



PACIFIC ISLANDS ROUNDTABLE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION (PIRT)

MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT, 2021-2025

PREAMBLE

The Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation is a membership-based network of NGOs, Regional Agencies and Donors that is committed to support governments and civil society in Pacific Island countries in their efforts *to sustainably manage and conserve the regions biodiversity.*

Members of PIRT declare their commitment to promote, facilitate and monitor progress regarding the new Pacific Islands Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas 2021-2025 and the Framework's Principles for Conservation Implementation through increased collaboration and partnerships.

The *Pacific Islands Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas 2021-2025* was adopted at the 10th Pacific Islands Conference for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas held virtually in November 2020. It was subsequently endorsed by the SPREP governing council at the 30th SPREP Annual Meeting in September 2021.

The Roundtable itself does not implement the Framework, but its member and partner organizations do. The Roundtable will report on the implementation of the Framework to governments in the Pacific Islands region through the SPREP Annual Meetings. The Roundtable serves as a venue for bringing strategic oversight to conservation in the region while providing a forum for accountability, transparency and coordination for conservation organisations and donors.



MANDATE OF THE ROUNDTABLE

The Pacific Island Roundtable for Nature Conservation is maintained as a mechanism for promoting, facilitating and monitoring the implementation of the Framework. The Roundtable adopts mechanisms for making its membership accountable to jointly formulated Principles of Implementation and its work inclusive of participation by regional and national bodies. The Roundtable's mandate for the next five years is to increase effective conservation action in the Pacific islands by ensuring members:

Actively recognise, respect and support a Pacific approach to conservation based on sustainable resource use, community property rights and decision-making practices, and local aspirations for development and well-being,

Respect and encourage national and community partner leadership for all conservation programmes and help strengthen partner capacity to exercise their leadership,

Align conservation programmes with conservation programmes of national partners,

Design conservation programmes that are of a scale and budget appropriate to the local context and that long-term strategic planning and resource mobilisation sustains conservation over time,

Actively support communication, education and public awareness,

Put systems in place to enable full accountability to and participation of the people affected by conservation programme implementation assisted by well-communicated, fully transparent operations,

Work with each other to ensure collaborative analysis, strategies, agreed priorities and coordination of political engagement to avoid duplication,

Provide timely, transparent and comprehensive reporting on conservation programmes to the Roundtable, and

Mobilise resources for the implementation of the Framework.

The Roundtable will report annually at the PIRT Meetings and at the completion of this Framework during the 11th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas on the overall implementation of the *Pacific Islands Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas 2021-2025*.



COMMITMENT

On signing this Membership Agreement, member organisations commit to the Framework Principles for Conservation Implementation attached in Annex 1 of the Agreement,

AND

- Transparency by participating in PIRT's monitoring and reporting of activities, projects and programmes relevant to the Framework
- Active participation in support of the five-yearly Conference and at least one of the PIRT Working Groups
- Financial and In-kind contributions to support PIRT Coordination and joint initiatives

COMMITMENT TO THE *PACIFIC ISLANDS FRAMEWORK FOR NATURE CONSERVATION AND PROTECTED AREAS 2021-2025*

We, as a member of the Roundtable for Nature Conservation commit to supporting efforts towards

- Regional strategies and priorities
- Regional collaboration
- Economies of scale
- Complementarity
- Accountability
- Transparency and
- Mutual support

in the Implementation of the Strategic Objectives and Principles of the Framework.

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By signing this membership agreement the organisation becomes a signatory to the *Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Island region 2021-2025* and agrees with the mandate of the Roundtable.

Signed:

NAME

Title

Address

Ms Margaret West

Chair

Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature
Conservation

Regional Director -Pacific

BirdLife International

Dated:



Annex 1 PRINCIPLES FOR CONSERVATION IMPLEMENTATION IN THE PACIFIC

About the Principles: A code of conduct for implementation of conservation programmes

These Principles articulate the critical components for implementing conservation projects in Pacific contexts. They are designed as a guide for designing, establishing, delivering and sustaining conservation programmes in the Pacific. They apply to all conservation initiatives undertaken in the Pacific region, not only those specifically linked to the Framework.

The eight Principles are mutually supporting, indivisible amongst themselves and are applicable across all six Strategic Objectives of the Framework. Their application will lead to enriched, more respectful relationships between conservation agencies and Pacific communities, and to a significant improvement in the conservation capacity of the region with corresponding progress towards the Vision and Goals of the Framework.

Principle 1: Community rights

Pacific indigenous and local communities have the right to own, use, manage, and conserve their natural resources and wider environment.

National, regional and international partners will actively recognise, respect and support:

- Community property rights, including traditional rights over natural resources, and indigenous intellectual property relating to natural resources and cultural knowledge.
- Community decision-making practices.
- Community rights to design, prioritise, conduct, and publish research.
- Community rights to access information available on their resources, natural cultural heritage, and society in appropriate forms of language.
- Community rights to develop opportunities that support and sustain local livelihoods and wellbeing.

Principle 2: Conservation from Pacific perspectives

Natural environments are central to the cultures, identities, livelihoods, and development opportunities of Pacific communities. Nature conservation affects all aspects of social, cultural, and economic life and must therefore align with the values, priorities, and aspirations of these communities.

National, regional and international partners will actively recognise, respect and support:

- Community aspirations for development and wellbeing.
- Pacific approaches to conservation based on sustainable resource use, cultural heritage and expressions, and traditional, indigenous, and local knowledge.
- The need of some communities to use their own languages and protocols when engaging with or undertaking conservation initiatives.
- The importance of establishing and maintaining lasting individual and organisational relationships with Pacific communities.



Principle 3: Ownership of conservation programmes

Lasting conservation in the Pacific can only be achieved if national partners and local communities lead the design, implementation, and evaluation of conservation initiatives.

National and community partners will commit to:

- Exercising and building their capacity for leadership of conservation programmes.
- Greater engagement and ownership of conservation within the private sector and local organisations, including cultural, spiritual, business, sporting, youth, and women's organisations.

Regional and international partners will commit to:

- Respecting, encouraging, and helping to build capacity for national and community partner leadership of all conservation programmes.
- Aligning all conservation programmes, including regional and international initiatives, with national programmes, priorities, and aspirations.
- Strengthening and resourcing national and local partners as an alternative to establishing independent institutions or infrastructure.
- Ensuring all key programme decision-making takes place in-country alongside national and community partners, and is led by local conservation priorities.

Principle 4: Resourcing for longevity

Conservation initiatives must be adequately and appropriately resourced over time, by planning for the financial, social, organisational and cultural components of project longevity.

National, regional and international partners will commit to:

- Ensuring their conservation programmes are of scale and budget appropriate to the local context.
- Long-term strategic planning and resource mobilisation that sustains conservation over time.
- Adhering to best practices for supporting livelihoods and community wellbeing, including poverty reduction and enhancing community financial sustainability based on local biocultural resources.
- Developing appropriate new and improving existing methods and partnerships to sustain financial investment and resources for conservation.
- Ensuring that locally specific social, cultural, and equity factors are considered when decisions are made about conservation financing.



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Principle 5: Good governance and accountability

Conservation is inclusive, participatory, accountable, transparent, equitable, and open to stakeholder scrutiny.

National, regional and international partners will commit to:

- Reinforcing inclusive and participatory approaches by involving all stakeholders, particularly community representatives, when designing, implementing, communicating, assessing, and reporting on conservation programmes.
- Ensuring systems are in place to enable full transparency and accountability to the people affected by conservation programme implementation and environmental regulatory services.
- Recognising and applying inter-generational equity and gender equality principles in all activities.
- Promoting and supporting cost-effective scaling up and adoption of best-practice conservation models.
- Developing and implementing durable, effective policies which are integrated across government agencies and governance levels.

National partners will commit to:

- Setting clear and standard processes for the establishment, operation, and accountability of international partners through formal agreements. These agreements should include a Code of Conduct with defined consequences for breaches and mechanisms to ensure transparency of operations.
- Establishing systems to register the conservation activities of all partners against national and local priorities, such as NBSAPs.
- Setting easily measured benchmarks to ensure progress against defined conservation objectives, with each partner held accountable for its commitments and progress.

Regional and international partners will commit to:

- Adopting systems that ensure transparency and accountability of their programmes at a national level.
- Providing timely, transparent, and comprehensive reporting on conservation programmes to national partners, including reporting on implementation of NBSAP priorities. Appropriate reporting must also be provided to community partners.



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Principle 6: Coordination and collaboration

Conservation is more effective when partners coordinate, collaborate and work within a strategic framework.

National partners will commit to:

- Ensuring NBSAPs and locally devised conservation programmes are strategic, focused, and set clear local priorities for action.
- Taking a leadership role in coordinating all partners, including by providing national and local focal points for coordinating NBSAP and other programme implementation.

Regional and international partners will commit to:

- Working within the legislation, policies, strategies, programmes, and priorities established by national partners.
- Working with each other to ensure collaborative analysis, strategies, agreed priorities, and coordination of political engagement to avoid duplication or inconsistencies.
- Avoiding programming that competes with national partners for projects and funding.
- Strengthening existing and cultivating new partnerships that are culturally oriented, innovative, and results driven.
- Working to integrate environmental datasets and other forms of relevant information, and making this available in accessible formats to national and community partners.

Principle 7: Growing Pacific capacity

Increasing national, sub-national and community capacity to design, prioritise, direct, manage, implement, monitor and evaluate conservation programmes.

National partners and communities will commit to:

- Building effective and sustainable conservation capability and organisations through ongoing capacity development.
- Ensuring conservation is continuously improved by recording, disseminating, and incorporating lessons learned and best practices.
- Building capacity with and within local organisations, such as cultural, faith-based, sporting, youth, and women's organisations, as well as the private sector.
- Enhancing the capacity of conservation practitioners to use appropriate concepts and tools, including those of the private sector.

Regional and international partners will commit to:

- Supporting national partners in their efforts to build effective and sustainable institutions.
- Supporting national partners and communities in their efforts to develop core competencies such as leadership, project management, scientific monitoring, and financing.
- Ensuring their presence in-country does not undermine national and local institution-building or capacity development.
- Contributing to national and community partners' best practice by recording, disseminating, and implementing lessons learned.

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Principle 8: Reinforcing resilience

Implementing nature conservation that supports the resilience and wellbeing of Pacific communities in the face of sudden or long-term disruption.

National, regional and international partners will commit to:

- Programmes and projects which focus on building resilience and adaptive capacity in Pacific communities, cultures and environments.
- Promoting innovative, community-based, and culturally grounded natural solutions, drawing on appropriate learning networks and the best available knowledge.
- Supporting communities to implement conservation activities by applying approaches and principles of ecosystem-based management and adaptation to their local context.
- Safeguarding traditional, indigenous and local knowledge, and supporting communities to utilise this knowledge for resilience and adaptation.