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Pacific Ocean

10 FLAGSHIP PROJECTS
FOR THE OCEAN

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THE BEATING HEART OF THE BLUE CONTINENT

In June 2025, the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) brings the international community together with one goal in mind: to protect the oceans and their resources to strengthen the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 on marine environment.

In other words: to reconcile conservation and sustainable use. The participation of the Pacific islands, the Blue Continent, is a keystone: it is the largest ocean on the planet and the islands that dot it consider themselves its guardians. This brochure is a small contribution to amplify the Pacific's voice on this subject, during UNOC3 and beyond.

We opted for a presentation of projects, some very modest, others much larger, to highlight the wide range of sectors covered in the Pacific Ocean: maritime transport;

fisheries; marine biodiversity and protected areas; coastal zone management and adaptation; and marine pollution (sanitation and waste).

In the Pacific Ocean, Agence Française de Développement is a long-standing development partner in the French overseas territories, while we became more recently involved in foreign countries, where our action initially took the form of regional projects. This history partly explains the wide range of projects we support. These are tangible projects to protect the ocean while improving the living conditions of communities, a result of ongoing dialogue with local players. These partnerships offer us a shared sense of awe when facing the majesty of the ocean, the beauty of its flora and fauna, the delicate nature of its ecosystems. As the people of the Pacific know, it is our love of the ocean that makes us its best advocates.

SPOTLIGHT ON LOCAL PROJECTS OF THE KIWA INITIATIVE



The local projects component of the Kiwa multi-donor initiative allows the deployment of nature-based solutions in each of the 18 island states and territories of the Pacific.

This is a different way of working, beyond the ambitious regional projects of the initiative, focusing on projects led by local authorities or civil society organisations for the benefit of communities.

Among the thirty or so subsidised projects, the local Kiwa project "SARA" focuses on biodiversity on the lagoon reefs in the north of New Caledonia. Since 2023, 17 coral islands have been protected, providing a secure habitat for approximately 30,000 breeding pairs of 13 species of seabirds, thanks to effective social stimulation measures: red flags and public awareness to limit disturbances, protective nets defining nesting areas, and an innovative technique using plaster decoys and mirrors to attract birds.



RAISING THE PROFILE OF THE CORAL SEA NATURAL PARK

The Coral Sea Natural Park, with its exceptional size, shares its borders with the maritime zones of Australia, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Fiji. Its 1.3 million square kilometers are home to unique biodiversity, including one-third of the world's wild reefs, underwater mountains – a refuge for humpback whales migrating from Antarctica – and important turtle nesting sites on islands that also host vast colonies of seabirds.

In 2024 and 2025, AFD finances technical support for the government of New Caledonia. This will help the Park and fishery services develop a new management plan and prepare the nomination for the IUCN Green List of Protected Areas. Highly demanding and selective, the Green List recognizes and promotes protected areas.

Those listed serve as global examples, particularly for their governance and conservation measures. This is an opportunity for New Caledonia and the Pacific.



Solution
Grant



Amount
100 000 € (12 M XPF)



Location
New Caledonia



© Parc naturel de la mer de Corail Astrolabe Squalé Odyssey

POLYNESIAN ARTISTS AND STUDENTS PUTTING THEIR CULTURE AT THE SERVICE OF THE OCEAN

The Metis Fund mobilises art around development issues. It finances the project "Middle School Students of Sustainable Fenua", where about fifty students from the Punaauia middle school (Tahiti) work alongside artists and scientists to promote and protect their natural and cultural heritage. They created a song and a Tahitian dance choreography based on their exchanges, which have been widely disseminated via a video clip. The project includes a "heritage" class where traditional arts

are taught, and a project-based class on the "educational marine area" (EMA). Initiated in the Marquesas Islands, EMAs offer innovative education, in contact with nature, to raise environmental awareness among young people while passing down knowledge.

This project, to be showcased at UNOC3, is a good example of how culture and nature are intimately linked in Oceanian civilisations, which stem from long-distance navigation traditions.



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Solution
Grant



Amount
15 000 € (1.79 M XPF)



Location
French Polynesia

REHABILITATING & GREENING THE PORT OF RABAU

The port of Rabaul is the main commercial hub for the East New Britain province and the only international port in the region. Its two docks allow it to handle around 400,000 tons of goods each year. However, the infrastructure is in poor condition, threatening the continuity of operations, and is highly vulnerable to climate change effects and natural disasters.

Launched in 2024, the project aims to "green" the port of Rabaul by strengthening its resilience to climate change

and natural disasters, reducing local pollution that affects natural resources and biodiversity, and cutting carbon emissions. This will allow the port to continue ensuring the transportation and exchange of people and goods, despite cyclone risks and sea-level rise, while supporting regional and national trade.

In French Polynesia, AFD also supports the ambitious "greening" project of the Autonomous Port of Papeete.



Solution

Very concessional loan and EU grant



Amount

40.6 M€ (AFD et UE) + 24 M€ (BEI) + 18 M€ (PNG Government)



Location

Papua New Guinea

A GREENER MARINA IN THE HEART OF NOUMÉA

Recreational boating is a cornerstone in the leisure and tourism economy in New Caledonia. Port-Moselle, located in the city center of Nouméa, is one of the two main ports for boats arriving from abroad. AFD supports the semi-public company Sodemo, which manages five marinas, in the rehabilitation and expansion of the Port-Moselle marina. Thanks to the works achieved in 2020-2021, the marina's total capacity was increased to nearly 700 berths.

All the infrastructure managed by Sodemo has been connected to the public sanitation network. Instead of the 14 former sea outlets, wastewater is now directed to the public network, with direct benefits for marine ecosystems.

The marina also offers its clients waste and used oil removal from each dock, as well as selective waste sorting bins.



Solution

Loan



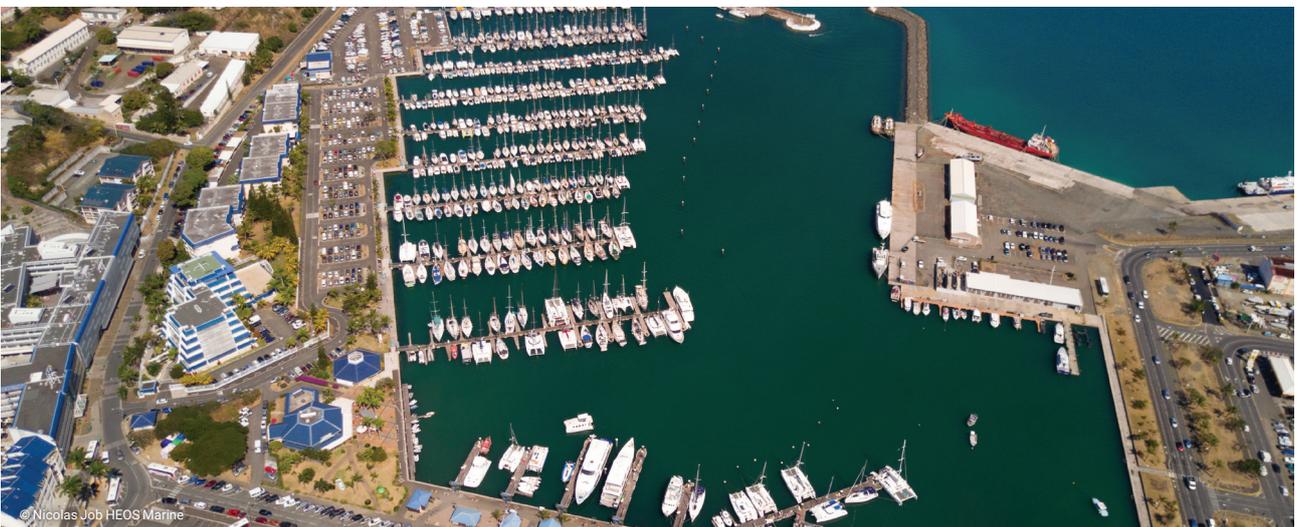
Amount

9.3 M€ (1.18 billion XPF)



Location

New Caledonia



WHEN SEAWATER BECOMES RENEWABLE ENERGY IN TAHITI

The Sea Water Air Conditioning (SWAC) system at the French Polynesia Hospital is an air conditioning system that uses seawater taken from 900 meters deep at a temperature of 5°C to cool the hospital.

It is the largest and most powerful SWAC system in the world (6 MW of cooling). Fully integrated into the energy transition of French Polynesia, this system saves up to 11 GWh of electricity annually, which is 2 % of Tahiti's total electricity consumption. The facility became operational on July 8, 2022, and now provides 100 % of the hospital's air conditioning, contributing to reducing its carbon footprint and a more sustainable management of natural resources.



Solution
Loan



Amount
7.5 M€ (893 M XPF)



Location
French Polynesia



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BETTER UNDERSTANDING AND REDUCING MARINE WASTE IN THE PACIFIC

Implemented by the SPREP (Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme), the Sustainable Waste Action in the Pacific (SWAP) project supports sustainable waste management in the Pacific, particularly marine waste, used oils, and solid waste. The project involves training activities, public policy support, small equipment promoting the circular economy, and pilot projects.

Between 2020 and 2024, a large-scale audit campaign studied the 4.5 tons of marine waste collected on the beaches of Fiji, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu, and Wallis and Futuna.

The analyses revealed that 58% of the waste was plastic (with a majority of food packaging), and the density of this waste varied significantly from place to place – the Solomon Islands recorded the highest density.

Phase 2 of the SWAP project, now also benefiting Kiribati, French Polynesia, and Tuvalu, makes marine waste a key theme. Some recommendations from the audit are already in progress: policies to reduce single-use plastics; improvement of waste management systems; public participation in cleaning initiatives and educational campaigns.



© SWAP/SPREP



Solution
Grant



Amount
3 M€ (phase 1) – 4.3 M€ (phase 2)



Localisation
Fiji, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, French Polynesia, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Wallis and Futuna

COMMUNITY-BASED FISHERIES MANAGEMENT IN MICRONESIA



For a long time, coastal fisheries management in the Pacific focused on increasing production and modernising techniques. Recently, it has evolved towards a more sustainable and participatory approach, involving fishers and local communities as key players.

Launched in 2023, the Kiwa MiCOAST project helps Micronesian communities better manage fisheries to protect marine resources and adapt to climate change.

It supports fishers and local authorities by proposing sustainable methods and management plans tailored to the needs of each area.

The expected impacts are better food security, the preservation of coastal ecosystems, greater resilience to climate change, and more stable incomes for fishers through sustainable practices and sharing experiences among different islands.

MiCOAST is supported by the Kiwa initiative, a multi-donor climate adaptation fund managed by the AFD.



Solution

Grant from the Kiwa Initiative (EU, AFD, Australia, New Zealand, Canada)



Amount

4.9 M€



Location

Micronesia (Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Marshall Islands, Palau)

RESTORING PACIFIC ECOSYSTEMS AND DEVELOPING A BLUE CARBON MODEL



Pacific islands are heavily impacted by climate-related natural disasters: coastal flooding, river floods, violent cyclones, and erosion, which have damaged shorelines, mangroves, and coral reefs. By working with local communities to restore and manage mangroves and coral reefs, the Kiwa RESTORE project, implemented by Conservation International, aims to stabilise shorelines, protect coasts, and support sustainable livelihoods. This approach strengthens the resilience of coastal ecosystems and helps protect island communities from the impacts of climate change.

Kiwa RESTORE also includes the first Pacific blue carbon pilot project, launched in the Ra province of Fiji, which will serve as a learning experience and practical model for future initiatives in the Pacific. It aims to value the carbon stored in mangroves to mitigate climate change.

RESTORE is supported by the Kiwa initiative, a multi-donor climate adaptation fund managed by the AFD.



Solution

Grant from the Kiwa Initiative (EU, AFD, Australia, New Zealand, Canada)



Amount

3.3 M€



Location

Fiji, Samoa, Timor Leste

PROTECTING AND MANAGING COASTAL AND MARINE ECOSYSTEMS IN THE PACIFIC

The Pacific Ocean is home to some of the richest and most diverse coastal and marine ecosystems in the world.

However, these ecosystems are still relatively unknown and are increasingly threatened by human activities, worsened by the direct impacts of climate change. These pressures weaken natural dynamics, disrupt ecosystems, and reduce their resilience. Local communities, who rely heavily on marine and coastal ecosystem services, are directly affected by this degradation.

In response, the AFD is working with the SPREP (Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme) and the Pacific

Community (SPC) on the future the Pacific Ocean Initiative. This regional program will aim at protecting biodiversity and promoting sustainable development resilient to climate change, thereby ensuring food and economic security for local communities. It will seek to strengthen regional, national, and local capacities by capitalizing on and sharing expertise and scientific knowledge on the ocean. The project will foster cooperation between islands within the region as a way to coordinate ecosystem and marine resource management and conservation. It will be launched in 2025 for a four-year duration.



Solution
Grant



Planned amount
8 M€



Eligible locations
Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Marshall Islands, Palau, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Wallis and Futuna, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Niue, French Polynesia

CONSERVING BIODIVERSITY AND IMPROVING LIVING CONDITIONS IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Solwara Na Graun blo Pipol (SoNG) means "The sea and the land for the people" in PNG pidgin. The country, home to 7% of the world's biodiversity, faces increasing pressure on its natural resources, essential for the survival of local communities. Fishing, agriculture, and forests play a vital role in their daily lives. However, these ecosystems are threatened by population growth, development, and climate change.

Implemented by the Wildlife Conservation Society and Expertise France, SoNG adopts a participatory approach,

combining traditional knowledge and innovations to protect these resources and ensure the sustainability of livelihoods.

The first phase of the project, launched in 2025, aims to contribute to protecting 30% of lands and seas by 2030. The marine component targets the Bismarck Sea, with effective management of the existing 1.7 million hectares of protected areas and the creation of 2.9 million hectares of new marine protected areas and other conservation measures.



Solution
Grant



Amount
8 M€ (tranche 1)



Location
Papua New Guinea

World in Common

AFD Group finances and drives the transition to a fairer, safer and more resilient world, working with its partners to support communities all over the world. Drawing on the complementary strengths of its entities – Agence Française de Développement for public financing, Proparco for responsible private investment, and Expertise France for technical expertise – the Group is ideally positioned to meet all sustainable development challenges.

Working in over 160 countries, including France's Overseas Territories and Departments, the Group adapts its operations to the realities on the ground, actively supporting local initiatives. With over 4,000 projects, whose objectives are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), AFD Group works on behalf of the French people, together with all stakeholders committed to economic development and the preservation of common goods: climate, biodiversity, peace, gender equality and global health. Working by your side, toward a world in common.

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