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**Special Body on Least Developed, Landlocked Developing
and Pacific Island Developing Countries: development
issues relevant to Pacific island developing countries****Report on progress made on the SIDS Accelerated
Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the
Sustainable Development Goals in the Pacific****Note by the secretariat*****Summary*

The present document outlines the sustainable development priorities of the Pacific and highlights areas where the secretariat has made progress in the implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Samoa Pathway and resolutions 71/4 and 72/6 of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific contain mandates for the secretariat to work with and through subregional organizations and other entities in the Pacific. The Framework for Pacific Regionalism, together with associated subregional policies and frameworks, provides the policy and operational context for the secretariat's work in the Pacific.

In 2015, Pacific leaders resolved that an integrated approach should be taken to implement these three pivotal agreements in order to promote sustainability and enhance Pacific ownership. The Pacific not only has unique structural challenges with respect to economic development but also a unique environmental, cultural and social context. Implementing these agreements in an integrated manner will ensure that the Samoa Pathway and the Sustainable Development Goals are contextualized as much as possible at subregional and national levels.

The Commission may wish to review the present document and provide the secretariat with guidance on the recommendations contained therein and on any other matters concerning support for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Pacific small island developing States.

* E/ESCAP/73/L.1.

** The present document is being issued late owing to the need to include the latest events in the Pacific and information regarding the ongoing consultations on the Sustainable Development Goal indicators.

I. Introduction

1. The present document highlights areas where the secretariat has made progress in the Pacific in the implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The mandates of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) with regard to the implementation of these two pivotal agreements are contained in the following resolutions:

(a) 71/4 on the implementation of Samoa Pathway, in which the secretariat was requested to work in collaboration with the relevant United Nations bodies and agencies, regional and subregional organizations and non-governmental organizations to assist Pacific island members and associate members, upon request, to enhance national capacities and institutions; enhance the Pacific voice and representation in regional and global processes; and ensure the realization of a transformational strategy for the sustainable development of small island developing States by strengthening the role of the Commission in monitoring the follow-up to the Samoa Pathway and the evolving post-2015 development agenda;

(b) 72/6 on committing to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific, in which the secretariat was requested to strengthen and promote communication, cooperation and collaboration among the relevant organizations of the United Nations development system in Asia and the Pacific and other stakeholders, in support of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals by member States, in particular least developed, landlocked developing and Pacific island developing countries.

2. The present report provides an outline of the subregional context and sustainable development priorities of the Pacific, as well as highlights of the areas where the secretariat has made progress in its implementation of the Samoa Pathway, the 2030 Agenda and Commission resolutions 71/4 and 72/6.

II. Pacific context and priorities

3. The Pacific Ocean covers a third of the Earth's surface and has tremendous if unappreciated diversity and value to the rest of the world. It is home to the Pacific island countries, also known as Pacific small island developing States, and has been recognized by the international community for a long time as a special case for sustainable development. It is not a homogenous subregion as is evidenced by the differences between Papua New Guinea, which measures 462,840 km² with more than 7 million people speaking more than 700 different languages, Fiji, 18,272 km² and almost 900,000 people with a prominent Indo-Fijian community, and on the other end of the scale, tiny Niue, 259 km² and fewer than 2,000 people, and Nauru, 21 km² and 10,000 people.

4. Differences exist in economic growth rates as well: a low average of 1.8 per cent between 2000 and 2014¹ which was unevenly spread, as can be seen from a comparison of the gross domestic product (GDP) growth rates of Nauru (26.4 per cent), Papua New Guinea (5.1 per cent) and Fiji (4.6 per cent) on one hand, and the Marshall Islands (0.8 per cent), the Federated States of

¹ Based on information from the ESCAP Online Statistical database. Available from www.unescap.org/stats/data/ (accessed 6 February 2017).

Micronesia (0.6 per cent), Palau (-0.3 per cent) and Tonga (-0.8 per cent), on the other. Urbanization rates are also higher in smaller countries like Palau (87.1 per cent), the Cook Islands (74.5 per cent) and the Marshall Islands (72.7 per cent) compared to the bigger Pacific island countries such as Solomon Islands (22.4 per cent), Samoa (19.1 per cent) and Papua New Guinea (13 per cent). Literacy rates are also lower in the bigger countries of Melanesia compared to the smaller Pacific island countries.¹

5. Given their sizes and location, Pacific island countries have long promoted regional cooperation and integration to support and supplement their national development efforts. In 2005, after decades of trying various forms of intraregional architecture and processes, the Pacific Islands Forum leaders launched the Pacific Plan for strengthening regional cooperation and integration with the aim of intensifying links between the sovereign countries of the region and of promoting action where regional gains could be made as a result of sharing resources, improving governance and aligning policies.

6. In 2013, a major review of the Pacific Plan² was conducted, resulting in its replacement with the Framework for Pacific Regionalism in July 2014. Its objective was to strengthen the political leadership for the Pacific regional agenda and process for sustainable development. In September 2015, at the Pacific Islands Forum, the meeting where the first priorities under the Framework for Pacific Regionalism were endorsed, the Forum leaders resolved that an integrated approach should be taken to implementing three pivotal global and regional agreements, the 2030 Agenda, the Samoa Pathway and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, in order to promote sustainability and enhance Pacific ownership. They agreed that global Sustainable Development Goal indicators should be selected that were relevant to the Pacific and agreed to monitor and report on all three agreements. The Pacific leaders also prioritized the implementation of the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals.

7. Climate change, and the related question of disaster risk reduction, is the highest priority for the Pacific, as it is an existential threat that will cause irreversible loss and damage to Pacific societies, livelihoods and natural environments. The Pacific island countries are among those with the highest risk of experiencing natural disasters.³ Another measure of vulnerability is losses and damage, which in the Pacific averaged 2.3 per cent of GDP between 1980 and 2014, a rate higher than most.⁴ Most recently, both Cyclone Pam, which struck Vanuatu in March 2015, and Cyclone Winston, which struck Fiji in February 2016, cost each country close to \$500 million. In Vanuatu, this represented approximately 61 per cent of GDP, while in Fiji it equated to 7.5 per cent of GDP.⁵

² Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, *Pacific Plan Review 2013: Report to Pacific Leaders* (Suva, 2013).

³ United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security and Alliance Development Works, *World Risk Report 2014* (Bonn, 2014).

⁴ Ezequiel Cabezon and others, “Enhancing macroeconomic resilience to natural disasters and climate change in the small States of the Pacific”, IMF Working Paper, No. WP/15/125 (Washington, D.C., International Monetary Fund, 2015). Available from www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2015/wp15125.pdf.

⁵ Based on government estimates of cost and ESCAP data on GDP.

8. The second highest priority for the Pacific subregion is oceans and fisheries. Ensuring the well-being of ocean ecosystems is essential for the health of the planet, as well as for food security, livelihood and economic development within the region. Greater support is needed for the sustainable use of fisheries, especially in the Pacific island countries, where national fish consumption is three to four times the global average, representing 50 to 90 per cent of animal protein consumed by many island populations. Additionally, fisheries account for more than 50 per cent of all exports in half the States of the region and, even in countries that fall short of this threshold, constitute a large part of their exports.⁶ Earnings from fisheries remain disproportionately low, representing only a small percentage of the value of the landed catch, partly owing to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. Several valuable species, in particular bigeye tuna in offshore and *bêche-de-mer* in inshore fisheries, are now under significant pressure and are at risk of depletion. Ocean acidification and warming are also an existential threat; low carbon development, therefore, is the highest priority with regard to both oceans and climate change. Marine debris and the environmental risks inherent to deep-sea mining are other critical areas to address.

9. The third highest priority relates to areas of socioeconomic and cultural vulnerabilities which, if addressed, could result in significant sustainable development dividends for the subregion. While most countries have achieved gender parity in primary and secondary education, the rate of women's participation in parliament remains among the lowest in the world, and rates of gender-based violence are extremely high. A study in Fiji found that reducing the excessive rates of gender-based violence was not only a moral imperative but also an economic necessity.⁷ Pacific leaders also continue to acknowledge the hardships created for persons with disabilities by barriers, as well as the vulnerabilities they face, and have emphasized the need for disability-inclusive development in all government programs as the way forward. Ultimately, these barriers result in higher poverty levels, deprive national economies of a significant pool of creativity and skills, and impoverish communities in other non-material ways. Non-communicable diseases, the third social vulnerability issue, have been recognized as a human, social and economic crisis and as contributing to nearly 75 per cent of all adult deaths in the Pacific subregion. The huge economic costs of the epidemic are taking their toll on Pacific economies and consume sizeable amounts of national health budgets, in some countries exceeding 50 per cent.⁸ A key feature of the Pacific subregion is the extent to which regional cooperation is used to address many of its social vulnerabilities.

III. Means of implementation

10. The means by which small island developing States can achieve sustainable development, and for which innovative partnerships are needed, include financing, trade, capacity-building, technology transfer, data and

⁶ ESCAP, *Pacific Perspectives 2014: Pacific Perspectives on Fisheries and Sustainable Development* (Suva, 2014).

⁷ World Bank, "The Pacific Islands cannot afford the human and economic cost of violence against women", 25 November 2012. Available from www.worldbank.org/en/news/opinion/2012/11/25/the-human-and-economic-cost-the-pacific-cannot-afford.

⁸ World Health Organization, *Noncommunicable diseases*, January 2015. Available from www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs355/en/.

statistics, and the institutional support provided to small islands developing States through the United Nations system. While these are not new modalities, qualitative improvements in the way they support sustainable development can help to ensure transformational change.

A. Information and communications technology

11. The importance of information and communications technology (ICT) development for Pacific small island developing States lies in its capacity to overcome the tyranny of distance and isolation. In the early 2000s, several Pacific island Governments⁹ opened up their telecommunications markets, resulting in a major expansion in ICT connectivity.¹⁰ By 2015, 10 Pacific island countries had access to high-speed and high-bandwidth capacity submarine cables, which replaced or complemented satellite access. Despite progress, Pacific islands have a long way to go to catch up to other regions of the world. In 2013, only 2.68 people for every 100 in the Pacific had a connection to broadband Internet, compared to 6 per 100 people in middle-income countries, 8 in the Caribbean and 27 in high-income countries. The same low numbers were evident for Internet subscribers and were even worse with respect to mobile telephone users; the Pacific region ranked lowest compared to all regions, including sub-Saharan Africa, and compared to low-income countries. An estimated 40 per cent of the population, mostly in rural areas, remains unconnected. In most Pacific island countries, extending access beyond the urban centres requires major investment. It is not surprising therefore that ICT is one of the most important regional priorities under the Framework for Pacific Regionalism.

B. Infrastructure financing

12. Most Pacific island countries have relied heavily on official development assistance (ODA), although total aid flows are levelling off at approximately \$2 billion per year and declining in real value.¹¹ This trend reflects the prevailing international discourse on development financing, which is placing greater emphasis on domestic resource mobilization, taxation, trade, foreign direct investment, and using public financing to leverage private funds for development. A shift away from ODA may prove difficult for a number of countries, especially those that have limited domestic revenue sources and suffer from systemic debt issues.¹² Moreover, access to sufficient and appropriate financing for infrastructure is likely to be an ongoing and major challenge, particularly in view of the extensive needs in

⁹ Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu, followed later by other Pacific island countries.

¹⁰ Increase in teledensity (fixed line/mobile) and Internet subscriptions per 100 people.

¹¹ Data is derived from the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

¹² According to the International Monetary Fund and the Pacific Islands Forum, four Forum island countries – Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Samoa and Tuvalu – are at high risk because of their debt levels. See Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, *2015 Pacific Regional MDGs Tracking Report* (Suva, 2015).

most countries,¹³ and the significant costs associated with maintenance.¹⁴ The Pacific Region Infrastructure Facility, which is a partnership between key development partners and multilateral banks, is one example of efforts to engage in regional cooperation to meet infrastructure needs. In recent years, the Facility has pooled donor assistance for infrastructure development in its member countries. Its focus has been five key economic infrastructure sectors: energy, telecommunications, transport (road, maritime and aviation), urban development (including solid waste management), and water supply and sanitation.

13. Improving access to and the use of alternative resources and revenues will require ongoing attention. Foreign direct investment already represents a relatively large share of GDP in some Pacific island countries (for example, during the period 2006-2013 it equalled 10 per cent in Fiji, 14 per cent in the Marshall Islands and 15 per cent in Solomon Islands)¹⁵ as do remittances, which are the second and third national income source for Samoa and Tonga, respectively. Other factors to consider will be the costs and risks associated with natural disasters, including cyclones, earthquakes and flooding, and man-made disasters, including violence against women and non-communicable diseases, which already place considerable strains on development funds.

C. Sustainable energy

14. Despite the central importance of energy security, it is estimated that 70 per cent of Pacific island households are without modern electricity services. The region's heavy dependence on imported fuel is another constraint, particularly since the transport sector is a substantial energy user. The Pacific small island developing States belong to the region most dependent on imported petroleum fuels for energy in the world (95 per cent are imported, compared to the global average of 34 per cent),¹⁶ especially for their transport sectors but also to meet household and commercial electricity needs. For most, petroleum represents the largest single import expenditure and, when oil prices are high, it exceeds or approximates the total value of exports. In order to improve access and affordability, as well as to reduce the heavy carbon footprint, there is an urgent need to improve energy efficiency and to promote the use of renewable energy.

15. Indeed, securing reliable and sustainable energy sources will also be essential for the subregion's economic growth and connectivity prospects. Leaders in the Pacific have prioritized affordable and clean energy to meet the needs of national populations and the global responsibility to act in response to climate change. Many countries have set ambitious renewable

¹³ ESCAP computed a composite measure that found Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Samoa, Tonga and Fiji in the lower half of the infrastructure development index (less than 0.15) for Asia-Pacific countries in 2007.

¹⁴ Maintaining existing infrastructure in the region requires roughly 6 per cent of GDP, which equates to approximately \$1.2 billion per annum, but this figure is far higher than what is actually spent. Pacific Infrastructure Advisory Centre, *Infrastructure Maintenance in the Pacific: Challenging the Build-Neglect-Rebuild Paradigm* (Sydney, 2013).

¹⁵ Based on information from the ESCAP Online Statistical database. Available from http://data.unescap.org/escap_stat/ (accessed 6 February 2017).

¹⁶ Peter Johnston, "Pacific perspectives on the challenges to energy security and the sustainable use of energy", paper prepared for ESCAP for the Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, Vladivostok, Russian Federation, May 2013.

energy targets to reverse the crippling effect of a heavy reliance on imported fossil fuels¹⁷ and to provide power to the 70 per cent of households without modern electricity. Of course the transition to renewable energy is not without its own challenges and constraints, which include, in particular, the high initial costs of renewable energy technology, ensuring the technology is appropriate for tropical small island conditions, capacity issues, and difficulties accessing international finance and investment.¹⁸

D. Regional trade and transportation issues

16. If Pacific island countries raised their current share of world trade from 0.05 to 0.5 per cent, it could bring in up to an additional \$50 billion to the region.¹⁹ Despite its tiny share of world trade, the Pacific remains heavily exposed to global economic conditions, as evidenced by the volatility in recent years that negatively affected inflows of foreign direct investment, foreign aid, tourism and export receipts, and workers' remittances. Reducing trade costs, particularly supply side and non-tariff sources, such as inefficient transport and logistics infrastructure and services, cumbersome regulatory procedures, and documentation requirements, is a critical element to increasing trade between Pacific island countries and the rest of the world. These costs have come down since 2006 but remain significantly higher than elsewhere. A range of measures to facilitate increased regional integration, including labour mobility, regulatory reform (particularly with regard to competition, fair trading, access and pricing laws and policy), and harmonization of quarantine and customs have been targeted by Pacific Islands Forum members to increase market access and share, but they remain a work in progress. Pacific small island developing States have pursued trade negotiations over the past 15 years, with a view to promoting gradual trade integration in support of sustainable development and economic cooperation in order to foster growth, investment and employment in the region.

17. Supply-side constraints remain an underlying challenge that impedes Pacific small island developing States from fully benefiting from improved market access. Many factors contribute to these constraints, including small scattered markets, the high costs of factors of production, isolation from major markets, high transport costs, a narrow-based manufacturing sector and, particularly for agricultural and tourism exports, the impact of frequent natural disasters. Measures are being pursued to alleviate these challenges, including through improvements in the business environment and the development of necessary supply chain capacities to increase exports of goods and services.

¹⁷ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "Five-year review of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States: Pacific High-level Dialogue", 8-9 February 2010. Available from www.un.org/esa/dsd/resources/res_pdfs/csd-18/csd18_2010_bp10.pdf.

¹⁸ Pacific Disaster Net, "Report on the summary of outcomes and proceedings from the Niue Pacific Climate Change Roundtable Meeting, 14 to 17 March 2011", 27 April 2011. Available from www.pacificdisaster.net/pdnadmin/data/original/PCCR_NIU_2011_Report_summary.pdf.

¹⁹ Business Advantage PNG, "PACER-Plus could boost Pacific nations' income by more than US\$50 billion a year, says trade adviser", 17 June 2015. Available from www.businessadvantagepng.com/pacer-plus-could-boost-pacific-nations-incomes-by-more-than-us50-billion-a-year-says-trade-adviser/.

18. In the 2015 Hiri Declaration on Strengthening Connections to Enhance Pacific Regionalism, the importance of people-to-people relations, improved institutional governance and enhanced physical connectivity in the Pacific was underscored. A key component of better connectivity will be improved shipping, which remains the most important mode of transport and trade.

E. Institutional and statistical capacity-building

19. Pacific island countries have systemic capacity limitations and, as a result, weak institutions. Building institutional capacities requires sustained, long-term approaches and investment. The long-standing fly-in-fly-out technical assistance approach to capacity-building merely offers short-term alleviation of what is a longer term issue. There needs to be a balance between immediate pressures to get the job done and ensuring that ongoing institutional systems and human resources are in place to deliver national plans and meet regional and global commitments. The inclusion of Sustainable Development Goals 16 and 17, together with the support mechanisms articulated in the Samoa Pathway, has highlighted the need to assess the underlying causes of capacity constraints and to devise appropriate strategies to strengthen national and regional institutions. Priority areas for consideration include the following:

(a) North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation and peer-to-peer learning (including from other Pacific and small island developing States and through regional platforms such as the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development) as a key modality for capacity-building;

(b) Strengthening the use of country systems by all development partners;

(c) Training programmes and courses, including in regional universities, on sustainable development, statistics, ICT, trade, financing, database development and the use of open source software;

(d) Reviewing international, regional and national development partnerships and supporting partners to align activities and reporting requirements with the regional priorities under the 2030 Agenda, the Samoa Pathway and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism;

(e) Harnessing existing global and regional initiatives and recognizing the need to review, harmonize and strengthen mechanisms where necessary. Examples of such initiatives include the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, the monitoring and evaluation plans of the Asia-Pacific region, Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability assessments, the Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific, the Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement, the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations Plus and the Ten-Year Pacific Statistics Strategy.

20. The lack of reliable and up-to-date data in and about the Pacific has long compromised planning and delivery, not to mention monitoring and evaluation, of development programs. Given the capacity constraints, and the breadth and complexity of implementing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and their 169 targets and 235 indicators, the challenge is to identify priority indicators that will ensure that the 2030 Agenda is both relevant and achievable in the Pacific context. Nevertheless, while it is important to recognize inherent statistical capacity constraints, these should not curb the level of ambition to fully contextualize and implement the 2030 Agenda and the Goals. Rather, it will be essential for the region to harness the momentum behind the global call for a data revolution to identify what they want to

measure (and not just what they can measure) to track priority national and regional indicators. The Pacific is in many ways ahead of the other subregions and regions in that it is developing a Pacific Sustainable Development Goals road map with priority regional indicators and the means of implementation to achieve them, which is expected to be agreed upon by the Pacific Islands Forum leaders in September 2017.

IV. Supporting the Pacific to implement the Samoa Pathway and the Sustainable Development Goals

21. As in previous years, key secretariat activities supporting the implementation of the Samoa Pathway and the Sustainable Development Goals in the Pacific, which are primarily implemented through its Pacific Office, are concentrated on the following areas: (a) enhancing national capacities and institutions; (b) enhancing the Pacific voice and representation in regional and global processes; and (c) ensuring the realization of a transformational strategy for the sustainable development of small island developing States by strengthening the role of the Commission in monitoring the follow-up to the Samoa Pathway and the evolving post-2015 development agenda.

A. Enhancing national capacities and institutions

22. In the Samoa Pathway, Heads of State and Government called upon the United Nations system and other development partners to, inter alia, continue to support small island developing States in their efforts to implement national sustainable development strategies and recognized the need for more effective, multi-stakeholder partnerships. These will need to help to strengthen and make better use of national systems in order to empower government agencies to be better equipped to collect and analyse data as well as to filter and disseminate meaningful information to both support policy development and report on its implementation. The emphasis of the Commission's work in 2016 and 2017 was and will be on the development and implementation of the Pacific Sustainable Development Goals road map as the subregional framework through which the member countries could be assisted in their implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Specific ESCAP initiatives include the following:

(a) Completing the implementation of the European Union-funded Climate Change and Migration Project supporting Kiribati, Tuvalu and Nauru to generate relevant information, develop appropriate policies and provide opportunities for dialogue and agreement on complex issues related to local planning, including land-use planning, migration and labour policies, and international law concerning displaced persons. A Pacific regional meeting on the project experiences and findings developed an action plan which ESCAP and other partners will be supporting, which includes a subregional mechanism to address the needs and rights of communities and peoples who move or are displaced due to climate change;

(b) Conducting national policy reviews and legislative analysis and reviews and drafting legislation for compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and assisting three countries with their ratification processes and working closely with Pacific partners to finalize the new Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2016-2025, which was endorsed by Forum leaders in October 2016. In addition, ESCAP has contributed to human rights reporting in the Pacific, in particular through the universal periodic review and treaty body processes. It has also helped to address issues of social inequality and to promote social protection through

national workshops in Fiji and Kiribati in 2016, as well as to improve representation of the Pacific in the Commission's reports and publications;

(c) Developing a partnership with the Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Centre of the International Monetary Fund, which conducted a regional training workshop to assist members in integrating sustainable development into their fiscal policies. In the wake of Cyclone Winston in Fiji in 2016, ESCAP provided direct support through technical assistance and regional advisory services to the Government and for a Pacific disaster needs assessment. ESCAP also hosted a special side event on Cyclone Winston during the seventy-second session of the Commission to share lessons learned and to promote the recovery plans of Fiji;

(d) Establishing and piloting biogas technology in Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tonga in 2016, with three to six more projects planned for 2017;

(e) Conducting national and subregional workshops on climate finance and the role of the private sector (national scoping study and workshop in Fiji, 2017); infrastructure financing for sustainable development (national study and workshop in Samoa, 2017); accessing climate financing (regional training in Fiji, 2016); the use of climate information for disaster risk reduction, early warning systems (regional workshop in Fiji, 2016) and resilient agriculture (regional workshop in Fiji, 2016); social equality and protection (national workshops in Fiji and Kiribati, 2016); and inter-island shipping (Fiji, 2016).

B. Enhancing the Pacific voice and representation

23. As mandated by the Samoa Pathway, the secretariat seeks to reflect the concerns and interests of Pacific island developing States in the proceedings and outcomes of Asia-Pacific and global intergovernmental processes. With the generous support of donors and member States, ESCAP has been able to maintain its support for the participation of Pacific member States in subregional and regional intergovernmental meetings, including the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development and the Commission sessions in 2016 and 2017. In the Pacific, ESCAP prepared studies and papers and helped to convene Pacific regional and national workshops and policy dialogues on the following:

(a) Pacific preparations for the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, to be held in New York in June 2017, specifically, support for the regional preparatory meeting in Fiji in March 2017 and the documentation of capacity development needs for implementing Goal 14;

(b) Pacific regional consultations, in the second quarter of 2017, on the Pacific Goals road map, which will be submitted for endorsement by the Pacific Islands Forum leaders in September 2017, with secretariat support for mapping Pacific regional priorities and the participation of member States in the consultations, including representatives of national women's organizations;

(c) Leaders' Summit of the Coalition of Low Lying Atoll Nations on Climate Change in Tuvalu in 2016;

(d) Pacific subregional meeting under the Pacific Climate Change and Migration Project in November 2016, which agreed to develop a regional mechanism to address the needs and rights of Pacific communities that are likely to move or to be displaced as a result of climate change, including through United Nations consultations and negotiations in 2017 and 2018 on the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration.

24. Analytical work and publications are important tools for enhancing the voice and profile of the Pacific small island developing States. The *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2017*, the Commission's flagship publication, which contains an update on issues of concern for the Pacific, will be launched in April 2017. Two papers, one on regional economic cooperation and integration and the other on the Sustainable Development Goals, which will include perspectives from the Pacific subregion, are being prepared by the secretariat for the Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development and the seventy-third session of the Commission.

C. Monitoring and reporting on implementation

25. The Samoa Pathway mandated ESCAP to help to follow up and review implementation as part of its monitoring and implementation framework. As noted above, the focus of the secretariat's work in the Pacific in 2016 and 2017 has been and will be on supporting the development of the Pacific Sustainable Development Goals road map and indicators that integrate the implementation of the Goals with the Samoa Pathway and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. This will provide an effective process for integrating the Samoa Pathway and the Pacific subregional agenda with the Commission's follow-up and review framework for the Goals, including the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific, and the *Asia-Pacific Sustainable Development Goals Outlook* report. It is expected that the participation of the Pacific delegates in future Asia-Pacific Forums on Sustainable Development will be based on the outcomes of the Pacific subregional process and close coordination between the Asia-Pacific and Pacific Sustainable Development Goals road maps and reports so as to maximize synergies and complementarities while minimizing the burden of multiple counting and reporting on small and capacity-constrained Pacific administrations.

26. As noted, ESCAP is also implementing a project to help build national capacity to produce environment-relevant indicators through the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting. Implementation has taken place or is planned for Fiji, the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Samoa and Vanuatu, and a regional training programme on the topic was conducted for Pacific small island developing States in Fiji in September.²⁰ Other training and regional workshops that ESCAP provided assistance for or organized include a workshop on Sustainable Development Goal indicators and data (New Caledonia, February/March 2017) and a workshop on data analysis and report writing for civil registration data and vital statistics (19-29 September 2016).

V. Conclusions: aligning the subregion and region

27. The Pacific's priorities for sustainable development have most recently been articulated through its engagement in the parallel intergovernmental processes that gave rise to the 2030 Agenda, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the Samoa Pathway. These priorities were further consolidated in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. Those objectives, which will be used to benchmark the implementation of the Goals and the Samoa Pathway, include the following:

²⁰ Participating countries: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

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

28. It should come as no surprise that the Framework for Pacific Regionalism and the Samoa Pathway are inherently aligned with the global agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals as they are all premised on addressing the interlinked and indivisible dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) in a holistic and coordinated way. This represents a significant departure from past development approaches that tended to operate across the economic, social and environmental dimensions in isolation of each other. In committing to this new era of sustainable development, the leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum have emphasized a country-driven process to tailor global indicators to national and regional contexts which will be used to measure the region's progress on the Goals, the objectives of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism and the implementation of the Samoa Pathway. Pacific leaders further called for an open and inclusive consultation process, taking into account national priorities, to select indicators relevant to the Pacific context.

29. A regional task force consisting of representatives of Pacific Islands Forum member countries, organizations associated with the Council of Regional Organizations of the Pacific, United Nations bodies, including ESCAP and the United Nations Development Programme, multilateral agencies, bilateral partners, non-state actors, and regional research and academic institutions was established in June 2016 to advance this directive. The task force is currently drafting a Pacific Sustainable Development Goals road map to create regional indicators and identify a process for follow-up and review that reduces the burden of reporting at the country level and supports countries in the national implementation of the Goals, the Samoa Pathway and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. A key initial component of this exercise was the priority mapping exercise commissioned by ESCAP that focused on the status of existing regional commitments articulated through frameworks, declarations, implementation plans and strategies.

30. The drafting of the Sustainable Development Goals road map is analogous to the preparation of the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific, which was based on the outcomes of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development and guided by General Assembly resolution 70/1, in which States Members of the United Nations acknowledged the importance of the regional and subregional dimensions, regional economic integration and interconnectivity in sustainable development. Both the Asia-Pacific regional and the Pacific subregional deliberative processes on implementation have emphasized the fact that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is predominantly a national endeavour. Additional gains may be achieved through subregional and regional engagements that serve to support national activities, and as such both mapping exercises have highlighted the need for informed gap analysis of existing and emerging priorities that may benefit from, or present opportunities for, regional cooperation.

31. The secretariat is well positioned to support the implementation of the Samoa Pathway and the Sustainable Development Goals in the Pacific subregion in a manner that is well integrated with the Pacific's own regional cooperation process and can lead to greater alignment and cooperation between the Asia Pacific region and its subregions.
