to coastal ecosystems. Only by conserving fisheries habitats, controlling pollution and addressing damage from outside the fishing sector can we develop resilience to the impacts of climate change and ocean acidification.

<p>Outcome 1. Informed, empowered coastal communities with clearly defined user rights</p>	<p>Goal 1. Empowerment Within 10 years, all FICS will have put in place policies and legislation that provide for the involvement of coastal communities in the management of their fisheries resources. Supported by national controls on export commodities, communities will drive local management regimes with clear user rights.</p>
<p>Outcome 2. Adequate and relevant information to inform management and policy</p>	<p>Strategy 1. Provide relevant information to inform management and policy</p>
<p>Outcome 3. Recognition of, and strong political commitment and support for, coastal fisheries management at a national and sub-national scale</p>	
<p>Outcome 4. Re-focused fisheries agencies that are transparent, accountable, and adequately resourced, supporting coastal fisheries management and sustainable development, underpinned by CEAFM</p>	<p>Strategy 2. Re-focus fisheries agencies to support coastal fisheries management</p>
<p>Outcome 5. Strong and up-to-date management policy, legislation and planning</p>	<p>Strategy 4. Develop and enforce strong and up-to date legislation, policy and plans</p>
<p>Outcome 6. Effective collaboration and coordination between stakeholders and key sectors of influence</p>	<p>Strategy 3. Ensure effective collaboration and coordination of stakeholders</p>
<p>Outcome 7. More equitable access to benefits and decision making within communities, including women, youth and marginalized groups</p>	<p>Strategy 5. Ensure equitable access to benefits and involvement in decision making</p>
<p>Outcome 8. Diverse livelihoods reducing pressure on fisheries resources, enhancing community incomes, and contributing to improved</p>	<p>Goal 3. Livelihoods Within 10 years, all FICs will have adopted policies to develop alternative livelihoods for coastal communities that are impacted by declining fisheries resources. In most cases, overfishing</p>

fisheries management	occurs because coastal communities have no alternative. Aquaculture, water-based tourism and small-scale fishing for tuna provides options, but many solutions will lie outside the fisheries sector.
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Relevant international and regional agreements and conventions

The two strategic instruments align with several regional and international reporting commitments and are included in the selection of indicators for the annual ‘Coastal Fisheries Report Card’. These include:

- Sustainable Development Goals (targets 2.1, 3.4, 14.4, 14.7)
- SIDs Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (58.a, 58.b, 58.e, 58.g, 58.h, and 58.o)
- Aichi Targets (1, 2, 4, 11, 17, 19)
- FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (5a, 5b, 6, 7, 8, 10)
- Melanesian Spearhead Group Roadmap for Inshore Fisheries (Objective 3.1, 3.2, objective 2)
- Micronesia Challenge

Box 7: Alignment to the development and diversification of sustainable supply chains in the Line Islands.

Given the focus on coastal fisheries, both documents are relevant to this assignment. In particular, these instruments place importance on diverse livelihoods to ensure a reliable and enhanced sustainable source of income, which are outcomes of this assignment.

5.2 Parties to the Nauru Agreement Strategic Plan 2019-2025

The PNA was developed and executed in 1982 as a platform for the Parties to collaborate more closely to develop common fishery management approaches and increase their level of participation in tropical tuna fisheries in the Western and Central Pacific. This strategic plan implements the Delap Commitment agreed in 2018¹¹. The focus of the agreement has changed as Parties have identified an urgent need to strengthen and formalise much of their work as a collective and within the PNA in order to consolidate and build on the substantial gains achieved so far. PNA Members are Federated States of Micronesia,

¹¹ https://www.pnatuna.com/sites/default/files/Delap%20Commitment_2nd%20PNA%20Leaders%20Summit.pdf

Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu plus Tokelau.

Values and Principles

- Ecologically Sustainable Fisheries Management
- Cooperation and Collaboration on zone-based management
- Mutual Benefit
- Respect and Integrity
- Good Governance and Transparency
- Mutual Support and assistance
- Independence

This Strategic Plan is based around three core objectives – a stronger PNA, growing PNA influence on tropical tuna management, and PNA being able to identify and capture additional opportunities.

Box 8: Alignment to the development and diversification of sustainable supply chains in the Line Islands.

The PNA while being an important strategic document for the management of tropical tunas in offshore waters in the Western Central Pacific, it has lesser relevance on this assignment at hand given project's focus on coastal fisheries. That being said, crossovers are evident in that tuna (bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack) are amongst the focal species for this project and offshore fishing vessels (mostly purse seiners) are expected in the near future to land their catches at the new fisheries processing centre in Kiritimati.

Specific objectives from the PNA which are of relevance and could be applied within the context of this project includes maximising economic returns, understanding the influence of climate change in the fishery and implementation of management and conservation measures. In addition, the capture of socio-economic opportunities and cooperation to enhance such opportunities is relevant for the Line Islands.

5.3 WCPFC Conservation and Management Measures

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) was established via the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.

Vision

The objective of WCPFC is to ensure, through effective management, the long-term conservation and sustainable use of highly migratory fish stocks in the western and central

Pacific Ocean in accordance with the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement.

Non-binding decisions

Non-binding statements and recommendations addressed to members of the WCPFC and Cooperating non-members are described in Resolutions. At the time of writing, there are six resolutions of the WCPFC:

- **Resolution 2005-03** on Non-target fish species;
- **Resolution 2008-01** on Aspirations of Small Island Developing States and Territories;
- **Resolution 2012-01** on the best available science;
- **Resolution 2017-01** on the Provisional Application of CMM 2017-01 on Tropical Tunas;
- **Resolution 2018-01** on Labour Standards for Crew on Fishing Vessels; and
- **Resolution 2019-01** on Climate Change as it relates to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.

Binding decisions

Binding decisions relating to the conservation and management of WCPFC fish stocks are described in Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs). The following are the CMMs that are active in the WCPFC at the time of writing:

- **CMM 2004-03** on Specifications for the Marking and Identification of Fishing Vessels;
- **CMM 2004-04** on Conservation and Management Measures;
- **CMM 2006-04** on Conservation and Management Measure For Striped Marlin in the Southwest Pacific;
- **CMM 2006-07** on Conservation and Management Measure for the Regional Observer Programme;
- **CMM 2006-08** on Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Boarding and Inspection Procedures;
- **CMM 2008-04** on the Prohibition of the use of Large Scale Driftnets on the High Seas in the Convention Area;
- **CMM 2009-02** on the Application of High Seas FAD Closures and Catch Retention;
- **CMM 2009-03** on Conservation and Management for Swordfish;
- **CMM 2009-05** on Prohibiting Fishing on Data Buoys;
- **CMM 2009-06** on Regulation of Transshipment;
- **CMM 2009-09** on Vessels without Nationality;
- **CMM 2009-10** on Monitoring Landings of Purse Seiners at Ports so as to Ensure Reliable Catch Data by Species;
- **CMM 2010-01** on North Pacific Striped Marlin;
- **CMM 2011-03** to Address the Impact of Purse Seine Activity on Cetaceans;
- **CMM 2012-03** on Implementation of the ROP by vessels fishing north of 20N;
- **CMM 2013-04** on WCPFC Implementation of a Unique Vessel Identifier (UVI);

- **CMM 2013-05** on daily catch and effort reporting;
- **CMM 2013-06** on the criteria for the consideration of conservation and management proposals;
- **CMM 2013-07** on the special requirements of Small Island Developing States and Territories;
- **CMM 2014-02** on Commission VMS;
- **CMM 2014-03** on standards, specifications and procedures for the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Record of Fishing Vessels;
- **CMM 2014-06** on the development and implementation of a harvest strategy approach for key fisheries and stocks in the WCPO;
- **CMM 2015-02** on South Pacific Albacore;
- **CMM 2015-06** on a Target Reference Point for WCPO Skipjack Tuna;
- **CMM 2016-02** on Eastern High Seas Pocket Special Management Area;
- **CMM 2017-02** on minimum standards for Port State Measures;
- **CMM 2017-03** on the protection of WCPFC Regional Observer Programme Observers;
- **CMM 2017-04** on Marine Pollution;
- **CMM 2018-03** on mitigating the impact of fishing for highly migratory fish stocks on seabirds;
- **CMM 2018-04** on Sea Turtles;
- **CMM 2018-05** on the Regional Observer Programme;
- **CMM 2018-06** on WCPFC Record of Fishing Vessels and Authorisation to Fish;
- **CMM 2019-01** on Cooperating Non-Members;
- **CMM 2019-03** on North Pacific Albacore;
- **CMM 2019-04** on Sharks;
- **CMM 2019-05** on Mobulid Rays caught in association with fisheries in the WCPFC Convention Area;
- **CMM 2019-07** on establishing a list of vessels presumed to have carried out Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing Activities in the WCPO;
- **CMM 2021-01** on bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack tuna in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean;
- **CMM 2021-02** on Pacific Bluefin Tuna;
- **CMM 2021-03** on the Compliance Monitoring Scheme; and
- **CMM 2021-04** on Charter Notification Scheme.
- **CMM 2022-01** on a Management Procedure for WCPO Skipjack Tuna (Supersedes CMM 2015-06).
- **CMM 2022-02** on for North Pacific Swordfish.
- **CMM 2022-03** on Establishing a Harvest Strategy for key fisheries and stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (supersedes CMM 2014-06).
- **CMM 2022-04** on Sharks (supersedes CMM 2019-04).
- **CMM 2022-05** on Standards, specifications and procedures for the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Record of Fishing Vessels (supersedes CMM 2014-03)

Box 9: Alignment to the development and diversification of sustainable supply chains in the Line Islands.

The CMMs that are somewhat relevant to this project are **CMM 2004-03** on Specifications for the Marking and Identification of Fishing Vessels, **CMM 2009-10** on Monitoring Landings of Purse Seiners at Ports so as to Ensure Reliable Catch Data by Species and **CMM 2021-01** on bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack tuna in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. CMMs do not place any restrictions on WCPFC member parties developing domestic fisheries. A potential implication for the current project is related to stock status. For instance, **CMM 2021-01** reports that stock assessments indicate that bigeye, yellowfin, and skipjack tuna are not overfished. The report also reiterated that the Commission continue to consider measures to reduce fishing mortality from fisheries that take juveniles, other species and ensure that the biomass depletion fluctuates around the target reference points.

6 International Perspectives

6.1 FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries

Vision

The FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF) intends to support the visibility, recognition, and enhancement of the already important role of small-scale fisheries and to contribute to global and national efforts towards the eradication of hunger and poverty.

Guiding principles

The guidelines follow the following principles:

- Human rights and dignity
- Respect of cultures
- Non-discrimination
- Gender equality and equity
- Equity and equality
- Consultation and participation
- Rule of law
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Economic, social and environmental sustainability
- Holistic and integrated approaches

- Social responsibility
- Feasibility and social and economic viability.

These guidelines also address the following two overarching pillars:

1. Responsible fisheries and sustainable development, which is implemented through:
 - Governance of tenure in small-scale
 - Social development, employment and decent work
 - Value chains, post-harvest and trade
 - Gender equality
 - Disaster risks and climate change.
2. Ensuring an enabling environment and supporting implementation through:
 - Policy coherence, institutional coordination and collaboration
 - Information, research and communication
 - Capacity development
 - Implementation support and monitoring.

Regional context

Many countries of the Pacific participated in the development of the guidelines through a regional consultation and agreement during the Committee on Fisheries in 2015. However, in the Pacific many of the objectives are linked and carried out through the 'Noumea Strategy for Coastal Fisheries'. Some gaps remain where the SSF Guidelines address certain issues that are not covered in the Noumea Strategy, including human rights, disaster risk reduction, value chains, etc.

Box 10: Alignment to the development and diversification of sustainable supply chains in the Line Islands.

Within the provisions of the SSF Guidelines, there are elements that could be relevant to this project. These include but are not limited to the balance of rights and responsibilities with resource use, clarification of co-management roles (also linked to the Noumea Strategy) under sustainable management; investment in human resource development, development and access to services supporting small-scale fishers/fish workers; creating decent work, addressing occupational health issues (e.g. in the marine aquarium trade fishery), and improving safety at sea under 'Social Development'. Gender equity, disaster risks and climate change provisions are also relevant but largely in place under the Noumea Strategy other than addressing implications of disasters on small-scale fisheries and trade.

In addition, the SSF requires MCS and enforcement to be in place to balance the needs of communities with the need for healthy fish populations and thriving marine habitats.

This is particularly pertinent for the marine aquarium trade fishery, to ensure the sustainability of the fishery is maintained (or improved) given the reliance of this on community income. Furthermore, the SSF guidelines make reference to post harvest and trade, and the necessity of a MCS system in place to ensure sustainable fishing practices to gain access to national, regional and international markets.

6.2 Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Blueprint for Peace and Prosperity for People and the Planet was adopted by all United Nations member states. Seventeen (17) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) fall at the centre of the Agenda, which recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve oceans and forests. The global recognition and collaborative effort to implement this plan makes it one of the most influential agreements in international development history and is therefore no surprise that the SDGs have been referenced by several of the documents reviewed as part of this report.

While all the SDGs are equally important, SDG 14 ‘to conserve and sustainably manage the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development’ is relevant to this project. Within SDG 14, there are four targets which align directly with this project, as follows:

- **Target 14.4:** effectively regulate harvesting, end overfishing, IUU and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans.
- **Target 14.7:** Increase the economic benefits to Small Island Developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through the sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.
- **Target 14.b:** Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets.
- **Target 14.c:** Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources.

Indirectly, the project also contributes to SDG 2 ‘Zero Hunger’, SDG 8 ‘Decent Work and Economic Growth’, and SDG 13 ‘Climate Action’.

6.3 UN Convention on Biological Diversity

The UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) entered into force on 29 December 1993. It has 3 main objectives:

1. The conservation of biological diversity
2. The sustainable use of the components of biological diversity
3. The fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources.

As part of the 15th Convention of Parties which took place in Canada in December 2022, the Global Biodiversity Framework committed to conserving or protecting at least 30% of global lands and waters by 2030 (known as the 30x30 target). This explicitly describes that parties should:

“Ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial, inland water, and of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities including over their traditional territories.”

Kiribati signed up to the CBD, and to meet their obligations under this, developed their CBD Strategy and Action plan, as discussed in Section 3.3. There is no evidence to suggest the 30x30 target has been integrated into any of the documents reviewed, but given this is a recent development, it is not surprising. This project, however, aligns directly with the 30x30 target by considering the important role of effective area-based conservation and management measures that recognise and the respect the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities to underpin sustainable fishery value chains.

7 Regulatory Framework

The following laws, acts and other regulatory instruments have been identified as having relevance to the current project.

7.1 Fisheries (Amendment) Act 2021

The Fisheries Act 2010 has been amended several times (2015, 2017), culminating in the most recent amendment in 2021.

The main purposes of the Act are to (i) promote the sustainable management of the fisheries of Kiribati and the development and use of fisheries resources for the benefit of Kiribati, including the recovery of fees that reflect the value of the resource; and (ii) protect fish stocks and the marine environment of Kiribati.

The Act includes several provisions of relevance to the current project, including:

- Clarifying that the Minister is responsible for the management, conservation and development of *all* fisheries within the jurisdiction of Kiribati to ensure that the

fisheries resources of Kiribati are managed for the benefit of I-Kiribati (Article II.4.1).

- Requiring any person engaged in fishing or any other related activity regulated by the Act to provide relevant data and information, including fishing time and effort, landing, processing, sales and other related transactions (Article II.5.2);
- Outlining criteria for the determination of designated fisheries and the development of fishery management plans.
- Defining customary rights;
- Defining fishery licencing requirements, violations and penalties (including for small-scale vessels);
- Incorporating precautionary principles (e.g., Article 4.3.b states “a lack of full scientific certainty regarding the extent of adverse effects or a threat or damage to fisheries and marine resources ... is not to be used to prevent or avoid a decision being made to minimise the potential adverse effects or risks”); and
- Establishing definitions for key terms and phrases including “fishery”, “illegal fishing”, “unreported fishing”, and “sustainable use”.

7.2 Coastal Fisheries Regulation 2019

The Coastal Fisheries Regulation 2019 (and the attached Notice of Designated Fishery 2021) lists those designated fisheries that have been identified as being important to the national interest, and hence subject to management control by the Minister. The Regulation grants authority to MFMRD to develop and enact a management plan for such fisheries of relevance to the current project. The Regulation further defines non-compliance penalties, licensing and permit provisions, provisions for size limits, and provisions for the establishment of community-based fishery management plans relevant to coastal fisheries.

7.3 Local Government Act (Amended) 2013

- The Local Government Act (Amended) 2013 repealed the 1984 act of the same name. The Act defines the establishment, operation, and functions of Local Government Councils, including the promulgation of Local Government Council bylaws. Such bylaws may have implications for the management of the coastal fisheries considered under the current project.

7.4 Shark Sanctuary Regulations 2015

The Shark Sanctuary Regulations 2015 prohibit catching, possessing and trading of sharks or their derivative products for all Hexanchiformes, Squaliformes, Pristiophoriformes, Squatiniformes, Heterodontiformes, Orectolobiformes, Lamniformes and Carcharhiniformes.

7.5 Domestic Fishing Zone Limit Regulations 2015

The Domestic Fishing Zone Limit Regulations 2015 define the geographic areas within which fishing operations are permitted. The Regulation applies only to “domestic fishing vessels” — i.e., Kiribati flagged purse seine or longline vessels landing catches in Kiribati.

7.6 Marine Zones (Declaration) Act 2011

The Marine Zones (Declaration) Act 2011 defines Kiribati’s maritime zones and boundaries (i.e., territorial sea, archipelagic waters, EEZ, etc.), with precise geographic coordinates provided. The Act establishes that any law in force in Kiribati, including the common law, shall apply throughout the nation’s archipelagic waters, regardless of their depth or distance from the coast.

7.7 Closing Lines Regulations 2014

The Closing Lines Regulations 2014 establishes coordinates for closing lines (i.e., archipelagic waters dividing line as per UNCLOS Articles 9–11 & 50). The Regulation defines the coordinates relevant to Marine Zones Act 2011.

7.8 Contiguous Zone Outer Limits Regulations 2014

The Contiguous Zone Outer Limits Regulations 2014 defines coordinates for the contiguous zone (i.e., 24nm from the baseline). This boundary marks the seaward extend of relevant regulations (e.g., Domestic Fishing Zone Limit Regulations 2015).

7.9 Seabed Minerals Acts 2017

The Seabed Minerals Acts 2017 addresses seabed mineral exploration and extraction. It has potential relevance to the current project in two main areas: (i) spatial planning and avoidance of mineral licences being granted for coastal areas that are fishing areas or designated protected areas; and (ii) mitigation, clean up and compensation associated with any incidents (e.g., ship groundings, mineral spills, environmental impacts, etc.).

7.10 Environment (General) Regulations 2017

The Environment (General) Regulations 2017 implement certain provisions of Environment Act 2007. Of relevance to the current project, including the development of the Cassidy Airport facility, are the Regulation’s definition of “environmental significant activities” and provisions for environmental impact assessment.

7.11 Fish Export Regulations 2012

The Fish Export Regulations 2012 implement certain provisions of the Fisheries Act 2010. The Regulations establish the Kiribati Competent Authority, outline the requirements and obligations of licenced fish processing establishments, define conditions for the export of seafood, and define quality management and certification processes.

8 Conclusions

The PROP Project Appraisal Document (PAD) highlights the reliance on fishing for subsistence and commercial purposes for the local I-Kiribati population, estimating that consumption rates here are one of the highest per capita consumption rates in the world. This context is set in parallel to the need to address the increasing pressure on over exploited coastal fish species and ensure the domestic supply remains productive. Weak compliance with coastal fisheries management measures, largely stemming from limited community participation in decision making, lack of institutional capacity and conflicting interpretations of access rights, have exacerbated stock overexploitation.

This project seeks to address some of the challenges mentioned above, but in doing so, must recognise the associated national, regional and international context, and strategic positions of Kiribati in relation to fisheries management and sustainable development. This report has sought to provide a high-level overview of various national, regional, and international agreements, strategies and policies of relevance to this project. In light of this, seven central ‘themes’ are evident and have been thread through several of the documents reviewed. These themes should therefore also provide the underpinning basis for the development of the management plans in this project. These key themes are provided in Table 3.

Table 3: Guiding themes to the development of the Kiritimati Island Ocean Resources Management Planning

Key themes	Justification
Economic growth/economic empowerment	Economic empowerment and growth is a guiding principle of the national and regional strategic plans and policies. For example, the Kiribati Development Plan 2020-2023 KPA-2 targets “growing economic wealth and leaving no-one behind” while the Noumea Strategy aims to ensure that inshore fisheries provide long- term economic benefits and contribute to the improved wellbeing of coastal communities. MEP has extensive experience of applying an Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management and will apply these principles in the delivery of this project. This includes ensuring that fishery and natural resource management plans developed under this project give adequate consideration to both ecological and socio- economic objectives and outcomes.
Ecological Stability	The Kiribati Development Plan 2020-2023 KPA 4 aims to “protect the environment and strengthen resilience”, while the National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap 2019 – 2013 promotes ecosystem-based

	<p>approaches to fisheries management. Ecological stability is a central principle of natural resource management, and MEP has an extensive track record in this field. Fishery management plans developed under this project will address the status of target stocks to ensure that harvests are within biological limits, and where appropriate will also highlight the need for adequate research and monitoring to support this goal. Throughout the project, precautionary principles will be applied.</p>
<p>Community participation/co-management</p>	<p>Stakeholder participation is a central theme across the majority of national strategic documents, as well as regional and global commitments such as the Nomea Strategy and the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. The National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap 2019-2013 in particular aims to “recognise diverse users ... and promote community-based fishery management”, and this roadmap provides the key policy framework for the fishery management planning activities under this project. Furthermore, extensive literature highlights the many advantages of involving stakeholders in the natural resource decision-making process and that stakeholder involvement is a key ingredient of good governance. MEP will implement a comprehensive stakeholder mapping and engagement strategy, and aims to ensure that stakeholder inputs are identified and incorporated into management plans.</p>
<p>Gender Equality</p>	<p>Gender equality is explicitly addressed via the Kiribati Gender Equality and Women’s Development Policy 2019–2022, but is also integral to other strategic plans and policies including the National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap 2019-2023 which aims to “recognise women, youth and vulnerable groups’ contributions to coastal fisheries and promote more inclusive management platforms and livelihoods”. The advantages of stakeholder participation in natural resource decision-making have already highlighted. Key to this is ensuring that the full range of stakeholder perspectives are considered, including for the vulnerable and marginalised groups that are often excluded from such processes. MEP’s stakeholder mapping and engagement strategy will take steps to identify and include marginalised groups, while training and capacity support will be designed with inclusivity as a core principle.</p>

<p>Good Governance</p>	<p>The majority of Kiribati’s national strategic documents consider governance issues as a guiding principle. The Kiribati Development Plan 2020-2023 KPA-5 addresses “good governance”, the Kiribati National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan 2016–2020 emphasises “good governance and leadership”, and the National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap 2019-2013 aims to promote “good governance, transparency, and accountability”. In implementing this project MEP will emphasise transparent and participative decision making, and ensure that management plans define the clear roles and responsibilities that contribute to accountability and good governance.</p>
<p>Food Security</p>	<p>Given the reliance on coastal ecosystems for food and nutrition, it is not surprising that food security is a priority throughout Kiribati’s strategic plans and policies, including the National Coastal Fisheries Roadmap 2019-2036 and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2016–2020 as well as in the linked regional strategies. This project aims to support the implementation of management plans for aquarium and sport fisheries. While not food fisheries themselves, they have considerable potential for interaction. Sport fisheries may target species that are also consumed, meanwhile the improved management of these fisheries will contribute to biodiversity maintenance and the reduced risk of tropic cascades that may impact food fish stocks and fisheries. The Ocean Resource Master Plan will address issues that include spatial planning and resource conflict, ensuring that growth and development in one maritime sector does not detriment other critical sectors and ecosystem services, including food provision.</p>
<p>Sound evidence</p>	<p>While sound evidence is not an explicit target or guiding principle of Kiribati’s strategic plans and policies, the need for evidence-based approaches is implicit in the fact that measurable targets are established by these plans. In implementing this project MEP will reference the best available data and information. Furthermore, where information shortages are identified, MEP will ensure that management plans specifically address issues of research and monitoring.</p>

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