

Workshop Report

Promoting policy coherence for environmental governance in the Climate and Nature Nexus: Pacific Subregional Workshop

Apia, Samoa

26 to 28 May 2025



1. Executive Summary

The Pacific Subregional Workshop on Promoting Policy Coherence for Environmental Governance in the Climate and Nature Nexus was held from **26 to 28 May 2025 in Apia, Samoa**. Organised by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the workshop gathered approximately **80 participants** from Pacific Island governments, regional organisations, development partners, civil society, and technical experts.



The workshop aimed to enhance capacities in the Pacific for integrating climate change and biodiversity objectives into coherent policy frameworks and coordinated national and regional actions. Discussions focused on the science-policy interface, sharing national experiences, practical tools and guidelines for integrated planning, and strengthening regional cooperation mechanisms. Technical sessions, panel discussions, and group exercises explored approaches to align national strategies such as National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and to harmonise reporting obligations under multiple multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

Presentations underscored the importance of translating global scientific assessments into actionable national policies, integrating traditional knowledge alongside scientific evidence, and promoting nature-based solutions as effective responses to climate and biodiversity challenges. Tools such as the Biodiversity-Climate Nexus Playbook, the InforMEA¹ platform, regional environmental indicators developed by SPREP, and resources under the GEF Early Action Support programme were introduced to support national implementation, including DaRT², NBSAP Forum³, checklist of key elements and cross cutting issues to be considered in updated NBSAPs, checklist of key policies related to elements of GBF and options for policy coherence, guide on whole-of-society approach to implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, among others. Group discussions provided practical feedback on these tools, highlighting the **need for tailored capacity building, harmonised terminology, and community engagement to operationalise integrated approaches.**

Countries shared experiences on building institutional coordination, developing policy frameworks, and implementing community-led initiatives to advance the climate-biodiversity nexus. Common challenges were identified, including limited technical and financial capacity, fragmented institutional arrangements, gaps in data and monitoring systems (including lack of joint indicators to measure integrated action), and the complexity of reporting requirements across various MEAs, and the lack of coordinated opportunities for reporting on integrated action across the conventions. A lack of cooperation in land-use planning was also noted as a barrier to integration. It was further acknowledged that many tools exist to promote integrated action, but they remain underused. Despite these challenges, participants expressed strong commitment to advancing policy coherence and recognised the value of regional cooperation in supporting national priorities.

The workshop also focused on regional cooperation, with updates shared from multiple regional mechanisms. Discussions emphasised leveraging existing platforms to avoid duplication, developing joint regional positions for global negotiations, promoting regional data-sharing and harmonised reporting frameworks, and exploring

¹ United Nations Information portal on Multilateral Environmental Agreements (InforMEAs) provides easy access to information on MEAs. <https://www.informea.org/en> Use this link for more information.

² The **Data Reporting Tool for MEAs - DaRT** is a tool supporting parties to effectively use synergies in the field of knowledge and information management for national reporting to biodiversity-related conventions. <https://dart.informea.org/>. Use this link for more information.

³ This online community of practice connects a wide range of stakeholders who need access to timely information regarding the [UN Convention on Biological Diversity \(CBD\)](#) and its targets. <http://nbsapforum.net> Use this link for more information.



South–South and triangular cooperation to enhance capacity building and knowledge exchange. Participants noted that while numerous regional structures exist, further alignment, clear regional targets, and sustainable financing are necessary for effective integration of climate and biodiversity agendas.

A significant outcome of the workshop was the recognition of thematic entry points—such as ecosystem-based adaptation, integrated coastal management, nature-based solutions for resilience, sustainable food systems, and One Health approaches—as practical avenues for advancing policy coherence. While the conventions often share these integrated approaches, they provide different entry points and perspectives, and understanding these variations can support more coordinated implementation and joint action. Participants agreed that focusing on such entry points can help translate high-level commitments into concrete actions that deliver multiple benefits for people, nature, and climate.

Overall, the workshop concluded with consensus on the importance of sustaining dialogue, strengthening institutional coordination, mobilising financial and technical resources, and integrating science, traditional knowledge, and community perspectives into decision-making. Participants affirmed that achieving coherent and integrated environmental governance in the Pacific will require ongoing collaboration at national, regional, and international levels.

2. Objectives of the Workshop

The overall aim of the workshop was to strengthen the capacity of Pacific Island Countries to promote policy coherence for integrated implementation of climate and biodiversity agendas. Specifically, the workshop sought to:

- Highlight the role of science-policy interfaces in informing integrated action on climate change and biodiversity;
- Identify common gaps, challenges, and opportunities in national and regional policy coherence;
- Share experiences and practices in aligning national policies, strategies, and reporting mechanisms;
- Introduce and discuss tools and guidelines to support policy integration and coordinated implementation;
- Define regional priorities and collaborative pathways for advancing the climate-nature nexus.

3. Summary of Discussions and Key Findings

3.1 Opening Session and Setting the Scene

Facilitated by **Jope Davetanivalu** of SPREP, the workshop commenced with a formal **Keynote Address** by **Lealaisalanoa Frances Brown Reupena**, Chief Executive Officer of Samoa’s Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, who emphasized the importance of policy coherence in sustaining long-term development. She observed that: “Policy coherence involves ensuring policies across various sectors and levels of government are aligned and mutually reinforcing to achieve sustainable development goals.” Her address highlighted the



importance of robust leadership, inter-agency collaboration, and knowledge-sharing platforms as essential components for establishing integrated environmental governance.

This was followed by an **Official Address** from **Easter Chu Shing**, Deputy Director General of SPREP, who welcomed participants and emphasized the urgent need for harmonized implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). She stated that the workshop would provide a rare opportunity to connect global environmental commitments with national implementation in the Pacific, and to foster regional cooperation through shared experiences and information exchange.

Video messages were then delivered by **Patricia Kameri-Mbote**, Director of the Law Division at UNEP, and **Astrid Schomaker**, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). These remarks reinforced the strategic importance of aligning Pacific national frameworks such as NBSAPs, NDCs, and NAPs with global environmental commitments, including the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

The opening session set the tone for the workshop, highlighting that effective solutions require both strong scientific foundations and inclusive, whole-of-society approaches. Participants were encouraged to consider how science, traditional knowledge, policy processes, and community engagement can be brought together to support integrated governance in the Pacific.

3.2 The Science-Policy Interface and Policy Coherence

The first technical session focused on the role of global scientific assessments in informing national and regional policy-making. **Mark Howden**, Vice Chair of IPCC Working Group II, delivered an intervention on the role of the IPCC in producing global climate science to guide adaptation and policy responses. He stressed the value of Pacific participation in IPCC processes to ensure that projections and assessments adequately reflect regional realities and needs. Mr. Howden discussed projections under warming scenarios ranging from 1.5°C to 3.5°C and noted the importance of making such projections more locally relevant and actionable for decision-making in Pacific Island countries. Participants raised questions about pathways for deeper Pacific engagement in IPCC work, particularly regarding author contributions and the practical usability of climate data for national planning. Mr. Howden also emphasized the crucial role of traditional knowledge as a complement to scientific analysis in designing effective adaptation strategies.

David Obura, Chair of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), spoke via recorded presentation on the work of IPBES in connecting science and policy to inform sustainable development. He introduced the IPBES Nexus Assessment, which examines interlinkages among biodiversity, climate, food systems, water, health, and energy. Dr. Obura underscored the urgency of developing integrated, cross-sectoral solutions that can address multiple challenges simultaneously, and encouraged Pacific stakeholders to engage with IPBES processes to ensure regional priorities are represented in global analyses.



Heather Maseko, Programme Officer at the UNFCCC Secretariat, contributed virtually to reflect on the SPI under the UNFCCC framework. Ms. Maseko explained how scientific evidence produced through processes such as the IPCC and the Global Stocktake informs global climate policy and negotiations. She highlighted the climate science-policy cycle and emphasized the importance of integrating scientific knowledge into national policies and action plans. She observed that effective regional collaboration and institutional readiness are crucial for translating global findings into practical policy responses in Pacific Island contexts.

Lijie Cai of the CBD Secretariat provided insights into the importance of aligning National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) with Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the climate regime. He noted that past biodiversity targets were not fully met, underscoring the urgency of coordinated action under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Mr. Cai highlighted Target 8 of the framework, which addresses the need to mitigate the impacts of climate change on biodiversity. He proposed strategies for achieving NBSAP-NDC synergies, including enhanced institutional coordination, shared data systems, capacity development, and mainstreaming biodiversity into climate policies. Such alignment, he observed, can help streamline reporting, reduce duplication of efforts, and ensure mutually reinforcing outcomes for biodiversity and climate goals.

Kazuhiko Seriu, from UNEP's Law Division, concluded the technical presentations by examining policy coherence and synergies among multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). Mr. Seriu explained that integrated implementation of MEAs can help Pacific Island Countries optimise resources, reduce duplication, and achieve shared objectives across different thematic areas. He stressed the importance of translating global mandates—such as those contained in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework—into national contexts that reflect Pacific realities and capacities, using examples from the Bern Process and SDG Indicator 17.14.1 on policy coherence from an environmental governance perspective.

The discussion following the presentations focused on shared concerns regarding transboundary environmental risks, the challenges of managing threats beyond national jurisdictions, and the importance of cross-border collaboration. Participants highlighted the need for coordinated responses to activities occurring in adjacent marine areas and for ensuring that national conservation efforts are not undermined by developments in neighbouring territories.

Across all presentations and discussions, common themes emerged, including the need for:

- Greater Pacific representation in global science-policy platforms to ensure regional contexts and priorities are adequately reflected;
- Practical mechanisms to translate scientific findings into policy and action at national and community levels, integrating traditional knowledge with scientific data;
- Strengthened institutional coordination to align climate and biodiversity policy instruments and reduce overlapping reporting requirements;
- Targeted capacity building and technical support to enable Pacific Island countries to engage effectively in global environmental processes and implement integrated national policies.



- Knowledge generation systems, such as state of the environment reports, provide good avenues for promoting synergies by tracking integrated action
- Data collection and monitoring would benefit from integrated indicators shared across the conventions

3.3 Panel Discussion: Integrated Action on Biodiversity and Climate Change

The workshop featured a panel discussion that focused on practical experiences and insights regarding integrated action for biodiversity and climate change. The session was moderated by **Joep Davetanivalu** of SPREP and included contributions from representatives of international partnerships, civil society organisations, and national government agencies.

Eva Gurria, representing the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership, opened the session by emphasising that nature and climate are inseparably linked and that policy responses must reflect this reality rather than remain siloed. She noted that Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) are frequently underutilised despite their significant potential for delivering both climate mitigation and biodiversity conservation benefits and stressed that impactful, integrated planning requires a whole-of-society approach, inclusive of land tenure rights, indigenous leadership, and gender equality as foundational rather than optional considerations. She highlighted global examples where overlapping priorities between NBSAPs and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) have been effectively addressed through joint planning processes.

Leilani Duffy-Iosefa from Conservation International (CI) underscored the significant gaps that persist in aligning biodiversity and climate policies at both national and regional levels. She noted that although UNCCD had not been prominently featured in discussions, there was potential to integrate desertification and land degradation issues more explicitly into nexus conversations. CI and other NGO partners expressed their readiness to assist countries in bridging gaps between NBSAPs and NDCs and highlighted SPREP's role in linking regional multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) with national implementation efforts.

Dean Launder Wotlolan, Senior Officer at a national department for environmental protection and conservation, shared practical experiences from national policy development and implementation. He described how the government has prioritised climate action, reflected in the revision of national climate change and disaster risk reduction policies and plans. He noted that significant vulnerabilities persist, including threats from sea-level rise, coastal erosion, and biodiversity loss, all of which have serious implications for key sectors such as fisheries, forestry, agriculture, and food security. He outlined ongoing efforts to integrate biodiversity and climate planning, including the development of a national adaptation plan and a policy framework addressing loss and damage. Specific initiatives were described, such as community-based conservation measures, including the designation of community conserved areas and Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs), mangrove planting, afforestation and reforestation projects, invasive species control efforts, and the implementation of early warning systems. The speaker stressed the importance of ensuring that communities can easily access funding opportunities and that future phases of



national projects will focus on enabling local communities to secure environmental grants and participate fully in implementation activities.

The discussion underscored several shared themes, including:

- The fundamental linkages between climate change and biodiversity, requiring integrated planning and governance.
- The necessity of moving beyond siloed approaches to achieve policy coherence and maximise co-benefits.
- The importance of inclusive approaches that respect land tenure rights, promote indigenous leadership, and integrate gender considerations.
- The critical role of technical support, capacity building, and mechanisms like the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership in facilitating practical implementation of integrated strategies.
- The need for greater harmonisation between NBSAPs and NDCs, both in design and execution, to avoid duplication of efforts and ensure more efficient use of resources.
- Recognition of community engagement as central to successful implementation, with emphasis on building local capacity and ensuring accessible funding pathways.

3.4 Regional and National Experiences

The workshop continued with presentations highlighting both regional and national experiences.

Makiko Yashiro of UNEP's Asia and the Pacific Office delivered a presentation on the Regional Nexus Approach, emphasising that global crises such as biodiversity loss, climate change, food and water insecurity, and health risks are deeply interconnected and require integrated, rather than siloed, responses. Drawing on findings from the IPBES Nexus Assessment (2024), she explained that isolated policy actions often exacerbate trade-offs and inequalities, particularly in vulnerable regions like the Pacific, and highlighted that a Nexus Approach seeks to deliver synergistic solutions that produce co-benefits across sectors by engaging diverse stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Ms. Yashiro pointed to global frameworks such as the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the UNFCCC COP28 Declaration on Resilient Food Systems as examples of policy guidance promoting whole-of-government and whole-of-society engagement, and shared a practical case from Lao PDR where integration of food systems, health (through One Health), and climate considerations is being pursued through revised NBSAPs and aligned strategies. Despite progress, she noted that implementation gaps remain, particularly in translating plans into action and integrating agro-biodiversity and health considerations into broader environmental governance.

Vani Koroisamanunu of SPREP provided an update on regional cooperation efforts to support Pacific countries in advancing integrated climate and biodiversity actions. The session highlighted regional initiatives aiming to consolidate knowledge sharing, promote harmonised reporting, and advocate for the Pacific's interests in international forums.



Sesimani M. T. Lokotui of Tonga shared their country's case study on national coordination mechanisms and whole-of-government approach on the biodiversity-climate nexus. She described its efforts to integrate biodiversity and climate action through coordinated frameworks such as the NBSAP, NDCs, and JNAP, led by MEIDECC and the JNAP Technical Working Group to ensure cross-ministry collaboration and community engagement. While progress has been made, challenges remain, including limited technical capacity, data gaps, enforcement issues, and fragmented donor support. She highlighted the importance of integrating traditional knowledge with scientific approaches, especially through community involvement, despite such knowledge not always being formally recognised as scientific data. Looking ahead, Tonga plans to update national strategies, strengthen monitoring systems, expand community-led conservation, and mobilise financing through initiatives like BIOFIN, GEF-8, and the Green Climate Fund to support effective, integrated environmental governance.

The group discussions further highlighted that while many countries maintain separate institutional structures for climate change and biodiversity, these often operate independently, limiting opportunities for integrated action. Participants agreed that existing multi-stakeholder councils and committees provide valuable entry points for enhancing cooperation if mechanisms are established to bridge gaps between the biodiversity and climate agendas. Common challenges identified included institutional fragmentation, siloed information sharing, and misaligned reporting obligations under different multilateral environmental agreements, which complicate national planning and reporting efforts. As a way forward, participants suggested creating joint coordination platforms, aligning reporting cycles across environmental agreements, and ensuring deliberate integration of biodiversity considerations into climate change planning, and vice versa, to promote more coherent, efficient, and impactful environmental governance across the Pacific region.

3.5 Tools, Guidelines, and Practical Approaches

This session focused on practical tools, methodologies, and emerging integrated actions designed to support Pacific Island Countries in advancing policy coherence and implementation across the biodiversity and climate change nexus. Presentations were delivered by UNEP and SPREP, alongside group discussions that reflected participants' experiences and perspectives on applying these resources in national contexts.

Niko Urho, an independent consultant, presented on opportunities for integrated action, highlighting that despite numerous decisions under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) explicitly addressing the biodiversity-climate nexus, practical integration remains uneven across national policy frameworks in the Pacific. While biodiversity considerations are relatively well integrated into adaptation planning, they are less systematically reflected in mitigation strategies. This reflects the lack of guidance for Parties, which has focused on promoting ecosystem-based adaptation. For example, the critical role of seagrasses as carbon sinks is absent in Pacific countries' climate reports, reflecting their limited recognition in UNFCCC climate guidance and accounting frameworks. Nevertheless, a key challenge in assessing the level of integrated action is that, while national implementation plans and reports often outline aspirational goals and activities, they are rarely followed up, leaving the extent of actual implementation in the Pacific unclear.



Mr. Urho emphasised that the current period, during which countries are preparing updates to their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and the third round of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), offers a critical window for aligning national planning and reporting processes. He noted that vulnerability assessments - commonly included in National Communications - remain a primary tool under the UNFCCC for understanding climate impacts on biodiversity, particularly regarding threats such as coral bleaching, ocean acidification, and sea-level rise. However, translating these assessments into concrete measures to mitigate biodiversity loss remains a gap in many national contexts.

Mr. Urho also highlighted opportunities to better align the policy cycles of the conventions. While integrated action has advanced primarily under the CBD, the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement have begun to recognize integrated concepts, such as nature-based solutions, in recent decisions, including in the outcome of the first Global Stocktake. A specific opportunity under the Paris Agreement is the upcoming review (by 2028) of the Modalities, Procedures and Guidelines (MPGs), which could strengthen the reporting of biodiversity–climate linkages within NDCs.

Josua Tamaiqaikula Waqanivalu from Fiji shared its national experience in advancing integrated action at the climate-biodiversity nexus, describing efforts to align policy frameworks and reporting under both climate and biodiversity conventions. Fiji highlighted how its updated NBSAP and NDCs increasingly incorporate shared priorities such as ecosystem-based adaptation, sustainable resource management, and community resilience. Practical measures include integrating biodiversity into climate vulnerability assessments, promoting nature-based solutions, and mainstreaming gender and social inclusion in environmental programmes. While progress has been made in institutional coordination, Fiji noted ongoing challenges in translating plans into implementation due to resource constraints, data gaps, and complex reporting demands. The country emphasised the importance of regional cooperation and practical tools to support further integration and committed to strengthening monitoring systems and community-led initiatives as key pathways for effective governance.

To support countries in operationalising integrated approaches, Mr. Urho introduced the **Biodiversity-Climate Nexus Playbook** and a **self-evaluation checklist**, developed for this workshop to synthesise commitments from MEAs such as the CBD, UNFCCC, CMS, Ramsar, and UNEA resolutions. These tools provide practical steps across fifteen thematic and cross-cutting areas, including ecosystem-based mitigation and adaptation, governance, science-policy interfaces, gender equality, and human rights. Participants recognised that narrative framing and harmonised terminology are critical for fostering integrated policy development, noting that language used in Pacific policy documents—such as “local communities” rather than the broader term “Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs)” —reflects regional contexts but can create challenges for aligning with global frameworks.

Participants engaged in group discussions to test the Nexus Checklist, reflecting on the degree of integration between biodiversity and climate change in their national strategies. While many noted that climate



considerations are referenced in national biodiversity plans, actual implementation often remains fragmented and occurs in silos. Participants emphasised that community participation, traditional knowledge, and simplifying technical concepts into local languages are essential for effective application. However, gaps persist in monitoring systems and data collection to capture biodiversity-climate linkages comprehensively. There was strong interest in using the checklist as a platform for peer exchange and regional capacity building.

The session also explored broader tools and resources to support integrated governance. **Kazuhiko Seriu** from UNEP highlighted the InforMEA platform, an online resource providing access to environmental treaties, national legislation, and policy documents to support legal and policy alignment.

Antony Kamau from UNEP's Ecosystems Division introduced technical resources under the GEF Early Action Support (EAS) programme, aimed at assisting countries in aligning updated NBSAPs with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. This resources include [UNEP's Data Reporting Tool for MEAs \(DaRT\)](#), [NBSAP Forum](#), checklist of key elements and cross cutting issues to be considered in updated NBSAPs, checklist of key policies related to elements of GBF and options for policy coherence, guide on whole-of-society approach to implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, among others. Participants also learned about other initiatives such as the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership, the China Trust Fund Project, and the Kunming Biodiversity Fund, which offer technical capacity support financial support for countries in the implementation of updated national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs). The presentation underscored the importance for the adoption of a whole of government, whole of society approach during updating of GBF aligned National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.

SPREP presented updates on the **Regional Environmental Indicators (REIs)**, encompassing 34 indicators across themes such as atmosphere, biodiversity, marine and coastal ecosystems, land, and environmental governance. These indicators are designed to support consistent regional reporting and assessment, with ongoing work underway to review and enhance the indicators and accompanying guidance to strengthen evidence-based policy-making.

During the discussion, **Elizabeth Munro** from the Cook Islands noted that while various tools and systems exist to support biodiversity and climate action, their effective use is often limited by capacity constraints, funding gaps, and brain drain. She emphasised the need for stronger coordination between national and regional policies to ensure integrated and practical implementation.

Throughout the session, participants acknowledged the significant potential of integrated approaches to enhance environmental governance in the Pacific. They agreed that tools and guidelines, such as those presented, are essential to translating global commitments into national action. However, they also emphasised the need for tailored technical support and capacity building to adapt these tools to Pacific contexts, harmonise reporting processes, and strengthen monitoring and data management systems. Participants concluded that effective integration requires not only technical tools but also clear narratives, institutional collaboration, and sustained community engagement to ensure that biodiversity and climate policies are mutually reinforcing and responsive to the unique challenges of the Pacific region.



3.6 Regional Cooperation and Future Priorities

The final day of the workshop addressed regional cooperation and future pathways for advancing policy coherence in the climate and biodiversity nexus across the Pacific, facilitated by **Amanda Wheatley** of SPREP. Representatives from regional coordination mechanisms—including the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP), the Climate Change Roundtable, the Cleaner Pacific Roundtable, and the Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation (PIRT)—shared updates on ongoing initiatives and highlighted opportunities to integrate climate and biodiversity agendas through collaborative platforms, joint data systems, and harmonised approaches to reporting and advocacy.

Discussions underscored the importance of leveraging existing regional platforms to avoid duplication of efforts and maximise the use of limited resources. Participants noted the potential for developing joint regional positions to amplify Pacific voices in global negotiations, as well as the value of regional data-sharing and harmonised reporting frameworks to alleviate national reporting burdens. The importance of South–South and triangular cooperation was highlighted as a mechanism for knowledge exchange and capacity building across the region, with suggestions to replicate successful national initiatives at the regional level and share best practices more systematically.

Group feedback revealed that while many regional mechanisms exist, further efforts are needed to strengthen coordination, align institutional mandates, and establish clear regional targets and indicators. Challenges were noted around fragmented mandates, gaps in regional integration, and the need for stronger financing and technical support for coordinated action. Participants stressed the importance of engaging the right stakeholders to ensure regional strategies are grounded in national realities and can translate high-level frameworks into practical action on the ground. Tools such as Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) were recognised as useful instruments for integrating biodiversity and climate considerations into planning processes. The role of EIA in flagging possible biodiversity impacts of climate measures (e.g., coastal adaptation plans) was highlighted.

Looking ahead, participants agreed on the importance of sustained dialogue and proposed using the upcoming 11th Pacific Nature Conference in 2026 as a key milestone to track progress, share lessons learned, and continue momentum for integrated environmental governance in the Pacific region.

4. Recommendations and Conclusions

The wrap-up session of the workshop was facilitated by **Anastacia Amoa-Stowers** of SPREP and **Makiko Yashiro** of UNEP. Participants concluded the workshop with several key recommendations to guide further work on policy coherence for environmental governance in the Pacific. These recommendations are intended as guiding considerations rather than prescriptive actions, recognising the diverse national contexts and priorities across the region.



- **Strengthen National Coordination:** Countries may consider establishing or reinforcing inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms to facilitate integrated planning, implementation, and reporting between biodiversity and climate portfolios. Such mechanisms can help reduce duplication, promote information sharing, and ensure consistent messaging across national institutions. Countries must also ensure effective participation in joint coordination mechanisms..
- **Translate Science into Action:** Efforts could be directed toward simplifying and contextualising scientific assessments to make them more accessible to policy-makers, practitioners, and communities. Integrating traditional knowledge alongside scientific findings can help ensure that policy solutions are culturally appropriate and grounded in local realities.
- **Promote Digital Tools and Data Sharing:** Participants highlighted the potential value of digital platforms, such as InforMEA, in supporting information management and reporting obligations under various multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). Adapting these tools to Pacific contexts, and investing in training for their effective use, may be helpful for national and regional implementation.
- **Enhance Regional Cooperation:** Regional cooperation mechanisms can provide valuable platforms for peer learning, harmonised reporting approaches, and developing unified regional positions for international negotiations. Continued engagement in regional dialogues may help countries access shared resources and technical support, reducing the burden on individual national institutions.
- **Address Human Capacity Constraints and Brain Drain:**
Participants also discussed limited human resource capacity as a key barrier, exacerbated by the ongoing brain drain of bright talents leaving Pacific countries for opportunities abroad. Investing in long-term capacity development, providing incentives for talent retention, and strengthening institutional memory were recognised as critical to sustaining national expertise in environmental governance. Additionally, a roster of experts at the regional level may help identify such talents.
- **Secure Resources for Integrated Implementation:** Participants recognised the importance of mobilising financial and technical resources to support integrated climate and biodiversity action. Exploring innovative funding opportunities and partnerships, including regional and international financing mechanisms, could be instrumental in enabling countries to implement their environmental commitments effectively.
- **Prepare for Future Dialogue and Identify Thematic Entry Points:** Participants agreed that ongoing regional dialogue remains essential to maintain momentum on integrated environmental governance. The forthcoming 11th Pacific Nature Conference in 2026 was identified as a key milestone to review progress and share experiences.

Countries and regional institutions may wish to explore specific thematic entry points as part of their preparations for future dialogue and cooperation. Such entry points could include:

- Disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation strategies, including vulnerability assessments, that incorporate biodiversity considerations;
- Integrated coastal zone management and other means integrated resources management as a means of addressing both climate impacts and habitat protection;



- Nature-based solutions for promoting sustainable livelihoods and climate resilience;
- Sustainable management of marine and coastal ecosystems to support food security and biodiversity;
- Incorporation of health and “One Health” approaches to link environmental sustainability with human well-being.

These thematic areas may offer practical opportunities to operationalise policy coherence between climate and biodiversity agendas, while aligning with broader sustainable development objectives.

The workshop concluded with commitments by UNEP, SPREP, and other partners to support follow-up actions, provide technical assistance, and continue engagement with Pacific countries in promoting integrated environmental governance.



Annexes

Workshop Agenda

Promoting policy coherence for environmental governance in the Climate and Nature Nexus Pacific Subregional Workshop

26 – 28 May 2025

Apia, Samoa

Draft Agenda

DAY 1

OBJECTIVES OF THE DAY: To highlight the role of science-policy interfaces and policy coherence in advancing integrated action on biodiversity and climate change, while showcasing regional approaches, whole-of-society practices, and country experiences to identify common gaps, challenges, and opportunities for further discussion on Day 2 and 3.

Time	Agenda
8:30 – 9:00	Registration
9:00 – 9:30	Session 1: Opening Segment MC: Jope Davetanivalu, SPREP ○ Prayer ○ Keynote address ○ <i>Lealaisalanoa Frances Brown Reupena, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment</i> ○ Official Address ○ <i>Easter Chu Shing, Deputy Director General, Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)</i> ○ <i>Patricia Kameri-Mbote, Director, Law Division, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (video message)</i> ○ <i>Astrid Schomaker, Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (video message)</i>
9:30 – 10:00	Group Photo & Break
10:00 – 10:20	Session 2: Introduction & Workshop Objectives MC: Kazuhiko Seriu, UNEP

	○ Kazuhiko Seriu, Programme Management Officer, Law Division, UNEP
10:20 – 12:00	Session 3: Science-Policy Interface (SPI) & Policy coherence MC: Kazuhiko Seriu, UNEP ○ Global Scientific Assessments for Integrated Action ○ Mark Howden, IPCC Bureau member / Vice Chair of Working Group II, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (virtual participation) ○ David Obura, Chair, Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) (recorded presentation) ○ Presentation/Reflection on the Science-Policy Interface by UNFCCC ○ Heather Maseko, Programme Officer, UNFCCC Secretariat (virtual participation) ○ Presentation by SCBD on policy coherence for climate change and biodiversity-effectively linking NBSAPs and NDCs ○ Lijie Cai, IMS Division, CBD Secretariat ○ Policy coherence and Cooperation/synergies between MEAs ○ Kazuhiko Seriu, Programme Management Officer, Law Division, UNEP
12:00 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 14:30	Session 4: Panel Discussion on integrated action on biodiversity and climate change including whole-of-society practice Facilitator: Jope Davetanivalu, SPREP ○ Eva Gurria, NBSAP Accelerator Partnership ○ Leilani Duffy-Iosefa, Conservation International ○ Country experience (Vanuatu) ○ Dean Launder Wotlolan, Senior Officer, Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation ○ Leana William, MEA Officer, Ministry of Climate Change
14:30 – 14:45	Break
14:45 – 15:30	Session 5: Regional Nexus Overview MC: Antony Kamau, UNEP ● A Regional Nexus Approach ○ Makiko Yashiro, Programme Management Officer, UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific ● Regional cooperation for the Climate-Biodiversity Nexus in the Pacific Islands ○ SPREP

15:30 – 16:30	Session 6: Country Experiences on national coordination and cooperation across biodiversity and climate change clusters MC: Kazuhiko Seriu, UNEP - Policy Alignment Through National Planning Cycles <i>Niko Urho, Independent Consultant</i> - Ref: Background paper - Policy cycle requirements for National Implementation Plans addressing the biodiversity–climate nexus - One country case study on national coordination mechanisms and whole of government approach on biodiversity and climate nexus (Tonga) <i>Sesimani M. T. Lokotui, GEF SGP National Coordinator</i> <i>Fololita Sila, Head of Policy & Planning</i> <i>Kelelia Lavaki, Environment Information Officer</i>
16:30 - 17:15	Session 7: Group Work Facilitator: Kazuhiko Seriu, UNEP - Short group discussion on opportunities and challenges on working across institutions and focal points at national level - Ref.: Key Actions and Entry Points for National Coordination Across Biodiversity and Climate Change Clusters
17:15 – 17:45	Session 8: Feedback from groups
17:45	End of Day 1

Day 2

OBJECTIVES OF THE DAY: To discuss nexus and trends by using the workshop’s background papers and introduce tools and guidelines that support Member States in strengthening policy coherence for the integrated implementation of climate and biodiversity nexus, and to apply the checklist as a self-assessment exercise during group work, contributing to the identification of key regional takeaways.

Time	Agenda
8:30 – 8:45	Session 9: Recap of Day 1
8:45 – 10:15	Session 10: Presentation on integrated actions to address the climate-biodiversity nexus taken by PSIDS countries MC: Kazuhiko Seriu, UNEP

	• Presentation of the key findings of the background paper “<i>Advancing the biodiversity-climate nexus through MEAs - National implementation plans as catalysts for integrated action</i>” • Trends based on Key Words Analysis/Playbook for strengthening climate-biodiversity policy coherence ○ Niko Urho, Independent Consultant • Country experience (Fiji) ○ Mr. Josua Tamaiqaikula Waqanivalu, Senior Environment Officer, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change ○ Mr. Jimmy Clint Gaunavou, Senior Environment Officer, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
10:15 – 10:30	Break
10:30 – 11:30	Session 11: Group Work on Self-assessment using Biodiversity/Climate Nexus checklist Facilitator: Niko Urho, Independent Consultant/Kazuhiko Seriu, UNEP
11:30 – 12:00	Session 12: Report back
12:00 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 14:30	Session 13: Tools and/or guidelines for Policy Coherence MC: Kazuhiko Seriu, UNEP InforMEA platform/knowledge management tools ○ Kazuhiko Seriu, Programme Management Officer, UNEP GEF Early Action tools and guidelines ○ Antony Kamau, Programme Management Officer, Ecosystems Division, UNEP ○ Country experience (Cook Islands) ○ Elizabeth Munro, Manager, Environment Stewardship National Environment Service, Cook Islands Regional Indicators ○ SPREP
14:30 – 15:30	Session 14: Group Work on tools and guidelines Facilitator: Antony Kamau, UNEP
15:30 – 15:45	Break
15:45 – 16:30	Session 15: Report back to Plenary
16:30	End of Day 2

Day 3



OBJECTIVES OF THE DAY: To define regional priorities, strengthen collaborative actions, and discuss next steps for advancing policy coherence for climate change and biodiversity through regional engagement.

Time	Agenda
8:30 – 9:30	Session 16: Presentation: Key Outcomes on Day 1 and 2
9:30 – 10:30	Session 17: Discussion on regional mechanisms for coordinated climate and nature action MC: Amanda Wheatley, SPREP Insights by: • One Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific (CROP) mechanism • Climate Change Roundtable • Cleaner Pacific Roundtable • The Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation (PIRT)
10:30 – 10:45	Break
10:45 – 11:45	Session 18: Group Work Facilitator: Amanda Wheatley, SPREP ○ Regional Context and Takeaways – Strengthening Regional Collaboration for Policy Coherence for Climate Change/Biodiversity ○ Regional and Global Engagement ○ Scaling Regional Action Through South–South and Triangular Cooperation
11:45 – 12:15	Session 19: Feedback from Groups
12:15 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 15:00	Session 20: Discussion on Key Takeaways from the Workshop (Plenary) Facilitator: Anastacia Amoa-Stowers, SPREP/ Makiko Yashiro, UNEP
15:00 – 15:30	Session 21: Closing • Workshop Evaluations • Next steps Closing remarks

List of Participants

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Convention on
Biological Diversity

Subregional workshop for the Pacific small island developing States on strengthening national contributions to global environmental commitments through the synergistic implementation of multilateral environmental agreements

26–28 May 2025

Apia, Samoa

Subregional dialogue for the Pacific small island developing States on biodiversity monitoring and reporting

29 and 30 May 2025

Apia, Samoa

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