

# TUVALU FISHERIES DEPARTMENT



# CORPORATE PLAN

2023 - 2025



Tuvalu Fisheries Department  
Ministry of Fisheries and Trade  
Government of Tuvalu

**CORPORATE PLAN**  
**2023 - 2025**

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## Acronyms used in this report

AFO	Assistant Fisheries Officer	MCS	Monitoring Control and Surveillance
CA	Competent Authority (for fisheries products exports to the EU)	NAFICOT	National Fishing Corporation of Tuvalu
CFC	Community Fisheries Centre	OFCF	Overseas Fisheries Cooperation Foundation (of Japan)
CP	Corporate Plan	PFO	Principal Fisheries Officer
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone	PNA	Parties to the Nauru Agreement
EU	European Union	PNAO	PNA Office
FAD	Fish Aggregating Device	PROP	Pacific Regional Oceanscape Project (World Bank funded)
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation (of the United Nations)	PROPER	Pacific Regional Oceanscape Project for Economic Resilience
FFA	Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency	SFO	Senior Fisheries Officer
FO	Fisheries Officer	SPC	Pacific Community
GEF	Global Environment Facility	TFD	Tuvalu Fisheries Department
GRP	Glass Reinforced Plastic (Fibreglass)	TFSP2	Tuvalu Fisheries Support Programme Phase 2 (New Zealand funded)
IT	Information Technology		
IUU	Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (fishing)	TNA	Training Needs Assessment
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency	UN	United Nations
KPI	Key Performance Indicator	VDS	Vessel Day Scheme (of the PNA)
LL	Longline	VHF	Very High Frequency (radio)
LMMA	Locally Managed Marine Area	WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission

# 1. Background

## 1.1 Fisheries in Tuvalu

Tuvalu has been described as one of the most fishery-dependent countries in the World. With a limited land area and poor soils, fish has always been an essential part of the diet. Today, with a range of imported foods available, per capita consumption of seafood has been falling but is still one of the highest in the world. Fisheries resources are essential for food security and fish is a healthier option than most of the imported substitutes. Nearly all households engage in coastal fishing, and small-scale commercial fishing supports the livelihoods of many who are not in formal employment. While much of this commercial effort targets sustainable resources of tuna, subsistence fishing is mainly based on lagoon and reef fish. The demands of a growing population in Funafuti are putting pressure on these resources already, while the impacts of climate change are expected to reduce future productivity.

Tuvalu's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) extends over three quarters of a million square kilometres and is more than three hundred times the land area. Located in the east of the main equatorial tuna fishing grounds, the main fishery is by purse seine. Smaller catches are taken by longline fisheries, which have declined in recent years, and occasional visits by distant water pole and line vessels. Access fees have formed an important part of Government revenue for decades and rose sharply under the Purse Seine Vessel Day Scheme (VDS) in the last decade. They now account for more than half of Government revenues but achieving further increases will be challenging. Other benefits from the oceanic fishery include employment – mainly of fisheries observers at present – and economic activity around transshipment in Funafuti lagoon. The Government, through the National Fishing Corporation of Tuvalu (NAFICOT) is a partner in one joint venture managing a single purse seine vessel. The domestic fleet includes five more purse seiners, owned and operated by foreign companies, and may grow in future.

## 1.2 Legal and Policy Framework

The legal basis for this plan is Tuvalu's *Marine Resources Act 2006*, as amended in 2012 and 2017, which states the objective 'to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the living marine resources for the benefit of the people of Tuvalu' (Part 1.3 (i)). Authority for the conservation, management, development and sustainable use of the living marine resources in the exclusive economic zone is vested in the Minister (Part 1.3(ii)), and the Act states the principles and measures which must be considered in the exercise of this authority. Regulations promulgated under the Act include the *Fisheries (Vessel Monitoring System) Regulations 2000* and the *Conservation and Management Measures (PNA third implementing arrangement) Regulations 2009* which regulate industrial tuna fisheries. More recent regulations include the *Shark Conservation and Management Regulation* and the *Fishing Crew Regulations*, both promulgated in 2019. Tuvalu's maritime zones are established under the *Maritime Zones Act 2012* and include archipelagic waters (around Nukufetau, Funafuti and Nukulaelae), territorial sea, EEZ and an extended continental shelf.

The fast-changing regulatory environment requires frequent review and updating of fisheries legislation, regulations, policies and agreements.

Management of coastal fisheries is, to a large extent, devolved to the Kaupule (or Island Councils) of each island under the *Falekaupule Act of 1997*, as amended in 2000. This requires the Kaupule to 'provide for the improvement and control of fishing and related industries in accordance with the Fisheries Act' and to regulate exploitation in accordance with the Wildlife Conservation Act. Marine protected areas may be established under the *Conservation Areas Act of 1999*. Tuvalu Fisheries Department (TFD) therefore works closely with the Kaupule on coastal fisheries management and development.

Tuvalu's oceanic fisheries resources mainly comprise the four main species of tropical tuna, which are highly migratory species. Tuvalu is a party to a number of global and regional treaties and arrangements for cooperation in the management of these shared resources, notably the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, the Nauru Agreement, the Palau Arrangement, and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Convention. Tuvalu is an active member of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC); the Pacific Island Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA); and the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA); as well as participating in the fisheries programmes of the Pacific Community (SPC).

Tuvalu has a new national sustainable development strategy for the period 2021-2030 – *Te Kete*. This corporate plan is based closely on outcome 7 and has been built around the five strategic actions agreed for the fisheries sector in *Te Kete*.

### 1.3 Corporate Planning

This is the fourth corporate plan (CP) for the Fisheries Department and, together with our annual workplans and reports, will take us into a second decade of systematically planned and reported work. The process of developing it included a review of achievements under the 2020-22 corporate plan which found that out of 68 performance indicators 40% had been fully achieved; 37% had been partly achieved and/or were still in progress; while 22% were not achieved. For one indicator there was no data on which to make an assessment.

In view of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which prevented overseas travel for training and visits and delayed procurement and other activities during the plan period, this is considered quite a good result; but it does mean that there is some unfinished business to be carried over into the new plan. It also needs to cover ongoing activities which are part of the TFD's core business, as well as new initiatives and activities.

### 1.4 TFD Priorities

The plan sets out the work of the Department under seven objectives. Five of these are taken directly from *Te Kete*, while the last two relate to building up TFD's capacity to deliver on these objectives and informing stakeholders and the public about our work and fisheries issues in general.

The priorities for this corporate plan are therefore to:

- 1: Develop a sustainable commercial fishery optimizing revenue from our own waters, which includes continued support for small-scale commercial fishers as well as efforts to develop a larger scale operation.
- 2: Foster sustainable management of oceanic fisheries resources – reflecting the importance of regional cooperation as well as monitoring control and surveillance in our waters.
- 3: Improve management of coastal fisheries, imperative for sustainable inshore resources, which face threats of overfishing and impacts of climate change.
- 4: Execute a consistent data collection and analysis facility to ensure best decisions are made throughout, in support of the effective management of both oceanic and coastal resources.
- 5: Increase the value of access fishing licenses in Tuvalu waters – maintaining and if possible increasing Government revenue while seeking to develop other economic opportunities.
- 6: Develop systems, staff capacity and facilities for a Tuvalu Fisheries Authority; the transition from a Department to an Authority will be an important step in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the fisheries agency.
- 7: Promote public awareness and education on fisheries issues, with a new emphasis on attracting talented young people into the fisheries sector.

### 1.5 New areas of work

While many of the priorities involve a continuation or development of existing activities, there is a new emphasis on developing economic resilience and food security. Apart from the implications for public health of the increasing reliance on imported foods, supply chain disruptions during the COVID-19 pandemic and the increasing cost of imported food have given a renewed focus to the idea of ‘fishing our own fish’. This plan period should see the start, at last, of the offshore fishing project, following a number of feasibility studies, to trial a new 12-15-meter multi-purpose fishing vessel. Increased support for private sector fishing operations in Funafuti and the outer islands is also a priority.

Increased investment in protecting our oceanic fisheries resources from IUU fishing is also planned, with further work on new satellite surveillance methods, as well as a small patrol boat that can be deployed rapidly to deal with any detections.

The transition of TFD into a Fisheries Authority has recently been approved by Government, and this will involve substantial institutional reform and development. A number of infrastructure developments are also expected to be completed during this plan period: the hatchery, training centre and store that were delayed during the last plan, as well as new investments in a jetty, upgrading of the fisheries slipway, and solar power for Funafuti fish markets.

In the area of information and communications, there will be further efforts to establish fisheries materials in the school curriculum, work on the role of women in fisheries in Tuvalu and a new scheme to attract promising school leavers to study and work in Fisheries.

## 2. Vision, Mission, Values and Cross-cutting Issues

### 2.1 Vision

The guiding vision of the Department is taken from *Te Kete* and can be stated as:

- Sustainable small-scale fisheries operations pertinent to income generation, food security and healthier diets are maintained and strengthened nationwide.
- Revenue generated from our ocean fisheries is optimized.

The physical and economic health of the Tuvalu population depends upon the health of both its inshore and oceanic fisheries. While inshore fisheries can be managed by Tuvalu, the oceanic fisheries cannot be managed by Tuvalu alone but require regional and sub-regional co-operation.

### 2.2 Mission

The Department's mission is also as stated in *Te Kete*:

- To increase the contribution of Fisheries to socio-economic development and quality of life.

These high-level objectives build on earlier Corporate Plans, but reflect a change of emphasis towards building food security and greater economic resilience based on our fisheries resources.

### 2.3 Values

- **Teamwork and cooperation**

The Department will continue to work as a team, and strengthen the corporate identity through the transition to an Authority. TFD will strengthen cooperation between the Fisheries Department and Kaupule/ Falekaupule as well as Fishers' Associations and island communities. Management of shared tuna purse seine and longline fisheries will continue to require cooperation between Tuvalu and neighboring coastal States as well as with regional and sub-regional organizations, notably PNAO, FFA, SPC and WCPFC, while maintaining a focus on Tuvalu's national interest.

- **Integrity and ethics**

In its dealings with other parties the Department will deliver on undertakings, and will act fairly, consistently and courteously. The Department will be respected as a solid management partner; a firm but fair regulator. TFD will take a principled approach in the management of regional organisations and initiatives.

- **Customer service**

Government Departments in the Pacific are not often notable for the quality of customer service, but Tuvalu's success in increasing access revenues has relied a lot on the quick and responsive work of TFD's staff. In working with local stakeholders also, TFD staff will aim to be efficient, helpful and courteous.

- **Operational excellence and staff development**



The Mission of the Fisheries Department is of central importance to the well-being of Tuvaluans.

Accordingly, everyone in the Department is expected to strive for high levels of performance by carrying out their responsibilities in a timely and efficient manner. This will be supported by a culture of valuing the staff of the TFD, and developing their skills and abilities through appropriate training and mentoring.

- **Innovation and creativity**

Scientific advances have changed the way we work and communicate, and the pace of change is increasing. TFD will explore the use of new systems and technology, and will be open to new ideas and new ways of working to deliver on our responsibilities.

#### 2.4 Cross-cutting issues

In delivering on the priorities of this corporate plan, the Department will be mindful of a number of issues that cut across all of them, and the interests of the nation more generally. These include:

- **Climate change**

Climate change is an existential threat to Tuvalu, with impacts forecast in many areas including fisheries. Climate variability has always had an impact on oceanic fisheries, with better fishing in the Tuvalu EEZ during El Nino years as the fishery shifts east. However, changes in the climate and ocean acidification are forecast to cause: shifting the Centre of the fishery out of the EEZs; submersion of EEZ baselines; and a major decline in the productivity of coastal demersal fisheries. TFD must advocate for international agreement that will protect Tuvalu's interests, as well as developing management arrangements that build resilience to climate change. Infrastructure development will be planned to resist sea level rise and provide adequate freshwater storage; and while Tuvalu is not a significant emitter of greenhouse gases, projects will aim to reduce fossil fuel use in the sector.

- **Environment**

A healthy marine environment is essential for healthy fisheries resources. While the impact of fisheries management is expected to be positive, there is a need for wider action to protect the marine environment from pollution and other threats. This requires work outside the normal areas of responsibility of TFD, particularly for Funafuti where the health of the lagoon needs urgent action to reduce pollution and improve water exchange.

- **Women and youth**

Fisheries are important for the whole population of Tuvalu. The Department will be inclusive in its consultation on marine resources, respecting the rights of women, youth and vulnerable groups. Women are under-represented in the staffing of the Fisheries Department (and in formal employment more generally), and efforts will be made to address this. Work with young people will aim to raise awareness of fisheries issues and encourage them to seek further studies and employment in the fisheries sector - both men and women.

- **Outer island communities**

Empowering island communities to manage their coastal fisheries resources has been an important theme of the work of the Department, but oceanic fisheries also contribute directly to the funding of the Kaupule through the community VDS. Fisheries can also provide economic opportunities for outer island communities, and this area will receive increased attention in the plan. Supporting these opportunities, and creating some formal employment, will be important if further depopulation of the outer islands is to be avoided.

- **The private sector**

Small scale commercial fisheries are one of the success stories of the private sector in Tuvalu, and Fisheries will continue to support their development. It will be important to ensure that Government-led initiatives to increase fish supply to the capital do not adversely affect local fishing businesses and the families that rely on them.

- **Good governance**

The tuna fishery in the region is a multi-billion-dollar industry, and such big money provides potential opportunities for dishonest practices at all levels – from fisheries observers to the nation’s leaders. TFD will have zero tolerance of corruption and will promote transparency in all matters that affect the national interest.

### 3. Objectives, Activities and Indicators

This section of the plan again aims to answer the main question: “what is the Department going to do over the next three years?” Under the seven broad objectives are listed the main areas of activity, which in turn will form the basis for annual work plans. Progress will be measured against a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Wherever possible, KPIs have been set so that they are within the control of TFD, as this has been a weakness of previous plans. While they have been selected to provide relevant measures of achievement, they are only indicators. There may be further work required even when these KPIs have been achieved; and conversely there will be important progress which is not measured by a KPI.

Activities	Key Performance Indicators
<b>Objective 1: Develop a sustainable commercial fishery optimizing returns from our own waters.</b>	
Trial larger (12 -15 m) vessels for offshore tuna fishing (Offshore Fishing Project) using longlining and other methods to maximise the chance of success.	At least one multi-purpose vessel delivered, equipped and operated for at least 12 months to determine tuna catch rates and economic viability.
Provide training and support for small scale fishers and processors, including fishing skills, sea safety, fish processing and outboard motor maintenance	At least 4 courses delivered per year. Training in all areas listed delivered to all islands over plan period.
Deploy and maintain Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs) at all islands. FAD echo-sounder buoys trialled to determine their usefulness.	At least 3 FADs at Funafuti and 1 at each outer island in place throughout period

	Offshore FADs (>5 n.mi. from land) tested at Funafuti
Implement projects identified for the fisheries sector in community consultations that will support safe and sustainable fishing in each island	At least one small project is completed in each of 8 islands each year
Continue to upgrade facilities for fish processing and storage in outer islands, including solar power where practical	Each Community Fisheries Centre (CFC) has functioning ice machine and can store at least 1 tonne of frozen fish; Solar powered refrigeration machinery tested.
Maintain the safety at sea programme to ensure all fishers have access to well- maintained safety equipment (grab bags). New vessel tracking systems trialled.	Every active fisherman operating outside the lagoon has a fully equipped and maintained grab-bag. Small boat VMS tested for at least 20 active trolling boats on Funafuti.
<b>Objective 2: Foster sustainable management of oceanic fisheries resources</b>	
Cooperate regionally in the various fishery management arrangements while promoting Tuvalu's national interests.	FAD tracking fully implemented High seas limits for domestic purse seine fisheries agreed.
Ensure compliance with international fisheries treaties and arrangements to which Tuvalu is a party, including through regular review and updating of legislation and policies.	No major non-compliance recorded in WCPFC CMR. Fisheries Management Act and subsidiary legislation reviewed. Legal instruments are developed or amended to ensure compliance with PNA, FFA and WCPFC commitments. Tuvalu ready to accede to the FAO Port State Measures agreement.
Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS), to regulate fishing by licensed foreign and domestic vessels and combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, continues to be expanded and improved	100% monitoring of transshipment in Funafuti resumed Electronic reporting by observers introduced for Purse Seine Electronic reporting by long liners introduced in 2023 and fully bedded down.
Explore and, where appropriate, implement new systems and technology to monitor the fishery and detect IUU fishing in territorial waters the EEZ and adjacent high seas areas	New high speed patrol boat managed by Fisheries is delivered and operational. Trial of RF satellite detection with dedicated aerial surveillance support is completed.
<b>Objective 3: Improved management of coastal fisheries for sustainable inshore resources</b>	
Work closely with the Kaupule, fishers' associations, and other stakeholders to develop and implement coastal fishery management plans and by-laws to optimise resources and regulate harvesting of key species in each of the outer islands	Detailed fishery management plan and/or by-laws developed in each island Monitoring and adaptive rules designed and agreed
Design and implement Funafuti Reef Fisheries Stewardship Plan phase 2.	Improved protection of Funafuti Conservation Area Size limits for key species introduced, in an appropriate way Improved access to more pelagic species to relieve the pressure on stressed resources

Develop a national locally managed marine areas (LMMA) strategy to scale-up and optimise the delivery of services to the communities sustainably	LMMA Strategy developed and aligned with community, Fisheries Department, and national plans. LMMA Strategy workplan implemented.
Develop systems and procedures to support compliance with new management rules and by-laws.	Fisheries and/or Kaupule employees in each island have been trained appropriately as compliance officers. Appropriate fisheries staff have been warranted as authorised officers under the Marine Resources Act
Support small scale aquaculture activities.	Mariculture hatchery operational At least one mariculture project in the outer islands is improved and producing fish.
<b>Objective 4: Execute a consistent data collection and analysis facility to ensure best decisions are made throughout</b>	
Strengthen systems for collection and analysis of data from the oceanic fishery	WCPFC part 1 report submitted on schedule each year Analysis and briefing provided for access negotiations with major bilateral partners
Maintain and strengthen the Fisheries Observer programme with improved data transmission.	Programme maintained at 80 active observers, with at least 2 national observer trainers Electronic reporting of observer data fully implemented Observer insurance scheme in place
Continue and improve coastal fishery resource monitoring and analysis to identify trends and problems, to provide reliable information on the status of the resources and feedback on the effectiveness of management measures	Creel and artisanal tuna surveys improved on all islands with databases available for analysis in Tuvalu Creel survey data is entered, results analysed and distributed to inform management Annual estimates of total catch of tuna and reef fish for each island available Analysis of catch trends for tuna and reef species prepared
Maintain and expand fisheries-related research and monitoring of the coastal environment (e.g., water quality and seafood toxicology).	Research completed on size at maturity and recommended size limits introduced Regular assessments of water quality prepared Monitoring of the algae that cause ciguatera and ciguatera cases in humans continued and reported
<b>Objective 5: Increase value of access fishing licenses in Tuvalu waters</b>	
Maximise and sustain government revenue from the sale of access rights to the resource by optimising arrangements and systems	Fisheries revenue maintained at more than AUD\$30 million/yr At least 90% of vessel days sold each year.
Support the environmentally sustainable development of Funafuti as a transshipment port to provide revenue and other economic benefits including new vessel support facilities.	Purse seine transshipment resumes and increases to 150 per year At least one new economic activity – net repair, bycatch utilisation, etc – introduced.
Review NAFICOT's remaining joint venture.	Cost and benefits of JV evaluated and decision made on its future.

Support the operations of vessels under Tuvalu flag and if possible increase the number.	At least 5 vessels operate under re-flagging arrangement with no subsidy.
Develop opportunities for Tuvaluan fishing crew.	All Tuvalu-flag vessels comply with their commitment to employ at least 5 crew. Crew training programme re-instated at Tuvalu Maritime Training Institute.
Develop systems needed for export of fisheries products from Tuvalu flagged fishing vessels	Tuvalu is listed as competent for EU sanitary and IUU regulations and certifies export of Tuvalu flag vessels
<b>Objective 6: Development of systems, staff capacity and facilities for a Tuvalu Fisheries Authority</b>	
Tuvalu Fisheries Authority established; transition from a Department completed during the plan period.	Legislation establishing TFA passed in 2023; separate budget and financial systems in place in 2024.
Devise a revised staff structure for the Authority, and strengthen coordination, work planning and performance management; absorb outer island staff into structure	Revised staff structure in place, including staff in all islands except Niulakita, with all staff on performance-based contracts by end of 2024.
Complete and implement the training needs assessment for all staff through institutional strengthening, and appropriate staff training in-country and overseas	Training needs assessment report available 3 in-country training programmes delivered 20 staff benefit from short (4-8 week) courses overseas
Efficiently implement development projects in line with the objectives of this plan, and with timely reporting to donors	PROPER project commences in 2023. TFSP2 project continues throughout period with additional funding secured.
Develop new fisheries buildings before 2025: hatchery, training centre, store, boatshed, with renewable energy supply where possible.	New buildings completed and in use.
Improve infrastructure for landing and maintain TFD vessels and other small boats	Fisheries jetty built. Fisheries slipway repaired and upgraded. Facilities provided for small boat landings, including on the Ocean side in Funafuti.
Improve internet connectivity for TFD and outer island CFCs	Reliable high-speed connection for Fisheries HQ and direct online communication with staff in outer islands
Efficiently operate TFD vessels and provide a service to Department and the wider community	At least 20 trips per vessel per year Operational and engineering maintenance plan developed and implemented.
<b>Objective 7: Promoting public awareness and education on fisheries issues</b>	
Continue to inform stakeholders and the public on TFD activities and fisheries issues through radio, website, social media and printed reports	At least 12 radio programmes per year At least 12 media/new releases on website and Facebook Annual work plan and annual report printed and circulated each year Short video on the work of TFD made for local TV
Celebrate special events in Fisheries to raise awareness	Programme of events organised for World Tuna Day each year.

Develop and roll out materials on fisheries in the school curriculum, and promote careers in fisheries to school leavers	Fisheries materials included in the curriculum for primary and secondary schools by 2024 Fisheries career talks/brochures developed and delivered to Secondary school leavers Competitive Fisheries attachment - 'Te Tautai-award' - offered to top form 5 student from each of MSS and FHS each year.
Document the role of women in fisheries through short videos	At least 4 short videos on women's role and issues in Fisheries prepared from face-to-face sessions in different islands. These should include information on fish processing and preservation.

## 4. Fisheries Department Resources

### 4.1 Organisation

The Department comprises four sections, with different areas of responsibility.

Government has decided that the scope of the new Fisheries Authority will be similar, so this overall structure will remain during the transition.

- The Administration Section, which is led by the Director, includes the Deputy Director, Legal Officer, Economist, Information Officer and IT Manager, as well as administrative staff. The group is responsible for fisheries access agreements, fisheries policy including regional initiatives, management of development projects, as well as planning and administration of the Division. The new Fisheries Authority will need some strengthening of this section to deal with financial and personnel management.
- The Oceanic Fisheries Section, led by a Principal Fisheries Officer (PFO), is responsible for Monitoring, Control and Surveillance of the tuna fishery. Main work areas include vessel licensing, reporting and data collection, VMS and VDS monitoring, coordinating aerial surveillance and patrol boat operations, transshipment monitoring and the observer programme. Market access for the catches of Tuvalu flag vessels is a growing responsibility of this section and the Competent Authority (CA) will be under it.
- The Coastal Fisheries Section also led by a PFO, is responsible for inshore fisheries resource assessment and management, as well as monitoring of the marine environment. The Section works closely with the Kaupule and other stakeholders in the community. Three teams, each led by a Senior Fisheries Officer, are responsible for work: in Funafuti; the outer islands; and on resource monitoring and assessment (including aquaculture).
- The Operation and Development Section is responsible for operation of the Department's two vessels – Manauai and Manauai II – including managing charters. The Section also has responsibility for the FAD programme, promoting sea safety, and training in fishing and fish processing. The new offshore fishing project will be led by this Section, working closely with local fishermen and their associations.

## 4.2 Staffing

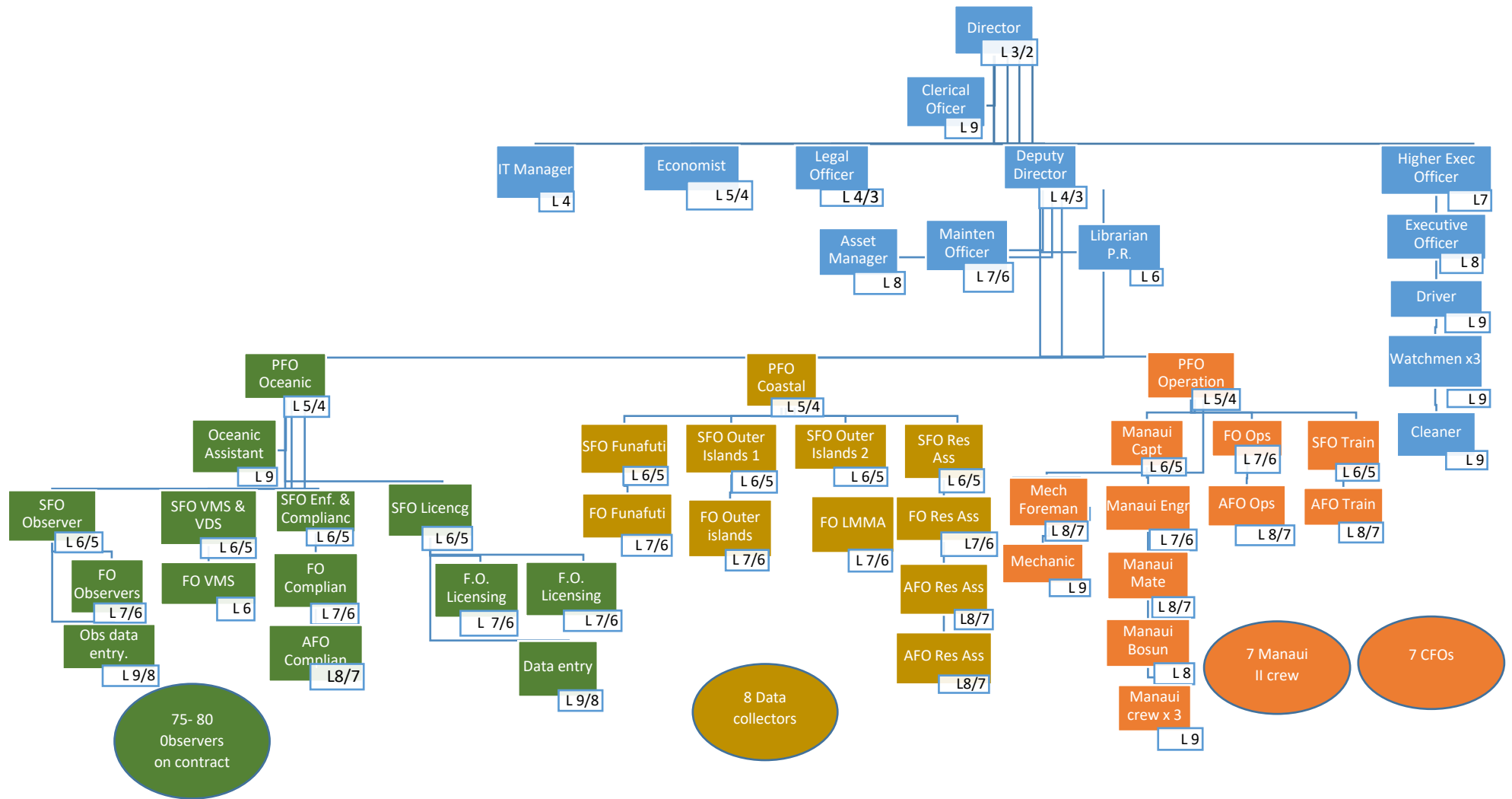
The staffing structure at the end of 2022 includes the changes proposed at the start of the last plan period and is generally working well. Some anomalies in the grading of staff have also been addressed. Some positions to deal with new responsibilities such as aquaculture and the CA have been proposed for 2023.

In addition to the 55 established staff positions, there are four important groups of contract workers:

- ✓ Around 80 qualified fisheries observers and debriefers, who work in the national and regional observer programmes, and also undertake transshipment monitoring;
- ✓ The 7 crew of the Manaii II;
- ✓ Outer island data collectors for each island and Funafuti; and
- ✓ Community Fisheries Officers (CFOs) in each of 7 outer islands.

The first group are funded through cost recovery (an observer levy paid at the same time as licence fees and payments from the PNA Observer Agency when engaged on regional programme duties). The crew of the Manaii II and outer island data collectors are funded under the Department's recurrent budget. The CFOs are currently funded by the TFSP2 project and will need to be absorbed into the Department if they are to continue beyond 2023.

Figure 1: TFD Organisational Structure 2022





### 4.3 Staff training

Planned staff training was one of the main casualties of the COVID-19 pandemic due to the border closures, although some on-line courses were delivered. A training needs assessment (TNA) has been undertaken for the Coastal section and now needs to be extended to all staff. This will reflect both the current needs of the staff, and planning for new activities and future staff turnover.

In the Tuvalu Government system, many senior positions require a university degree and this has encouraged staff to seek long-term scholarships overseas. It is planned to encourage promising school leavers to take up scholarships in Fisheries related subjects so that more of such training can be provided pre-service in future. The new Fisheries Authority will also have an opportunity to ensure that promotion in technical areas relies more on skills, competence and performance than formal qualifications.

The Department will take advantage of a number of opportunities apart from long-term study overseas, including:

- Participation in short training courses, workshops and meetings organised by regional organisations;
- Engagement of consultants and personnel of regional agencies to deliver short training courses in-country;
- Attachments with regional agencies and other institutions overseas;
- Specialised short courses delivered by academic institutions overseas.

Without pre-empting the TNA, it is expected that the focus of much of this training will reflect priorities of the plan, and will include improving the skills of relevant staff in areas such as:

- Asset management and maintenance;
- Human resource management and staff appraisal;
- Mechanic training, particularly to repair the increasingly sophisticated outboard motors now in use;
- Ensuring that the Department's vessels have officers with the required qualifications;
- Database management, data analysis and reporting;
- Laboratory techniques and skills;
- Mariculture hatchery operations;
- Practical aspects of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance, including the use of new techniques and equipment;
- Fisheries products hygiene and sanitary controls.

### 4.4 Assets and facilities

Since 2018, TFD has benefited from a new and well-furnished office complex (provided under the New Zealand Aid Programme) equipped with a solar energy system that meets most of the building's electricity needs. During the last plan period a thorough programme of maintenance was completed and a new seawall built to provide more working space and protect the building from storm surges. A new training centre, store and boatshed could not be built and will now be constructed in 2023/24 with assistance from the Republic of Korea, as well as the small mariculture hatchery which was also carried forward from the last plan.

The Department currently operates two vessels with inter-island capability. The *Manau* is a 17 meter GRP vessel provided by the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in the 1980s, while the larger *Manau II* (19 meters) was delivered in 2021. The *Tala Moana*, a 32-meter steel

vessel, was operated by Fisheries for six years but has now been handed over to the Marine Department.

Both *Manai* and *Manai II* have had some mechanical problems and will require careful maintenance if they are to be fully operational. The Department's facilities for operating and maintenance have been rather neglected in recent years, and it is planned to build a new jetty and upgrade the slipway during the next three years.

The Department also has four outboard powered boats for use in the lagoon, a compressor and diving gear, a range of laboratory and workshop equipment, and a large number of computers, printers and other IT equipment. Again, it will be important to rationalise some of these assets and dispose of IT equipment that is no longer needed. TFD also needs to improve its asset register and develop a plan for asset maintenance and replacement.

#### 4.5 Budget

In recent years Fisheries has contributed around 45% of all Government income (including budget support from aid donors) and more than 60% of revenue actually collected. It is perhaps not surprising that the agreement to establish a Fisheries Authority stipulates that fisheries access fees will continue to go directly to the Government's general revenue account, and the Authority will receive an annual allocation through the normal budget process, which will probably remain at around 2% of Government expenditure. The ability to control this expenditure directly, as well as project funds and cost recovery accounts, is expected to increase the effectiveness and timeliness of disbursement and procurement.

The Department/Authority will continue to rely heavily on development assistance to achieve the objectives of this plan. Notable contributions expected include:

- WB PROPER project - \$16 million from mid-2023 for six years;
- NZ TFSP2 project - \$3.5 million from 2021-25 plus technical advisers;
- KOFCC project - \$6.7 million invested mainly in infrastructure from 2023-27;
- OFCF – in kind assistance with maintenance of boats and equipment annually.

Smaller but significant inputs of funding and technical assistance can be expected from the regional agencies.

The Department will again need to work closely with donor partners throughout this plan period. This means developing realistic project workplans and budgets, as well as meeting donor requirements for procurement and reporting. While both New Zealand and World Bank have indicated a relatively long-term commitment, their support will not continue indefinitely and both are keen to see the Tuvalu Government absorb activities, that may be project funded at first, into the recurrent budget.