



The Framework for Pacific Regionalism

In 2014, Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum endorsed a Pacific Vision that was for a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion, and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead free, healthy, and productive lives.

The Framework for Pacific Regionalism represents their long term commitment to deeper regionalism as a means to achieving this vision. Four principal objectives underpin this commitment: sustainable development, economic growth, strengthened systems, and security for all.

The Framework sets out a number of ways in which ambitious and transformative initiatives best addressed through a regional approach can be identified. Governments of the Pacific, through existing Ministerial and Officials' driven processes are one important avenue. Another is the regional public policy consultation process. Through these mechanisms the Framework provides a political platform that enables Forum Leaders to assert their collective sovereignty over the Pacific Vision into the future.

Regionalism can be expressed in a number of ways:

- **Regional Cooperation** consists of regional agreements between national governments, where implementation is left at the national level. This has been the primary vehicle for regionalism in the Pacific since the 1960s.
- In some instances cooperation has led to **Regional Delivery and Regional Service Provision** such as the University of the South Pacific and its regional delivery of tertiary education.
- **Economic and Political Integration** represent two forms of deeper regionalism that can lead to shared sovereignty, shared political and legal institutions, and increased flows of people, goods, and capital. PACER Plus represents the region's efforts to achieve an agreement towards greater economic integration, while tangible efforts towards greater political integration are still to be attained.

Deeper regionalism requires coherence and conformity across regional stakeholders. The Framework prioritises the regional political agenda, and in doing so provides all stakeholders the opportunity to align their strategic direction and resources behind it.

Implementation of effective forms of regional cooperation and integration is underpinned by emphases on:

- Greater **political oversight** and discussion by Forum Leaders around key issues such as political settlements, pooled resources and sovereignty, and what is to be gained and forfeited for the greater regional good.
- Ensuring focused **political discussion** takes place that considers only issues best serviced through a form of regionalism. This does not downplay the importance of other issues that are not considered through the

processes articulated in the Framework, but recognises that they may be best addressed at the national level or through a multi-country approach.

- Promoting a more **inclusive approach to regional public policy development**. The regional public submissions process set out in the Framework enables coherent and meaningful public engagement in regionalism. In addition, through mechanisms like the Private Sector Roundtable, and the Civil Society – Forum Troika Dialogue, Pacific communities are connected with regional decision makers.

Processes to inform Forum Leaders Priorities for Regionalism



Continuum of stages to deeper regionalism



The Pacific Islands Forum is the political grouping of the 16 independent and self-governing states in the Pacific re-gion. Its Secretariat (PIFS), based in Suva, Fiji, delivers on the decisions made at the annual Forum Leaders meetings and high level ministerial meetings.

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Vision

Our **Pacific Vision** is for a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion, and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead free, healthy, and productive lives.

Values

We value and depend upon the integrity of our vast ocean and our island resources.

We treasure the diversity and heritage of the Pacific and seek an inclusive future in which cultures, traditions and religious beliefs are valued, honoured and developed.

We embrace good governance, the full observance of democratic values, the rule of law, the defence and promotion of all human rights, gender equality, and commitment to just societies.

We seek peaceful, safe, and stable communities and countries, ensuring full security and wellbeing for the peoples of the Pacific.

We support full inclusivity, equity and equality for all people of the Pacific.

We strive for effective, open and honest relationships and inclusive and enduring partnerships—based on mutual accountability and respect—with each other, within our sub-regions, within our region, and beyond.

These Pacific regional values will guide all our policy-making and implementation.

Objectives

Our principal objectives are:

- **Sustainable development** that combines economic social, and cultural development in ways that improve livelihoods and well-being and use the environment sustainably;
- **Economic growth** that is inclusive and equitable;
- **Strengthened governance**, legal, financial, and administrative systems; and
- **Security** that ensures stable and safe human, environmental and political conditions for all.