## 7<sup>th</sup> August 2024 / National Environment Service NBSAP Meeting minutes

Meeting	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan							
Date	Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> August 2024							
Time start	9:00am							
Present	Government Agencies							
	National Environment Service							
	Elizabeth Munro – Environmental Stewardships Manager							
	Jessie Nicholson – NBSAP Manager							
	Karen (Kas) Silk– NBSAP Coordinator							
	Rima Moeka'a – NBSAP Consultant							
	Benjamin Maxwell – NES Senior Compliance Officer Eva Patai - NES Compliance Officer Hayley Weeks – Environmental Partnerships Manager Fred Nicholas, Terena Wiki-Koteka – GEF 7 Project Officers							
	Ngatupuna Kae – NES Independent Contractor							
	TMO - Public health Mura Herman, Taaki Moekopiti							
	MFAI	Peka Fisher						
	MMR	Phoebe Argyle, Liam Clegg, Epeli Maisema, Mereana Atatoa Carr						
	INTAFF	Mereina Herman, Helina Glassie						
	MOA	William Wigmore, Ngatoko Ngatoko, Eitiare Vano						
	OPM - CPPO	David Pori						
	MFEM DCD	Ana Tiraa, Tessa Vaetoru,						
	SBMA	John Parianos, Tanga Morris						
	MOT John Hosking							
	MOE Jane Taurarii							
	CCCI	Wayne King, Charlene Akaruru						
	MOCD	Jane Wichman Poa						
	MFEM	Eileen Story						
	CIIC	Bianca Herman						
	TMO	Mura Herman, Taaki Moekapiti						
	Tourism	Jeremy Goodwin						
Time end	1:00pm							

## Agenda

## 1. Welcome, prayer and overview of the program

## • Opening Prayer – Kevin Iro

Environmental Stewardships Manager, Elizabeth Munro, opened the meeting and welcomed all government agencies for taking time to attend. Elizabeth Munro acknowledged Rima Moeka'a as the Consultant that will assist the National Environment

Housekeeping rules – Elizabeth Munro

## 2. Objectives of the workshop - Kas presenting

- Overview of the Framework Purpose, Vision and Mission statement
- To engage with stakeholders
- Overview of the current NBSAPs
- Alignment of the CI NBSAP to the GBF and Island Plans
- Identify top 5 targets for each agency
- Collective targets identified
- Formulate a Working Group

#### 3. Menti Mini Quiz

• Tell us who you represent today.

TMO - Public health, MFAI, MMR, INTAFF, MOA, OPM – CPPO, MFEM DCD, SBMA, MOT, MOE, CCCI, MOCD, MFEM Economic planning, CIIC, TMO, Tourism, CCI OPM

What does 'biodiversity' mean to you?

LIFE, SUSTAINABILITY, NATURE, ecosystems, nsda goal 11 biodiversity, Mei te maunga ki te moana, medium, unity, existence, environment, guardianship, trees, land, preservation, life around us, finance is crosscutting, mother nature, healthy ecosystems, living thing, all of life, health, sustenance, conservation, foundation of life, food source, living organisms, services

Is biodiversity linked to your agency mandate?

Yes, strongly aligned = 14

Medium = 3

Low = 1

No alignment = 0

What biodiversity area do you focus on?

Marine, finance, bbnj, finance is crosscutting, coral reefs, lagoons, social welfare, regenerative tourism, offshore, climate impacts, every part, restoration, ecosystems, sustainable land mngmt, agency, oceans, transport, deep sea, support,

- What is a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan? Or what do you think it is about?
  - Alignment of national plans to GBF commitments
  - Managing biodiversity across the Cook Islands
  - A strategy to help guide in what areas of biodiversity our country will be implementing to ensure we are meeting the CBD targets
  - Protections, restoration and regeneration of biodiversity
  - A set of targets to preserve biodiversity in the Cook Islands
  - It is about the eyes and ears of the nation, international with a focus on preservation, conservations and alignment with all government policies
  - A plan to help preserve and enhance biodiversity in the Cook Islands now and into the future
  - National Policy
  - To gain optimal management plans for our natural environment
  - Positioning on biodiversity for the nation
  - Halting biodiversity loss and putting nature on the path of recovery for 2030
  - A whole country approach to prioritise our biodiversity
  - The country's priorities towards a sustainable biodiversity

- Plans to conserve and protect our biodiversity
- It's a set of actions to protect and manage biodiversity to ensure our future generations are able to enjoy our beautiful homeland for generations to come
- List of ideas of what and how we are addressing biodiversity
- Strategy to help with preservation of nature, maintain wildlife
- A strategy plan that guides the country's efforts to conserve and sustainably mange its biodiversity
- Maintaining culture. Voice of the aronga mana landowners decision making and plans

## 4. Global Biodiversity Framework - Presented by Kas Silk

## 3 Main Objectives:

The conservation of biological diversity

The sustainable use of the components of biological diversity

The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources Outputs:

- Global Goals: Long-term objectives to halt biodiversity loss and ensure ecosystem resilience.
- Targets: Specific, measurable outcomes to be achieved by 2030.
- Indicators and Monitoring: Systems to track progress and ensure transparency.
- Support Mechanisms: Financial, technical, and collaborative resources for effective implementation. Policy Integration: Embedding biodiversity considerations into various sectors.
- Public Awareness and Engagement: Raising awareness and involving stakeholders.
- Legal and Institutional Frameworks: Strengthening governance structures to support biodiversity actions.

NBSAP: All parties to the CBD to develop, review and align their NBSAP to the GBF (Decision 15/6)

## The three components of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF):

- 1. Biodiversity Targets and Goals
- 2. Implementation Support Mechanisms
- 3. Monitoring and Reporting Framework:

Together, these three components provide a comprehensive approach to achieving the objectives of the GBF:

- 1. Setting Clear Objectives (Targets and Goals): Establishing what needs to be achieved.
- 2. Ensuring Effective Implementation (Support Mechanisms): Providing the means to achieve those objectives.
- 3. Tracking Progress (Monitoring and Reporting): Ensuring that progress is measured and reported, facilitating course corrections as necessary

The three components provide a comprehensive approach to achieving the objectives of the GBF

#### 4 Goals, 3 themes and 24 targets

4 goals – Goal A: Protect and Restore

Goal B: Prosper with Nature Goal C: Share Benefits Fairly Goal D: Invest and Collaborate

## 3 Themes and 24 Targets

Theme 1: Reducing Threats to Biodiversity:

- Target 1: Plan and Manage Areas to reduce biodiversity loss
- Target 2: Restore 30% of Degraded Ecosystems
- Target 3: Conserve 30% of Land, Waters, and Seas
- Target 4: Halt Species Extinction and Protect Genetic Diversity and manage conflicts
- Target 5: Ensure Sustainable Harvesting and Trade of Wild Species
- Target 6: Reduce Introduction of Invasive Alien Species by 50%
- Target 7: Reduce Pollution
- Target 8: Minimize Climate Change Impacts

Theme 2: Meeting People's Needs through Sustainable Use and Benefit-Sharing

- Target 9: Manage Wild Species Sustainably
- Target 10: Enhance Biodiversity in Agriculture, Aquaculture, Fisheries, and Forestry
- Target 11: Restore, Maintain, and Enhance Nature's Contributions
- Target 12: Enhance Green Spaces and Urban Planning
- Target 13: Increase Sharing of Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge

Theme 3: Tools and Solutions for Implementation and Mainstreaming:

- Target 14: Integrate Biodiversity in Decision-Making
- Target 15: Assess, Disclose, and Reduce Biodiversity Risks
- Target 16: Enable Sustainable Consumption Choices
- Target 17: Strengthen Biosafety and Biotechnology Distribution
- Target 18: Reduce Harmful Incentives and Increase Positive Ones
- Target 19: Mobilize Funds for Biodiversity
- Target 20: Strengthen Capacity-Building and Tech Transfer
- Target 21: Ensure Availability of Knowledge
- Target 22: Ensure Participation and Access to Justic:
- Target 23: Ensure Gender Equality and Gender-Responsive Approaches

Targets are all interconnected to each other. Examples of how targets are interconnected

## 5. NBSAP Project – Results from NBSAP 2002 – Projects Achieved presented by Liz Munro

- 8 themes, 10 goals and 21 actions
- Endangered Species Management
- Invasive Species
  - National Invasive Species Strategy and Action plan only focuses on invasive species.
- Ecosystem management
  - Marae Moana Kevin and his team have been working hard to get this work underway
  - Suwarrow has regulations and rules in place for yachts
- Biodiversity Awareness and Education
- Mainstreaming of Biodiversity

This is an opportunity for NGOs and CSOs to align their projects to the following targets.

What have we done in the Cook Islands under the NBSAP

- Endangered Species Management
  - Insert the following information from the slide
- Invasive Species Management
  - O Developed a National Invasive Species Strategy and Action Plan
  - o Insert the following information from the slide

- Ecosystem Management
  - EEZ has been declared as a Marae Moana
  - Marae Moana Outlook Report
  - Suwarrow National Park → Project ENUA will be helping to develop a draft management plan
    - Takitumu Conservation Area management plan (OECM)
      - Takuvaine Water Catchment Regulations & management plan (2006)
    - Ra'ui sites established Rarotoga & Pa Enua → this is something that we may need to focus more of our attention on
- Equitable Sharing of Benefits and Access to Biodiversity
  - Biological Research and Benefits Bill → still in draft form
  - Cook Islands Access and Benefit Sharing Policy we did not realize that our own people are accessing our own genetic resources. There were many discussions with the vairaku Maori groups.
- Management of knowledge related to biodiversity
  - National Research Committee Any research that comes into the Cook Islands needs to be verified by the committee
  - Atiu Arapo published Published in Maori (Atiu dialect)
- Contributes to biodiversity in an indirect way
- Fisherman look at the arapo (phases of the moon)
- Biodiversity Awareness and Education
  - Biodiversity Day celebration (event or an article in the newspaper)
- Nolene did the layout for us
  - Lagoon Day and Environment Week we still continue with
- Mainstreaming of Biodiversity
- Financial Resources and Mechanisms for Biodiversity
  - Pakau Aroa Act conduct many of its work and some of this also helps with the biodiversity work that is being done within the National Environment Service. Back in 2008, this Act the funds went straight into the national funding pool.
- Challenges/Issues
  - Limited capacity to develop management plans for species or ecosystems some of these areas are dependent on the communities
  - Value of biodiversity not really recognized, people only like things that are important to them. Today we do not plant coconut trees as much as we used to.
  - National Funds for Biodiversity Protection there are no funds directly given for biodiversity protection.
  - Gaps in the NBSAP Climate Change, Pollution, etc. we have to look ahead.
  - o Invasive plants vs. Vairakau How do you differentiate the two?
  - Land ownership system How do we try and get landowners to preserve native plants that only have existence on their land?
  - Awareness does not reach the Pa Enua Awareness was all about printing and sending the documents out to the PE.
- Technology has contributed to awareness reaching out to the Pa Enua
  - O Why is NBSAP important?
  - Guides the Cook Islands to address biodiversity

- Creates partnerships between agencies
- Avoids duplication of work

## 6. Morning tea

## 7. Ice breaker by Eva Patai

## 8. Review the NBSAP Project – Kas Silk

- Component 1 Alignment of current NBSAP and targets with the GBF
  - Outcome: Reviewing and updating national targets to align with the GBF and relevant SDGs ensuring it is measurable, costed, grounded in programs and spatially-explicit where appropriate
  - Reviewing NBSAP for updates in line with the GBF via an inclusive whole-of- government and whole of society process
- Component 2 Assessment of national monitoring systems and development of monitoring action plans
  - Outcome: Gaps in existing national data and knowledge systems, and institutional monitoring systems and frameworks, are assessed for monitoring.
  - Monitoring action plans are developed. An initial costing of monitoring systems, and sequencing
    of investment support to fill the monitoring gaps are determined.
- Component 3 Policy and institutional alignment and review for achieving coherence with the GBF
  - Outcome: A policy review to assess the alignment between the GBF and National policy.
  - Policy alignment and action plans are developed and shared across agencies:
  - o A prioritized action plan for policy coherence using a whole-of-government approach,
  - Opportunities for enhanced biodiversity mainstreaming identified.
  - A plan to promote a nature-positive approach to sectors and
  - Develop spatialized mapping of nature-related policy targets (optional)
- Table of the Targets/Goals/Actions from NBSAP 2002

## 9. Breakout activity – How your agency aligns with the targets

- Choose your top 5 targets
- Justify why you have chosen that target
- Present to the workshop group

#### 10. Breakout activity – How your agency aligns with the targets

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## **Comment from audience**

Wayne King – Climate Change Cook Islands

• Expressing concern regarding government agencies not being asked about their thoughts on the current NBSAP and didn't think identifying the Top 5 was useful

#### Kas Silk - Response to Wayne

Justifying that it will assist the Working Group with where to focus with so many targets and will
help agencies think about how their Policy aligns with the current GBF. It also gives NES an idea of
what the main targets are.

#### Wayne King - CCCI

• It would be helpful to have a starting point. The starting point should be the 2002 NBSAP.

#### Elizabeth Munro - NES

Addressing the reasons for why this meeting is necessary and that it is to kick-start and identify at
the global level what are the key targets for the government agencies. Within each of the different
groups, they have their own mandates. We are trying to see what the common activities in line
with the targets are.

## 11. Breakout activity – How your agency aligns with the targets

- Choose your top 5 targets
- Justify why you have chosen that target
- Present to the workshop group

## Seabed Minerals Authority (SBMA) - Tanga Morris, John Parianos

- Target 3 –, Area is large and largely pristine and needs to be protected and conserved. There's an important question as to whether it can be partially developed but still protected and conserved. One possibility is the role of OECM's as they allow for other objectives while still contributing to conservation. Effects assessment, Regional Environment Management Plan. SEA-EA, MSA, CIA & REMP Block release policy
- Target 11 SBMA is tasked with maintaining and enhancing nature's contributions to our people
   Diversification of the economy is something that is accepted to be needed by all three pillars of our society without compromising our Marae Moana Seated Minerals Act & Regulations including amendments to laws
- Target 15 As a regulator SBMA is all about this target A core function is turning principles and overarching requirements into leading best practices that are pragmatic enough for business and financial institutions. SBMA standards a guidelines (including those with NES)
- Target 20 Seabed Mineral is a new sector, there is not enough land-based minerals extraction in the Cook Islands. Capacity building at all level is fundamental to what we do *Recruitment and development processes at our agency*.
- Target 21

  We are legally mandated to make environmental date publicly available. We are also legally mandated to keep our public informed. With reference to our laws, there are information repositories and libraries on our website. We run a comprehensive community consultation programme

## Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) Eitiare Vano and Ministry of Education (MOE) – Jane Taurarii

- Target 3 MOA and MOE are working together
  - o Ra'ui Is this manageable now and is there a balance between then and now? Should it be extended and maintained at a permanent pace?
- Target 6 Fruit fly surveillance system
  - ERP Emergency Response Plan new species that are introduced, this is when that action is introduced
- Target 8 This is to improve our soil health. There is a lot of planting that has been happening here over the years. We need to know how to conserve our soil health and how to maintain an adaptive variety of crops.
- Target 10 Conservation of Plants Genetics
  - Moving into the use of safe pesticides

- Target 11 There is a school garden that is running
  - School tree planting programs
  - Tree planting on land boundaries
  - Now we are looking at fruit trees and traditional trees

# Ministry of Cultural Development (MOCD) and Cook Islands Tourism (CIT) (CIT) Jeremy Goodwin

- Target 11 Tourism is heavily involved with a lot of NGOs at the moment
- Target 16 Encourage good practice Industry members
- Target 20 Capacity building
- Target 14 Integrate Policy management of sites Turtles etc
- Target 21 Dashboard measure NSDA

## (MOCD) Jane Wichman Poa

- Target 7- Reduce pollution, medicines, Creative Industries
- Target 22 Indigenous Rights, HOA, Aronga Mana
- Target 13 Impacts of Digital Resource info on Traditional Knowledge
- Target 20 Capacity Building / Scientists, Technicians
- Target 1,2,3,7,11 Maintain, Enhance Natures Contributions to people

## Ministry of Internal Affairs (INTAFF) Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration (MFAI) - Peka Fisher

- Target 21 Ensure availability of knowledge
- Target 11 Restore, maintain and enhance nature's contributions
- Target 23 Ensure gender equality and gender responsive approaches
- Target 12 Urban blue and green spaces
- Target 5 Harvesting and trade of wild species

## Climate Change Cook Islands (CCCI) and the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), NES, CPPO

- Target 8 NDC Action Plan, V&A Island profiles (T21, T23), Climate change awareness and outreach (Science Expo). Accessing Climate Finance 2050 Blue Pacific Strategy, Regional Approaches (RPACA UBPP), Review of Climate legislation / Policy, Upskilling and capacity building across ALL stakeholders and Pa Enua, NSDA Health and well being, Biodiversity and Environment, Climate change. This gives us an idea of our progress
- Target 7 Climate change policy, Country programs, NatCom National Communication, NDC, , Reduce emissions, Carbon Sinks
- Target 3 Ocean Acidification, Ocean Monitoring Program, Support NGO's
- Target 16 Reduction of methane emissions, Fossil fuel use in waste stream
- Target 11 NBS, EBA

## CIIC and MFEM

#### CIIC - Tessa Vaetoru

- Target 7: Reduce Pollution
- Target 11: Restore, Maintain, and Enhance Nature's Contributions
- Target 12: Enhance Green Spaces and Urban Planning
- Target 14: Integrate Biodiversity in Decision-Making
- Target 16: Enable Sustainable Consumption Choices

- NSDA, National Infrastructure Investment Plan, Statement of Corporate Intent, Project Design and Development

## MFEM - Eileen Story

- Target 7: Reduce Pollution
- Target 12: Enhance Green Spaces and Urban Planning
- Target 14: Integrate Biodiversity in Decision-Making
- Target 16: Enable Sustainable Consumption Choices
- Target 19: Mobilize Funds for Biodiversity
- Target 22: Ensure Participation and Access to Justice
  - NSDA, Economic Development Strategy, Economic Response Roadmap, Sovereign Wealth Fund, Mid Term Fiscal Strategy

**Target 7, 12, 14, 16** – We have to think about the way they we do business.

**Target 19** – There are some quick wins that we could do.

**Target 22** – There are some things that we could improve on.

#### TMO HEALTH - Mura Herman, Taaki Moekapiti

- Target 2 Restore 30% of all Degraded Ecosystems Health Act 2024 Public Health (Sewage and Waste-water treatment and disposal) 2014 Regulations. Issue: compliance on systems: Guideline and standards
- Target 6 , 12, 14, 16 We have to think about the way they we do business.
- Target 19 There are some quick wins that we could do.
- Target 22 There are some things that we could improve on.

## 12. Overall Target Results

Target		Target		Target		Target	
T1	1	T6	2	T12	3	T18	
T2	3	T7	5	T13	1	T19	1
T3	5	T8	2	T14	3	T20	4
T4		Т9	1	T15	1	T21	4
T5	1	T10	4	T16	4	T22	2
		T11	8	T17			

## 13. Rima Moeka'a - Presentation - Rapid Review of our current NBSAP

- Methodology of NBSAP 2002
  - o Work started in 1996
  - o Relooked at between 2000-2002
  - o Endorsed in 2002
- Current NBSAP 2002
  - 6 objectives
  - o 8 theme areas
  - Translated into Cook Island Maori
- Gaps/Challenges
- Recommendations

#### Next Steps

- Workshop report and feedback to feed into the rapid review
- One on one consultations with government, NGO, Pa Enua and community
- o Aligning with national, regional and international policies and convention

#### 11. Menti Survey

Name your agency plans or policies that highlight biodiversity

Gender Policy, Cultural, Youth Policy, Community Programs, Planting Trees In Social, Capacity Building, Economic Development Strategy, Restoration, Coastal Fisheries, Pacific One Maritime Policy, NSDA, MMR act 2005, Publish Health, Climate Policy, Paris Agreement NDC, Blue Pacific Strategy, Climate Change Policy, Agriculture Act 2012, EDS, Prevention Of Marine Pollution, Planting Vegies In Science, Sovereign Wealth Fund, CC Country Program, ERR

 What key biodiversity priority areas should be highlighted in the NBSAP? E.g. PA, health, urban planning, gender etc;

Climate Change, Traditional Knowledge, Pollution, Urban Planning, Raui, Monitoring And Reporting, Culture Our Traditions, Habitat Restoration, Data Sharing, Blue Green Economy One Health, Finance, Protection, Protected Areas, Public Health, Indigenous Peoples, Communicable Disease, Air Quality, Pesticides, Medicines, Agriculture, Gender, Culture, Urban, Conservation, Habitat Preservation, Monitoring And Surveys, Freshwater Ecosystems, Security Safety And Quality, People Organic Farming, Biodiversity Recording, Food Safety, Awareness.

What expertise do you have to contribute to the NBSAP Working Group to create targets and monitoring indicators?

Health protection – plants and animals, marine, environment and public health Cultural Policies and Intellectual properties and traditional knowledge, Education

Outdoor site inspection, survey, policies and so much more

Technical expertise (environment, economic policy, international relations). Experience in international, regional boards and think tanks

All Transport – land, sea, air DG

Ecology, freshwater, marine science, survey design, data analysis and statistics, species, ID, water quality research

Climate change adaptation & mitigation, Ocean monitoring program of climate change impacts. Monitoring, reporting and verification standards.

Regenerative Tourism, Cultural and Traditional, Spiritual insights

People-centred – teaching our people to better take care of our environment so that it can look after us also. Mutual

Water testing, food safety

Meteorological services

Regional and international networks

None. Don't put me down

Surveillance, samplings and inter

Climate data analysis

Holistic approach

Young people's perspective

Community

Please indicate your interest and availability to join the NBSAP Working Group

Interested = 9

Not sure – will need to check with the boss = 6

No thanks = 0

Any other comments or final feedback?

Meitaki ranuinui

Don't forget our spiritual leaders

Suggestion to tap into the Cook Islands Policy Group to assist with this

Great work

Meitaki ma'ata

It was a fabulous workshop, great presentations and great information available and please can we have the digital information and documents sent to us of all presentations. Meitaki! Today was informative and engaging. Meitaki

Looking forward to the one on one consultations

Would have been good to receive a link to the 2002 NBSAP before the workshop. Have feedback about the implementation NBSAP it's trials and tribulations

A thorough review of which activities from the 2002 plan didn't happen and the reasons why identified. This will increase the chance of success with the updated plan.

Meitaki

## 12. Closing of the Workshop - Elizabeth Munro

- Thanking all of the agencies that have attended today. On behalf of Halatoa Fua and the NES, we would like to thank everyone for today's meeting.
- The presentation and results will be shared with everyone.
- Rima and the NES team will be contacting agencies in the next couple of days and hopefully we will have a draft target.

## 13. Closing Prayer and Pure - Jeremy Goodwin

**Lunch Break**