



Country and Territory Strategic Partnership Framework 2023 - 2026

between the

Government of the Republic of Palau

and the

Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

SPREP
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Executive Support

Purpose

The Republic of Palau and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) have developed the Country and Territory Strategic Partnership Framework (CTSPF) to guide SPREP's overall engagement in Palau. It responds to the SPREP Governing Council's decision for strengthening the Secretariat's engagement in SPREP PICT Members.

Process and Approach

The process for formulating Palau's CTSPF was first initiated in December 2021 followed by series of discussions in 2022 between the SPREP CTSPF Taskforce and the SPREP Palau National Focal Point. The formulation of the Palau CTSPF experienced delays due to other competing priorities including the impacts of COVID19. Discussions were resumed in May 2023 which included consultations with key stakeholders led by the Palau SPREP Focal Point and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Environment (MAFE).

An integrated, programmatic, and holistic approach in addressing national and regional priorities is fundamental to the effective formulation and implementation of the Palau CTSPF. The Palau National Environment Management Strategy (NEMS) which was launched in May 2023 was the main strategic document used to inform the Palau CTSPF including feedback from the consultation with key stakeholders.

Objectives

The overall objectives of the CTSPF are to:

- a) Provide a high-level strategic guide on all interactions between the Secretariat and the Republic of Palau.
- b) Strengthen country engagement, leadership, and ownership in the effective development and implementation of interventions by the Secretariat.
- c) Ensure greater alignment of strategic regional and national environment priorities.
- d) Confirm agreed mutual commitments to existing and planned national and regional strategic priorities and actions.
- e) Leverage new opportunities for further collaboration for example through project development and donor funding.
- f) Acknowledge other development partners' engagement in country and facilitating coordination to ensure complementarity of efforts.
- g) Facilitating strategic programme and project level dialogues to promote and support *sustainability of outcomes and results*.
- h) Enhance visibility of the outcomes and results by the Secretariat and SPREP Member.
- i) Support and contribute towards country efforts in improving the environment.



Guiding Principles

The CTSPF will be guided by the following principles:

- a) Increase greater alignment between national and regional environment priorities.
- b) Contribute positively towards national, regional, and relevant global environment priorities and commitment including the Sustainable Development Goals.
- c) Support shared values, mutual respect, and responsibility.
- d) Support meaningful, positive, equitable, and mutual benefits.
- e) Increase visibility, accountability, and transparency.
- f) Promote gender mainstreaming and social inclusion.

Strategic priority areas of collaboration

The Palau CTSPF priorities are informed by the Palau National Environment Management Strategy (2023).

Table 1 below shows the convergence between the SPREP Strategic Plan 2017 – 2026 Regional Goals and Objectives and the Palau NEMS Strategic Priority Areas.

SPREP Strategic Plan – Strategic Priority Area	Palau NEMS Strategic Priority Areas
Regional Goal 1: Climate Change Resilience	1. Climate change
1.1 Policy development and capacity building on Adaptation, Mitigation, NDC, DRR	1.1 Strategic planning for climate change impacts 1.4 International advocate for climate justice 1.5 Transition to RE 1.6 Reduction in GHG emission 1.7 Reduction in use of ODS
1.2 Climate change adaptation, EbA and NbS	1.2 Adaptation to climate change impacts
1.3 Weather forecast, early warning systems, and climate services	
1.4 Climate finance	1.3 Climate finance mechanisms
Regional Goal 2: Islands and ocean ecosystems	2. Land management and food security 3. Near shore marine management 4. Offshore marine management 6. Biodiversity conservation
2.1 Coastal and marine 2.1.1 Effective management and protection of coastal and marine ecosystems	3.1 Data collection, sharing, and feedback system 3.2 Marine spatial planning 3.5 MPA management and expansion 3.6 Mangrove management 3.7 Coral reef management 3.11 Protection and maintenance of marine biodiversity
2.2 Conservation and sustainable use of coastal, marine and terrestrial ecosystems	6.3 Protected Area Network 6.5 Biodiversity mainstreaming
2.3 Threatened species	6.1 Endangered species protection
2.4 Invasive species	6.2 Invasive species management and control
Regional Goal 3: Waste management and pollution control	7. Waste management 8. Chemical management
3.1 Implementation of regional and international framework	7.1 Improved national waste management and prevention 7.2 Improve landfill operation 7.5 Hazardous waste management

SPREP Strategic Plan – Strategic Priority Area	Palau NEMS Strategic Priority Areas
	8.2 Management of priority obsolete chemicals 8.3 Contaminated site management
3.2 Institutional mechanisms for waste management and pollution control	7.7 Marine plastic 8.4 Oil spill management
3.3 Resource recovery	7.3 Recycling 7.4 Composting
3.4 Waste management and pollution monitoring	
Regional Goal 4: Environmental monitoring and governance	11. Environmental Governance 10. Culture, Heritage and Awareness
4.1 Sustainable development planning	11.6 Compliance and enforcement 11.7 Stakeholder participation 11.8 Gender and social inclusion
4.2 Policy, legislation, MEAs	11.3 Environmental legislative framework 11.4 Environmental policy and strategy 11.7 Stakeholder participation 11.8 Gender and social inclusion
4.3 Environmental data, monitoring and reporting	11.2 Coordination, monitoring, and evaluation 11.9 Communication and knowledge management
4.4 Access to funding mechanisms	11.1 Sustainable financing
4.5 Science, policy and traditional knowledge	10.1 Traditional knowledge

The following strategic priorities were identified from the consultations with stakeholders including priorities proposed by the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and the Environment. These include specific targeted priorities which have been added for implementation for the duration of the CTSPF:

- 1) Continue implementation of existing SPREP projects, including regional projects involving Palau.
- 2) Launch the Palau NEMS and develop M&E framework for the NEMS.
- 3) Continue to provide capacity building and training on climate change resilience, biodiversity conservation, waste management and pollution control, and environmental monitoring and governance.
- 4) Support engagement in regional (Waigani Convention) and international MEAs (UNFCCC, CBD, BRS).
- 5) Support to the SPREP North Pacific Office located in Majuro.
- 6) SPREP to assist Palau access funds under the Adaptation Fund.
- 7) Assess and map regional marine protection priorities (KBAs), Palau one of three countries where a NCG will be established (IOE).
- 8) Protected area data updates for the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) - Work closely with national authorities and with UNEP-WCMC to assist the review of national protected area data to identify any changes in site information and/or to capture any new protected areas for updating Palau's WDPA record.
- 9) Update Palau's protected area management effectiveness (PAME) data on the global PAME database (GD-PAME) - Work closely with Palau authorities and with UNEP-WCMC to update PAME data for Palau on the GD-PAME.
- 10) Conduct virtual training on basic navigation and use of the Pacific islands Protected Area Portal (PIPAP) to assist planning and decision making on protected area management (upon request)

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- 12) Review the Endangered Species Act
- 13) Work with Palau EPQB on their Environmental Assessments training needs. Part of training will cover compliance and enforcement; stakeholder engagement; and gender and social inclusion in the Environmental Assessments process.
- 14) Support the development of the Palau State of Environment Report 2024.
- 15) SPREP will work with Palau to develop an M&E framework for the NEMS using the SPREP Regional Environmental Indicators as a guide.

Annex 1 provides the details of the links between the SPREP Strategic Plan 2017 – 2026 Goals and Outcomes and the Palau NEMS indicating what and how SPREP is contributing to Palau’s priorities in the NEMS through SPREP projects and activities in Palau including regional activities which Palau is involved in. Annex 1 will continue to be updated to reflect new priorities and activities as they arise.

Assumption

The SPREP-Palau CTSPF is based on the assumptions that:

- Priorities may change as new and emerging issues arise.
- Other development partners, CROP, and organisations continue to be actively engaged and supporting Palau’s national environment priorities.

Risk Management

The following risks will be closely monitored, and mitigating measures developed during the timeframe of the CTSPF:

Risk type	Mitigating measure
Strategic Agreed priorities may not be fully achieved.	Regular dialogues to review, monitor, and track progress and develop mitigating measures to address any major changes to strategic priorities.
Political Lack of political support and commitment	SPREP Focal Point to continue to update and inform Cabinet and relevant decision making entities and processes. Seek continued commitment from government to support the implementation of the CTSPF.
Environmental Natural disasters that may affect the delivery and implementation of CTSPF priorities	Develop contingency plans to mitigate risks due to natural disasters

Implementation and management arrangements

The coordination and implementation of the Palau CTSPF will follow the NEMS coordinating mechanism under the guidance of the Palau SPREP National Focal Point with the support of MAFE, NEPC, and relevant stakeholders.

Roles and responsibilities

SPREP and Palau agree to collaborate fully in the implementation of agreed priorities and activities identified in the CTSPF. The roles and responsibilities are outlined as follow:

Palau will:

- Lead in-country implementation of the agreed priority actions of the Palau CTSPF.
- Coordinate with key stakeholders and partners in-country to ensure complementarity of efforts.
- Ensure the Palau CTSPF priority actions are aligned with and contribute to national priorities in the NEMS including relevant national thematic strategies and plans on climate change, environment, and waste management.
- Facilitate sharing of information and update progress reports through relevant national coordinating mechanisms.
- Raise awareness and visibility of the outcomes and results of the CTSPF at all levels of government including communities and partners.
- Hold annual joint review meetings with SPREP.

SPREP roles and responsibilities

SPREP will:

- Provide responsive high quality technical and capacity back-stopping
- Support communication and advocacy
- In collaboration with Palau, broker partnerships and collaborations
- Provide regional services and access to resources
- Provide and manage regional repositories of environmental data, knowledge, and information as requested by, and dissemination to Palau for example, through the Pacific Environment Portal, Pacific Climate Change Portal, and the Pacific Islands Protected Areas Portal.
- Facilitate reporting on the Palau CTSPF through the SPREP PIP for reporting to the SPREP Meeting.

Monitoring, Review, and Reporting

The Palau CTSPF will be monitored through the Palau NEMS M&E process with updates shared with SPREP through the SPREP Focal Point. CTSPF progress reports will form part of the SPREP PIP report to the SPREP and the Executive Board Meetings.

Visibility and Communication

The visibility of outcomes and results achieved through the Palau CTSPF will be documented and promoted widely through relevant national and regional mechanisms, networks, and approved media outlets.

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Duration

This Framework is for the years 2023 - 2026 and will take effect from the date of signature.

Amendments and Termination

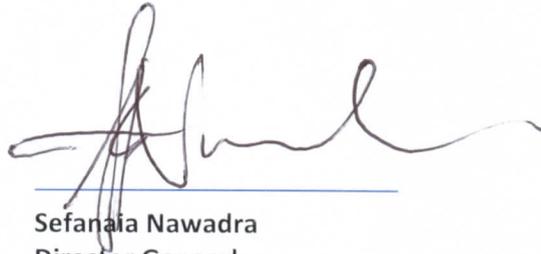
This Framework may be amended at any time by agreement in writing by the Parties.

Signature



Hon. Gustuv Aitaro
Minister
Ministry of State
Republic of Palau

Date: 9/8/23



Sefanala Nawadra
Director General
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional
Environment Programme (SPREP)

Date: 09/08/23.

