# Pathway to 2030

Progressing with Our Past
Toward a Resilient, Sustainable,
and Equitable Future

**1st Voluntary National Review on the SDGs**

**Republic of Palau** June 2019

# FOREWORD

I am pleased to present our first Voluntary National Review on the SDGs. This Review is yet another important benchmark in our ongoing commitment to transform Palau along a path of sustainability, while also ensuring that no one is left behind. This journey towards a sustainable future is not one for government alone, nor a single nation, but for us all. Given the SDG's inherent inter-linkages, we acknowledge that our challenges are also interrelated, and thus so too must be our solutions.

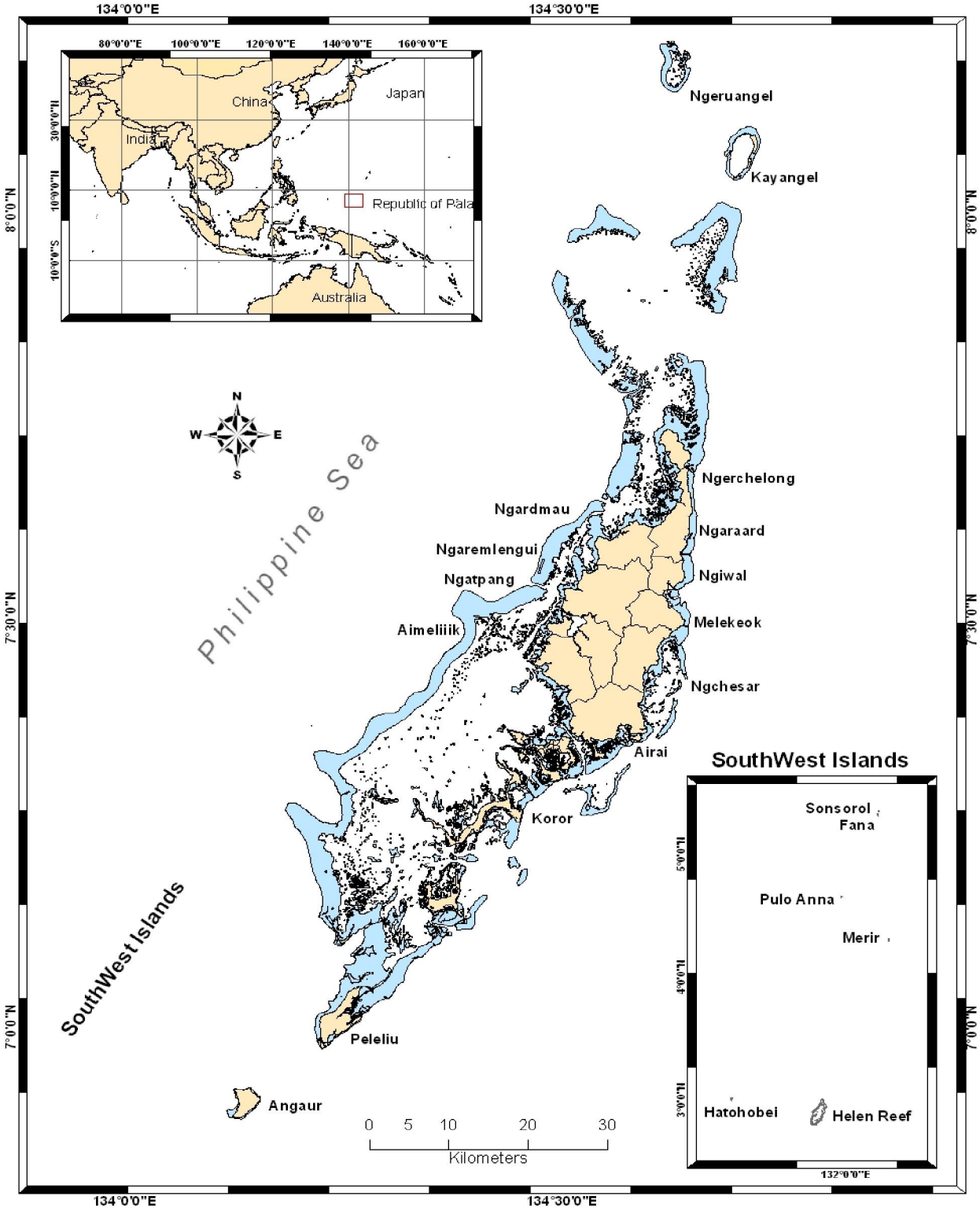
The accelerated pace of global change we see today makes it particularly difficult for small island nations, like Palau, to keep up, let alone achieve sustainable development. Despite this challenge, we firmly believe that we can achieve a sustainable future for Palau. Our conviction stems from our certainty that we can confront our challenges by combining our lessons from the past with new information and modern technology and use them to guide us to stay the right course along our path to the future. Just as important, we are also confident in this endeavor because we can also find solutions amongst each other.

Over the past three years, Palau has systematically pursued a rigorous process of assessing our Pathways to 2030. Eight inter-sector working groups, led by government ministries, but including representatives from civil society, and semi-private organizations, have prepared this initial Voluntary National Review. The groups have selected an initial set of 95 SDG global targets and associated indicators that collectively constitute our initial National SDG Framework. The VNR process employed ideals that are central to the SDGs, including commitments to 'leave no one behind'; allowing each country to address implementation in ways that are most relevant to their domestic and local context; and taking concrete approaches to build greater understanding and engagement among donors, partners, and stakeholders.

In moving forward with our development, we are guided by the SDGs that were adopted and adapted specifically for Palau. Learning from the past – the traditional knowledge that has served Palau for millenniums, we will move forward to address the gaps identified during our VNR process guided by the principles of inclusion and equity ensuring that no one is left behind.

Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.
President, Republic of Palau

# Map of Palau




Map courtesy of PALARIS

# Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| APR | Annual Performance Review |
| BBP | Bureau of Budget and Planning |
| CHCs | Community Health Centers |
| CTFP | Coalition for a Tobacco Free Palau |
| EQPB | Environmental Quality Protection Board |
| FPA | Family Protection Act |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GNI | Gross National Income |
| HCR | (Palau) Health Care Fund |
| HDI | Human Development Index |
| HIES | Household Income and Expenditure Survey |
| IMR | Infant Mortality Rate |
| IOM | International Organization on Migration |
| KRAs | Results Areas |
| MCCA | Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs |
| MDGs | Millennium Development Goals |
| MMR | Maternal Mortality Ratio |
| MOE | Ministry of Education |
| MOF | Ministry of Finance |
| MOH | Ministry of Health |
| MOJ | Ministry of Justice |
| MOS | Ministry of State |
| MPA | Marine Protected Areas |
| MNRET | Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Tourism |
| MSA | Medical Savings Account |
| MTBF | Medium Term Budget Framework |
| MTDS | Medium Term Development Strategy |
| NCDs | Non-Communicable Diseases |
| NEMO | National Emergency Management Office |
| OERC | Office of Environmental Response and Coordination |
| PAN | Protected Areas Network |
| PCAA | Palau Community Action Agency |
| PPP | Public Private Partnerships |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SOE | State of the Environment (Report) |
| SORA | State of the Republic Address |
| TPA | Terrestrial Protected Area |
| U5MR | Under 5 (Child) Mortality Rate |
| UAK | Ulkerreuil A Klengar |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNCT | United Nations Country Team |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| UNFPA | United Nations Fund for Population Activities |
| VDS | Vessel Day Scheme |
| VNR | Voluntary National Review |
| WHO | World Health Organization |

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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

Palau actively participated in formulating the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Accordingly, Palau welcomes the Voluntary National Review (VNR) process as an opportunity to reflect on achievements and acknowledge vulnerabilities while accelerating progress toward a global development paradigm characterized by resilience, sustainability, and equity – an Era of Sustainable Development.

Over the 25 years since independence, as a small island but large ocean state, Palau has established governance and infrastructure supportive of modern nationhood and evolved from a low-income country in 1994 to a high-income country in 2017. Palau achieved seven of the eight MDGs and has played a leadership role - globally and locally - in safeguarding the environment for future generations. Other achievements include universal access to quality health care and education, reduction of poverty amidst a growing economy, a sustainably financed nationwide network of protected areas, and enduring regional and global partnerships. Nonetheless, challenges remain due to vulnerabilities as a small island developing state, global economic forces, and climate change.

## Means of Implementation

Palau has embraced the SDGs at the highest political level. After mapping global targets and indicators against domestic priorities, Palau identifies 95 targets that comprise the national SDGs framework. The 2019 VNR presents a baseline report against this national framework and outlines a pathway to 2030 and beyond. Next steps include integration of the nationalized SDGs into planning and budgeting frameworks to facilitate monitoring and timely implementation while building ownership of the SDGs at the grassroots.

## Sustainable Development

Palau's sustainable development lies at the intersection of four interlocking pillars – people, prosperity, planet, and partnerships. In the People Pillar (SDGs 2, 3, 4, 11) Palau envisages happy, healthy, and purposeful lives supported by the Prosperity Pillar (SDGs 1, 8, 9, 10) characterized by equitable, inclusive, and sustainable growth in harmony with nature – the Planet Pillar (SDGs 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15). The fourth pillar, Partnerships and Governance (SDGs 5, 16, 17) reflects the interdependence of all pillars and the continuing need for effective governance and partnerships both domestic and international. Along the path to 2030, Palau identifies challenges in closing gaps, improving quality, and enhancing resilience – especially climate resilience.

***Closing gaps:*** There are many SDG targets that Palau is on track to realize but for which additional effort will be needed to maintain good progress. Having achieved universal education, more is needed to ensure quality education for a globalized future (Target 4.1). Having achieved universal access to water, more is needed to ensure safety and drought resilience (Target 6.1). Having created a national network of marine protected areas, more is needed to protect especially sensitive ecosystems still underrepresented in the network such as mangroves (Target 14.5), to conserve near-shore fish stocks (SDG 14.4), and to sustainably manage terrestrial ecosystems while achieving food security (Targets 2.3 and 2.4) and inclusive economic growth (Target 8.5) in harmony with nature.

***Improving quality:*** Having achieved basic services, Palau now strives to improve quality. No one goes hungry but many do not enjoy a nutritionally optimal diet and as a nation, Palau is overly dependent on food imports resulting in dangerous insecurities (Target 2.2). Everyone enjoys modern energy, but Palau aspires toward modern renewable energy (Targets 7.1 and 7.2). Palau has built roads but aspires to complete land transportation infrastructure incorporating sidewalks and public transport and a marine transportation system powered by renewable energy (Target 9.1).

***Building resilience:*** Climate change, and associated disaster risks, impact all aspects of life and without climate-informed development threaten Palau's health, culture, economy, infrastructure, and environment.

Adapting to new climate realities including climate-proofing infrastructure, relocating communities where necessary, and building human capital for life in a climate-altered world is imperative to safeguard people and planet for a prosperous future.

## Progressing with Our Past

Palauans have called our islands home for generations, adapting to change, and evolving values and traditions that are foundations for sustainability. As Palau progresses in this Era of Sustainable Development, we look to our past to guide our future and commit to progress together, leaving no one behind, linked by our common heritage and values. We seek genuine partnerships with the global community to support us in accessing technologies, developing innovations, and securing financing that supports a resilient, sustainable and equitable future for today and for generations yet to come.

1

**Palau voluntary national review roadmap**

SDG Adopted 25 Sept. 2015
1st National Consultation February 2016
Alignment of Palau's development strategy with SDGs
2nd National Consultation June 2017
National SDG Framework developed - core targets and associated indicators identified
Commitment to report made 2018
Executive Order 419 December 2018 Creates Working Groups
Working Groups validate data and prepare initial drafts
Validation Workshop June 2019
Report submitted 15 June 2019

# Our Journey:

## Introducing Palau's First SDG Status Report

## Overview

Building on our long cultural tradition of environmental stewardship, contemporary Palau is committed to developing along a pathway of sustainability with the well-being of the Palauan people - born and unborn – at the center. This journey toward sustainability is not one for government alone, but for everyone. And while our journey may be unique to us as Palauans, we do not walk alone. In fact, because of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we walk alongside 192 other United Nation member nations. Working together, we strive to make our world a better place for ourselves and for our children.

Eight multi-sector working groups have led the preparation of this initial Voluntary National Report (refer to Table 1). The groups have identified an initial set of 95 "core" targets and associated indicators that collectively constitute Palau's initial National SDG Framework. Selected targets are immediately relevant and most have data that supports their monitoring.

Our purpose in reporting is to realistically and systematically assess progress and challenges as we collectively carve out our path towards sustainability, including adjustments required by our new status as a high-income country. We know there will be many challenges along the way. We also know that when we are committed, bold, and innovative; and work together as one, we can meet these challenges as they arise. As we progress, we must keep in mind why we have embarked on this journey – we do it for our people and our families - our nuclear families, our extended families and clans, and our global family.

## Highlights

We are pleased to report that Palau is generally progressing well toward achieving our 95 core national targets. Work to jumpstart our economy while protecting our environment is reducing poverty in line with SDG 1. We need to do more, however, to ensure equality. This means more work to prevent people from falling into poverty due to non-communicable diseases, climate change, and natural disasters and redoubled efforts to ensure the abilities of every child are recognized and nurtured in our schools.

If we are to halt the NCD epidemic, we must transform our diets – eat more fresh local foods. To support this, we must redouble our efforts in marine conservation and sustainable fisheries while expanding our agriculture and aquaculture industries and positioning these vital industries as occupations of choice for our youth. Building our agriculture and aquaculture industries will diversify our economy, support our tourism industry, reduce rural poverty, build resilience against climate change, and contribute to our response to the upcoming challenge of preparing for a possible end to funding under the Compact of Free Association with the United States in 2024. These few examples illustrate why a siloed approach to sustainable development cannot work. Our challenges are interrelated, and our solutions must be likewise.

## Integrating the SDGs into Government Processes

Palau has embraced the 2030 Agenda at the highest political level and is using the National SDG Framework to improve implementation, monitoring, and reporting on national priorities. The structure of the Global Agenda with its cross-cutting goals and associated targets and indicators, provides an ideal opportunity for the national government to (1) improve policy-level decisions and national budgeting centered on data-based reporting; (2) improve tracking of financial flows for key priorities – initially climate change and the SDGs but ultimately for other priorities that cut across sectors and agencies inclusive of gender and human rights; (3) increase capacities for information management; (4) increase opportunities to engage local communities and non-state actors around sustainability; and (5) provide a foundation for updating and transforming the national master development plan ("Palau 2020") into the National Sustainable Development Plan.

## Methodology

***First national consultation***: Our initial work has focused on creating enabling conditions for monitoring and evaluating progress toward sustainable development. Work began with the 1st National SDG Consultation (February 2016) where the SDG Coordinating Unit, in partnership with the United Nations Development Program, introduced the SDGs to government officials, civil society organizations, and the public. At that meeting, over-arching criteria were identified to guide localization of global goals within our national context.

Participants in that first meeting agreed to report on all 17 goals while working toward improved reporting mechanisms and stakeholder engagement. More specific, participants identified the SDGs as a tool to:

1. Improve integration of sector priorities into a single national reporting system;

2. Improve planning and decision-making processes;
3. Establish monitoring and evaluation systems specific to measuring progress across the SDGs; and
4. Advance broader stakeholder engagement.

***Localizing the SDGs***: Following the 1st National Consultation, work on localizing the SDGs began with a desktop assessment identifying available data and mapping linkages between the SDGs and national plans, policies, and strategies. Given the broad nature of the 17 goals, the mapping exercise went beyond SDG goals and targets to also include the 232 global SDG indicators. Mapping involved:

1. Identifying locally relevant SDG targets
2. Identifying indicators for the targets for which data are available or, if unavailable now, can become available over the medium-term
3. Developing local targets and indicators addressing Palau-specific issues
4. Identifying data sources in support of the indicators
5. Generating an initial list of core indicators, and
6. Obtaining endorsement for the initial core indicators from stakeholders.

***Second national consultation***: The resulting list of targets and their associated indicators was subsequently reviewed by key government and semi-government agencies. This process required multiple rounds of consultations involving discussion of relevance, validity, availability, quality and reportability. Indicators supported by available, accessible and reportable data were retained in the core; others were deferred to a "Tier 2" for later work. The final list of core targets and indicators that collectively constitute the Palau National SDG Framework was subsequently validated at the 2nd National Consultative Workshop (June 2017).

Although complete for purposes of this initial VNR, the National SDG Framework will continue to evolve. Working Groups are refining indicators and standardizing data collection methods and reporting while still considering additional targets and indicators appropriate for Palau.

## Policy and Enabling Environment

### *Stakeholder Engagement*

The two National SDG Consultations involved government agencies and a cross-section of stakeholders from civil society, state governments, traditional leaders, as well as the United Nations Country Team (UNCT). Besides learning together, consultations provided valuable opportunities for dialogue with key groups such as Omekesang (the national disabilities forum). Ongoing work to deepen and broaden stakeholder engagement was identified as a high priority in moving forward.

As the work of writing the VNR has progressed, however, only a small number of non-government stakeholders have actively participated. A notable exception is BANGO (Belau Association of NGOs). BANGO initiated its own SDG education process for members and appointed representatives to sit on each of the SDG working groups. Post-VNR, the SDG Coordinating Unit is committed to expanding stakeholder engagement. The unit will design communication materials to introduce the SDGs and the Palau National SDG Framework to stakeholders, especially those at the grassroots, and encourage stakeholders to integrate the SDGs into their activities.

### *Ownership of the SDGs: Working Groups*

Presidential Executive Order No. 419, *Establishing a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the Implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda*, signed on December 28, 2018 catalyzed creation of the SDG Working Groups, each led by a governmental ministry but with representatives from civil society (see Table 1). Between January and June 2019, working group chairs met three times and the groups themselves met as often as necessary to complete their tasks.

It was the working groups that compiled the national indicator data (Annex A of this report). It was the working groups that developed the first draft of the VNR sections. As writing progressed, working groups were kept abreast of progress through weekly e-updates prepared by the national coordinator and in the later stages, e-versions of successive drafts.

The third and final pre-VNR meeting of working group chairs took place on 6 June 2019. Considering a pre-final draft, chairs identified errors of fact, targets needing further development, and examples of Palau culture and traditions that illustrate the subtheme of this report, "Progressing with our Past".

## Means of Implementation

***Domestic:*** The national budget process revolves around a Medium-Term Budget Framework (MTBF) which specifies Key Results Areas (KRAs). In coming months, the Bureau of Budget and Planning (BBP) will integrate the National SDG Framework into the KRAs. Government agencies in turn respond to the KRAs when formulating their medium-term work programs and annual budget requests. They report on funds received the following year through the Annual Performance Report (APR). The APRs in turn form the basis for the President's annual State of the Republic Address (SORA). Integrating the National SDG Framework into the MTBF and KRAs will enable government ministries to better identify the resources they need to achieve the targets for which they are responsible.

***External:*** Government, through the Ministry of State, engages in ongoing dialogue with Palau's development partners to identify partnership opportunities for programs and projects requiring funding, technical resources, technology and other inputs beyond Palau's domestic capacities. In the 2019 SORA, the President unveiled a new Medium Term Fiscal Strategy, which among other purposes, aims to increase domestic resources supporting development while initiating non-traditional funding mechanisms new to Palau (e.g. South-South cooperation and Public-Private-Partnerships). For further discussion of these mechanisms, refer to SDG 17.

## Pathways to 2030

The SDG Working Groups, supported by the SDG Coordinating Unit, will continue to refine the National SDG Framework while facilitating implementation across the national government. The BPP, in consultation with the Working Groups, will take the lead on integrating the National SDG Framework into budget processes. The National Coordinating Unit will support all of this work while further engaging with non-government, state government, and community stakeholders.

**Table 1: SDG Working Groups with Associated SDGs and Lead Ministry**

| WG | Thematic Area | Lead Ministry | Associated SDGs |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Culture, Equity & Gender** | MCCA | SDG 1 No Poverty<br>SDG 5 Gender Equality |
| 2 | **Health & Nutrition** | MOH | SDG 2 Zero Hunger<br>SDG 3 Good Health & Well-being |
| 3 | **Quality Education** | MOE | SDG 4 Quality Education |
| 4 | **Water, Oceans & Ecosystems** | MNRET | SDG 6 Clean Water & Sanitation<br>SDG 14 Life Below Water<br>SDG 15 Life on Land |
| 5 | **Energy, Industries & Infrastructure** | MPIIC | SDG 7 Affordable & Clean Energy<br>SDG 9 Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure |
| 6 | **Sustainable Communities & Inclusive Economic Growth** | MOF | SDG 8 Decent Work & Economic Growth<br>SDG 11 Sustainable Cities & Communities<br>SDG 12 Sustainable Consumption & Production<br>SDG 13 Climate Action |
| 7 | **Peace & Justice** | MOJ | SDG 16 Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions |
| 8 | **Partnerships** | MOS | SDG 10 Reducing Inequality<br>SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals |

# 2

# National SDG Framework Progress, Challenges, Future Priorities

**Pillar 1** – People at the Center of Development, SDGs 2, 3, 4, 11

**Pillar 2** – Prosperity, Poverty and Equality, SDGs 1, 8, 9, 10

**Pillar 3** – Planet - Protecting Our Island Home, SDGs 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15

**Pillar 4** – Participation, Peace and Partnership, SDGs 5, 16, 17

Pillar 1

# People at the Center of Development

## Putting People First, Leaving No One Behind

For much of the 20th century, the progress of a nation's development was measured by its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) with the assumption made that as national wealth increases, gains are shared equitably across the population improving the well-being of all. In too many countries, however, stark gaps between the "haves" and "have nots" called this assumption into question. In 1990, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) published a groundbreaking "Human Development Report" in which it was proposed that GDP as a singular measure of progress be replaced with a new Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI combines measures of wealth (Gross National Income per capita), education (years of schooling), and health (life expectancy). Since the HDI was introduced, other indices have been developed that build on the same central premise – development is multi-dimensional, and income represents only one measure of progress.

**People centered development:**

"People are the real wealth of a nation. The basic objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives. "

UNDP, Human Development Report, 1990

The HDI was a forerunner of the SDGs focusing on "people first" and "leaving no one behind". Accordingly, Palau begins this VNR with a focus on four enablers of human well-being–

- SDG 2, food and nutrition
- SDG 3, health and well-being
- SDG 4, education
- SDG 11, human settlements (focus on culture)

**Palau Human Development Index**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2000 | 0.743 | 2015 | 0.793 |
| 2005 | 0.760 | 2016 | 0.798 |
| 2010 | 0.769 | 2017 | 0.798 |

*Source: UNDP, 2018 Statistical Indicators*

In 2017, Palau ranked 60 among 189 countries assessed by UNDP and was among the high development countries.

# Food and Nutrition

## End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, promote sustainable agriculture

SDG 2 addresses malnutrition in all its forms – low birth weight, underweight (low weight for age), stunting (low weight for age), wasting (low weight for height), over nutrition (overweight and obesity), and nutrient-specific deficiencies – together with food security and sustainable food production.

Palau incorporates 2 of the 8 SDG 2 targets into its national SDG Framework. Target 2.1 aims to end hunger and assure everyone of a safe, nutritious, and adequate food supply. Target 2.2 pledges to end malnutrition in all its forms, inclusive of overweight and obesity. Much work is being done in relation to this SDG by government, civil society, and the private sector, work will need to accelerate in the lead-up to 2030.[1]

**SDG 2.1**
**End hunger & ensure food security**

**SDG 2.2**
**End malnutrition in all its forms.**

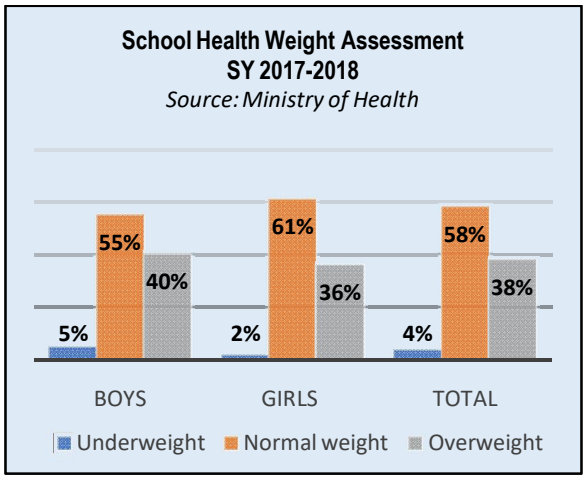
### Nutrition Status

*SDG 2.1 and 2.2*

Undernutrition is uncommon in Palau but overnutrition, unhealthy diets, and national food insecurity due to dependence on food imports are significant concerns. These issues drive the NCD epidemic and are linked across the SDGs.

***Undernutrition:*** On average 10% of infants are born at low birth weight (below 2,500 grams) but due to the small number of births (average 229 per year), rates vary widely from one year to the next (MOH, Title V, 2017). The Ministry of Health identifies maternal tobacco use as a leading risk factor. MOH estimates that mothers who chew tobacco (with betel nut) during pregnancy face a 1.7 times greater risk of a low birth weight baby than those who abstain (MOH, 2014). Low birth weight is not an SDG target but the World Health Organization (WHO) has set a global target to reduce low birth weight by 30 percent between 2015 and 2025 (WHO, 2015). For Palau, this means reducing annual low birth weight incidence to below 7 percent. Strategies to achieve this, lie largely in the domain of SDG 3.A. (tobacco control).

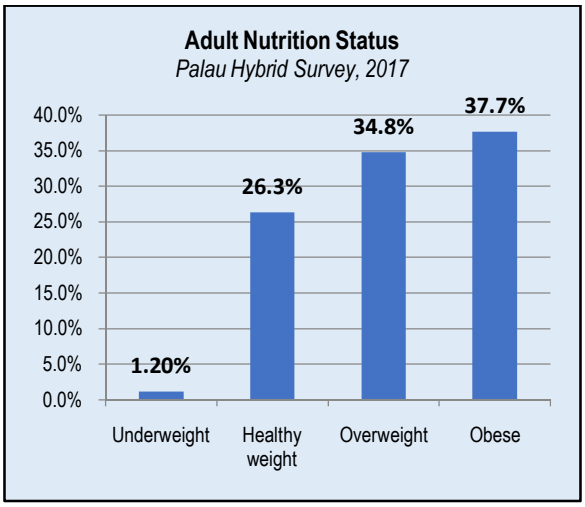
While growth monitoring is a standard part of child health services, the MOH data system does not capture population-level information about the nutritional status of infants and toddlers seen in clinics (Director of Public Health, personal communications). This data gap impedes early identification of infants and young children at risk of overweight or obesity. The first systematic collection and compilation of child nutrition data occurs during preschool health screening and continues through Grade 12 under the MOH School Health Program.




School health data confirm that undernutrition rates are low. Health workers further confirm that rates of nutrition-specific deficiencies are likewise low.

***Overnutrition:*** Overweight and obesity is a serious problem among both children and adults. With almost 38 percent of adults obese, Palau now ranks #3 on the list of the "world's most obese countries" behind Nauru and the Cook Islands (World Population Review, 2019).

[1] Color code: Blue (achieved); Green (on-track); Yellow (progressing); Red (off-track); Grey (insufficient data)..




***Unhealthy diets:*** Low rates of undernutrition do not mean that everyone enjoys an optimal diet. Although contested as an over-estimate by many care providers, official MOH data based on surveys of mothers show that 48 percent of infants are exclusively breastfed until six months of age, a rate below the national target (70 percent) and global target (100 percent).[2] For both children and adults, the typical diet is:

- High in calories relative to physical activity
- High in imported, processed foods, much of low nutritional quality
- High in salt, sugar, fats, and proteins
- Low in fruits and vegetables
- High in rice and low in more nutritious taro and other local root crops.

There is evidence, however that people are becoming more nutritionally aware. 69 percent of adults report they watch their salt intake (MOH, Palau Hybrid Survey, 2017).

## Food Security

*SDG target 2.1.*

**Food security:** Inherent in SDG Target 2.1 is the concept of household and national food security. Food security includes both physical and economic access to food that meets people's nutritional needs and their food preferences. The World Food Summit (2009) identified four elements of food security – adequacy (ability to produce food), access (income to buy food), use (knowledge of nutrition, storage, and preservation), and food safety. Palau faces challenges across all of these four pillars (McGregor, et al, 2012).

The Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES, 2014) found 0.2 percent of households reported expenditures below the national food poverty line suggesting that food insecurity due to poverty is not widespread. Researchers, however, have described a "payday cycle" in which low-income households eat well at the beginning of the typical bi-weekly pay cycle period but poorly toward the end when cash reserves are depleted (UNICEF, 2008).

At the national level, high dependence on food imports represents a significant source of insecurity. In the HIES (2014), 86 percent of food expenditures were for imported foods, much of which had low nutritional quality. Only 14 percent of expenditures were for locally produced foods (including the market value of foods produced for own consumption). As all Palau residents know well, even a short disruption in shipping results in rapid depletion of food stocks. A lengthy disruption arising from conflict or disaster along the supply chains would be catastrophic.

**Climate Change Impacts Food Security**

On average 6 percent of taro production is lost each year due to saltwater intrusion (Del Rosario et al., 2015). OERC reports that local food production declined by 50% during the severe drought of 1997-98 (OERC, 2008). Despite efforts to rehabilitate taro patches and promote salt and drought resistant crops, climate change continues to pose challenges to food security. (SOE 2019).

***Agriculture production***: The *Palau Policy to Strengthen Resilience in Agriculture and Aquaculture* set a target for local food production to meet 50 percent of food requirements by 2020 (Kit along, et al, 2015; SOE, 2019). While data for directly measuring food production are weak, sentinel indicators cited by the State of the Environment Report (2019) provide evidence of some modest increase.

- Land used for agriculture increased from 306 hectares (FAO, 2014) to 543 hectares (PALARIS, 2017).
- Commercial farms increased from 16 (FAO, 2014) to 19 (PALARIS, 2017).

[2] *Breastfeeding rates require further investigation. Kotel A Deurreng Inc, an NGO that provides breastfeeding counseling, has surveyed its own clients and found much lower rates than those from the MOH survey. A possible explanation for the discrepancy is that mothers responding to the MOH survey are reporting any breastfeeding rather than exclusive breastfeeding (no other fluids or food except breast milk before 6 months of age).*

**Featured Partnership:**
**Partnerships for School Health and Nutrition**

PCAA and UAK have worked with Palau schools on nutrition improvement for several years. Their primary intervention has been school gardens but through their work school specific policies, such as 'water only' and 'walk-to-school', have also been implemented.

In 2011, Presidential Executive Order No 372 mandated the Ministries of Education and Health to work together to promote physical activity, health education, and good nutrition. The Executive Order reinforced the ongoing work of PCAA and UAK and facilitated a significant new partnership between MOH and MOE for improving the nutritional value and local food content of school lunches.

To address physical inactivity, the Executive Order resulted in the two ministries working together on "after school' activity programs.

- The number of students enrolled in agriculture at Palau Community College increased between 2013 and 2018.
- The number of persons employed in agriculture increased from 0.5 percent of the workforce (2013) to about 1 percent (2017).

Despite these modest increases, demand for local food far outpaces supply, and it is clear that Palau is below production targets set in the policy document. Although there are many reasons for low food production ranging from shortage of arable land, difficulty in accessing clan land, Oriental fruit fly infestation, weak land use planning, and disinterest in agriculture among young people, probably the most significant factor is the high cost of local production vis-à-vis importation (ADB, 2017). Climate change, including saltwater intrusion into wetland taro patches and more frequent and severe droughts, are also deterrents to local production that will become more significant in future years (SOE, 2017).

## Examples of Actions Taken

***Infant nutrition:*** (1) *Baby Friendly Hospital Policy* adopted by the MOH in 2006; (2) community breastfeeding support group established in 2014 in partnership between the MOH and the NGO, Kotel A Deurreng, Inc.; (3) breastfeeding counseling offered by Kotel A Deurreng, Inc. during the first prenatal-postpartum check-up, community breastfeeding counselors trained to provide home-based support, and a breastfeeding support text messaging system developed; (4) maternity leave legislation covering both public and private sectors awaiting action in the Olbiil Era Kelulau (national congress).

***Healthy diets:*** (1) Palau Healthy Food Guidelines adopted; (2) guidelines integrated into school and hospital feeding programs and food handler training; (3) nutrition improvement integrated as a core element of the National NCD Action Plan; (4) Government-Civil Society nutrition working group (Tabesul Blengur) established; (5) schools actively promoting good nutrition by aligning school lunches with the Healthy Food Guidelines, expanding school gardens, and instituting 'water only' policies; (6) nutrition issues on the agenda of the annual meeting of the women of Palau (Mechesil Belau) and as a results, measures have been taken to improve the nutritional quality of foods served in customs; (7) voluntary actions have been taken by some restaurants to offer healthy menu options.

***Household food security***: Two NGOs, Palau Community Action Agency and Ulkerreuil A Klengar, actively promote "table gardens" and "tire gardens" as easy inexpensive ways for households to have a convenient supply of fresh vegetables. Koror State Government has recently joined the promotion by providing table gardens upon request as part of community outreach (picture below).

***National Food Security***: (1) *National Policy to Strengthen Resilience in Aquaculture and Agriculture* adopted in 2015 provides a policy framework and plan of action for increasing local food production; (2) farms mapped by PALARIS (Palau Automated Land and Resource Information System) in 2016; (3) Bureau of Agriculture within the Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment, and Tourism (MNRET) implementing a piggery improvement project; (4) Government and Civil Society working collaboratively to identify salt and drought resistant crop varieties; (4) community women's groups across Palau working to rehabilitate taro patches; (5) agriculture support provided through the National Development Bank for low-interest agriculture and aquaculture loans; (6) research and extension services provided through the Bureau of Agriculture; (7) National Marine Sanctuary established (operational in 2020) designating 20 percent of Palau's Exclusive Economic

Zone for domestic fisheries (see also SDGs 8 and 14). Despite these positive measures, a threat to sustainability is increasing domination of the sector by foreign (Asian) males in a field traditionally the domain of Palauan women.

## Pathways to 2030

**Closing gaps**

- Focus on children first; fill data gaps on child nutrition including breastfeeding practices and early childhood nutritional status.
- Ensure universal maternity leave for all working mothers; lack of maternity leave benefits is the number one reason women cite for cessation of breastfeeding.
- Improve data collection on agriculture (and aquaculture) productivity.

**Improving quality and reach**

- Accelerate interventions that address overweight and obesity among children and adults; education is important but policy measures such as taxes on unhealthy imports (e.g. soda, high-fat meats, and foods with high sugar content) may also be considered (MOH, NCD Plan Assessment, 2018).
- Healthy diets begin with healthy food; accelerate implementation of the national policy on sustainable agriculture and aquaculture.

**Building resilience**

- Enhance national food security, while improving health, by reducing dependence on imported food using a combination of supply and demand measures including those contained in the national policy on sustainable agriculture and aquaculture.
- Enhance climate resilience of local food supplies.
- Address the shortage of Palauan agriculture labor and a growing gender imbalance in the agriculture workforce by positing agriculture as a vocation of choice for young Palauan entrepreneurs.

Strategies for local food production and healthy eating link across the SDGs incorporating targets within SDG 1 (poverty), SDG 3 (health), SDG 4 (education), SDG 5 (gender), SDG 1 (poverty), SDG 8 (economic growth and decent work), SDG 11 (culture) SDG 13 (climate resilience), SDG 14 (oceans), and SDG 15 (terrestrial ecosystems).

**Progressing with the Past**

Palau's traditional agriculture is a multi-story agroforestry system, where tree crops provided a protective canopy for the intensive production of over 40 plant varieties. Under the traditional system, every Palauan woman had a garden (or gardens). Female produced agricultural products together with communally harvested marine and forest products provided a self-sufficient food system with in-built security against natural and economic disasters, pest intrusion, and old age. Today, remnants of the traditional system still remain although less than 3% of land is now under agroforestry production. The taro gardens most closely resemble the traditional agro-forestry system although contemporary gardens are less intensively cultivated than those of the past (Bishop, 2001 as cited in McGregor, et al, 2012).

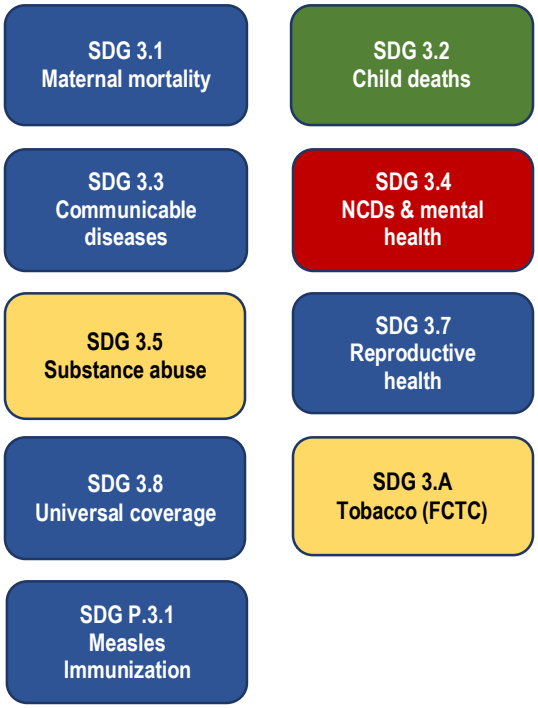
Traditional agriculture is good for people and the environment. Research shows that taro patches absorb up to 90 percent of sediment thus protecting Palau's coral reefs (S. Koshiba, et al, 2014).

# Health and Well-Being

## Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

SDG 3 includes 12 targets. Some (e.g. maternal mortality and communicable diseases), reflect continuing commitment to the unfinished work of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Others (e.g. child health) expand on MDG achievements and still others, such as 3.8 (universal health coverage), 3.4 (non-communicable diseases and mental health), and 3.A. (tobacco control), reflect a higher ambition to address underlying determinants of health and well-being.

Palau incorporates 8 of the 12 SDG 3 targets into the national SDG framework plus one Pacific Regional target carried forward from the MDGs (measles immunization).[3]




### Maternal and Reproductive Health

SDG 3.1, 3.7, 5.6

Target 3.1 addresses maternal mortality and is closely linked to SDG Targets 3.7 and 5.6 (universal access to sexual and reproductive health services) which have been achieved by Palau. All births take place at Palau National Hospital under the supervision of skilled health personnel and in most years, there are zero maternal deaths. A full range of family planning services are available through the Bureau of Public Health at no cost and without restrictions due to age, ethnicity, or marital status. Contraceptives are also available through private clinics and pharmacies. Completed fertility rates are stable at 2 births per woman (MOH, Title V, 2017; MOH, 2014). On average 22 percent of births occur to women 35 years of age or older but less than 8 percent occur to women 15-19 years of age yielding an Adolescent Birth Rate of 27 (Statistical Yearbook, 2017 and Census, 2015). The major maternal health risk factors identified by the Ministry of Health include (a) older mothers; (b) pre-existing health issues including obesity; (c) delayed enrollment in prenatal care; and (d) use of betel nut with tobacco during pregnancy (MOH, Title V, 2017; MOH, 2014).

### Child Health

***SDG 3.2 and P.3.1***

Target 3.2 addresses infant and child health, also integrated across SDG 3 and in targets 2.1 and 2.2. Neonatal mortality (deaths in the first 28 days f life), infant mortality (deaths under 1 year), and under-5 mortality have declined continuously over recent years so that Palau has already met the SDG child mortality targets for 2030.

Over the 20-year period, 1996-2015, the number of infant deaths in Palau ranged from an annual low of one to a high of

**Well-being**

The words "and promote well-being" were incorporated into SDG 3 at the behest of Palau's former Ambassador to the United Nations, Dr. Caleb Otto. Speaking before the UN, he noted, "there are three basic components of the human being: the body, the mind, and the soul. The well-being of human beings is optimum only when all three of these component parts are healthy." He goes on to explain that this concept of holistic health is recognized in the Palauan language by the many words that contain "*reng*", Palauan for "heart" (25 September 2016)

[3] Color code: Blue (achieved); Green (on-track); Yellow (progressing); Red (off-track); Grey – lacks data.

eight (average four deaths per annum) yielding a 20-year average 17 deaths per 1,000 live births, a rate that is still high for a high-income country. Analysis is hampered by the low number of births which means that one additional death from one year to the next can cause a massive change in the rate.

**Monitoring Health Trends:**
**Challenge of Small Numbers**

Palau's small population creates challenges for monitoring health trends. Using the maternal mortality ratio as an example, in most years, Palau reports no maternal deaths. In any population, however, a maternal death will occur from time-to-time. The difference of one death is considerable when translated into rates.

- 0 deaths = MMR of 0
- 1 death = MMR of 469

With one death, Palau can go from a top-performing country to one of the worst performing countries. To address this issue, five-year moving averages are used to more accurately monitor trends.

Palau's measles vaccination rate for children 12-23 months of age was 96 percent in 2017 (The World Bank Group, 2017). The overall immunization rate for all childhood vaccines was estimated by MOH as 67.5 percent (2015). The national goal is to raise immunization coverage across all antigens to 95% by 2022 (MOH, MCH State Plan, 2017).

## Communicable Diseases

***SDG 3.3***

Communicable diseases represent a relatively small proportion of Palau's overall health burden but still require continuous surveillance and aggressive management.

Although the number of HIV/AIDS cases is low (14 HIV+ diagnoses between 1989 and 2017), one of the challenges is a high level of stigma and discrimination related to HIV/AIDS. There are no laws or policies, however, that hinder access to treatment. Sexually transmitted disease rates, especially Chlamydia, remain high and surveys show high levels of risky sexual behaviors (multiple partners and inconsistent use of condoms) thus necessitating ongoing education and surveillance. Tuberculosis incidence is high by the standards of high-income countries but is about half the rate of the Pacific Island Region and most cases are imported. These data underscore the need for ongoing surveillance and aggressive case management. Palau has recently been certified as free of lymphatic filariasis, a Neglected Tropical Disease included in SDG 3.3. Malaria is not present in Palau. Dengue fever, a mosquito-borne disease associated with climate change, is a Palau health priority, but is not included among SDG targets. A Palau-specific target and indicator for dengue fever will be developed for future monitoring and reporting.

## Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

*SDG 3.4*

Target 3.4 addresses the "Big Five" NCDs – cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes, chronic obstructive lung diseases, and mental health disorders. Target 3.4 is closely linked to Target 3.5 (substance abuse disorders) and 3.A (tobacco control). NCDs are at epidemic levels in Palau and account for 80 percent of all deaths and for low life expectancy, especially for men (57.6 years) in comparison to women (74.5 years) (MOH, 2014). Palau has one of the world's highest rates of schizophrenia together with high rates of depression (MOH, 2014).

NCDs are a driver of poverty and inequality and threaten to undermine socio-economic progress. Combating NCDs requires action not just on SDG 3 but across multiple SDGs—1 (poverty), 2 (food and nutrition), 4 (education), 5 (women), 6 (water and sanitations), 8 (economy), 10 (inequality), 11 (cities and local government), 13 (climate), 14 (oceans), 15 (land), 16 (justice and strong institutions), and 17 (partnerships).

## Strengthening Health Systems

*SDG 3.8*

An effective and efficient health system accessible to all at affordable cost is a prerequisite for achieving SDG 3 targets as well as targets under other Pillars. Target 3.8 calls for universal health coverage with financial risk protection.

Healthcare in Palau is provided by the government through the Ministry of Health supplemented by private clinics (three medical, two dental, two optical, and one physical therapy facility) and visiting specialty teams sponsored by Palau's partners in health – Japan and the US among others. The Ministry of Health provides comprehensive primary, secondary, and limited tertiary services in Koror and nationally through a network of nine Community Health Centers (CHC). Except in the sparsely populated states of Hatohobei and Sonsorol (2015 population of 65) served intermittently by visiting health teams traveling by ship from Koror, all Palau residents live within one-half hour travel time to a primary care facility.

The Palau Constitution mandates government, through the Ministry of Health to provide free preventive health services and subsidized health care for citizens. To implement these provisions sustainably, the Palau Healthcare Fund (HCF) was established in 2010 and consists of two components, individual Medical Savings Accounts (MSA) and a pooled universal social health insurance fund commonly known as National Health Insurance (NHI). These components are funded through mandatory contributions on earned income (2.5 percent of earnings contributed by the employee and matched by an equal contribution by the employer). NHI complements MSA by providing coverage for catastrophic illnesses and off-island referrals approved as medically necessary by a Medical Referral Committee established within the MOH. Government pays the MSA premiums for unemployed senior citizens and the severely disabled using funds earmarked for this purpose from tobacco taxes. With this, Palau has largely achieved Universal Health Coverage. HIES data show that less than 2 percent of average household expenditures are for health suggesting that the HCF is achieving financial risk protection (HIES, 2014).

## Examples of Actions Taken

***Maternal and child health:*** (1) life cycle approach healthy girls – healthy mothers – healthy babies; (2) universal access to reproductive health services and family planning; (3) promotion of early prenatal care; (4) promotion of tobacco and alcohol cessation.

***Communicable diseases:*** (1) active surveillance and education among at-risk groups; (2) contact tracing; (3) aggressive patient management including anti-retroviral therapy (HIV-AIDS) and Directly Observer Treatment Short-Course (tuberculosis); (4) supported by inputs from the Global Fund, point-of-care testing using the SD Duo test kit, is offered for key populations (men who have sex with men, transgender women, and sex workers) who are being reached with HIV prevention information and tested for HIV and syphilis, counseled, and referred for care; (5) review and updating of the national HIV/STI guidelines are in line with the latest WHO guidelines for HIV testing, STI diagnosis, treatment, and management.

***Non-communicable diseases***: (1) Presidential Executive Order 295 (May 2011) declared a state of emergency and directed a whole-of-government approach to addressing the NCD crisis; (2) this approach was expanded to a whole-of-society strategy by Executive Order 379 (2015); (3) National NCD Strategic Plan (2015-2020) developed with progress closely monitored; (4) health promoting schools and workplaces where "healthy choices are easy choices"; (5) although measurable indicators progress are mixed (2014-2018), significant progress is noted in hypertension rates (down from 49 to 30 percent of adults, 2014-2017).

***Tobacco control:*** (1) Many years of tobacco education and advocacy by Government in partnerships with the NGO, Coalition for a Tobacco Free Palau; (2) Comprehensive Tobacco Act enacted in 2011 put effect to the WHO FCTC with amendments now pending to update and further strengthen implementation and enforcement; in 2013 the minimum age of sale of cigarettes was raised from 19 to 21 and the tobacco tax increased in 2014 and 2015 with excise tax now reaching over 70% of the retail price; 10% of tax revenue set aside for community engagement in NCD control.

***Strengthening health systems:*** The health sector's vision for 2030 and beyond is "healthy communities with access to high quality healthcare services". This vision is supported by a health plan (MOH, 2014-2018) that prioritizes five strategic objectives: (1) provide accessible and high-quality patient-centered hospital services; (2) provide accessible and high quality primary and preventive health services; (3) ensure effective partnerships are developed and maintained; (4) value

**Whole of Government and Whole of Society Approach to NCDs**

Palau is one of the first countries to implement a holistic approach to NCD prevention. Executive Order No. 379 (May 2015) established a multi-sectoral National Coordinating Mechanism on NCDs that includes civil society, A 2016 public law (RPPL 9-57) allocated 10 percent of combined alcohol and tobacco taxes for NCD action by communities and civil society thus supporting direct community engagement in resolving the NCD crisis.

**Featured Partnership: Ministry of Health and Coalition for a Tobacco Free Palau (CTFP)**

Since establishment in 1995, the Coalition for a Tobacco Free Palau has partnered effectively with the Ministry of Health to support and advance tobacco control policy and legislation In the early 2000s, the partnership focused on ratification of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). Since the Treaty came into effect in 2005, and recognizing it as "*an accelerator for sustainable development*", the partnership has focused on its implementation.

the health workforce and support their continuing growth and development; (5) ensure that administrative and support services are accountable and sustainable. Strategic objective #5 includes continued work to strengthen Health Management and Information Systems in support of the SDGs.

## Pathways to 2030

While it is critical to maintain progress across all health targets, NCDs, inclusive of mental health issues, are clearly the priority for the coming decade. The NCD Plan and associated architecture is an excellent start but progress must be accelerated with more focus on policy measures that "make healthy choices, easy choices".

**Closing gaps**

- Continued strengthening of sexual and reproductive health services.
- Focus on preventing NCDs in early childhood starting pre-conception through the school years; encourage healthy food choices beginning with exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life.
- Adopt measures that make tobacco less affordable and enact amendments to tobacco control legislation that strengthen implementation and enforcement of the WHO FCTC.
- While considering new policy measures to address NCDs (e.g. taxes on unhealthy food imports), strengthen enforcement of existing legislation, especially tobacco and alcohol.

**Improving quality and reach**

- Adopt internationally validated best practices to strengthen tobacco, alcohol, and substance abuse services.
- Change social norms around tobacco and alcohol.
- Strengthen law enforcement measures to control the import of illicit drugs (see SDG 16).

**Building resilience**

- Address the health impacts of climate change including the increasing risk of vector borne diseases (e.g. dengue fever and leptospirosis), health impacts of droughts and natural disasters, and on mental health.
- Palau has a well-developed public health system, but most services are funded by U.S. federal grants available through the Compact of Free Association; looking forward to possible reductions in US Compact Funding in 2024, more domestic resources need to be invested in public health to build sustainable futures.

As Palau has acknowledged with the NCD Coordinating Mechanism, action against NCD cuts across many SDGs inclusive of SDG 2 (food and nutrition), SDG 4 (education), SDG 6 (water and sanitation), SDG 8 (economic growth and decent work), SDG 13 (climate action), SDG 14 (oceans), SDG 15 (land and forests), SDG 16 (justice and strong institutions), and SDG 17 (partnerships).

**Progressing with the Past:**
**Palauan Medicine**

Traditional medical practices have evolved over millenniums and include ethno-biology (plants, leaves, and vines) and massage. Traditionally medical arts were considered to be secret knowledge to be closely guarded and passed through family lines. In recent years, western and traditional practitioners have begun to collaborate. A *Palau Primary Health Care Manual* has been published and rigorous scientific research initiated to validate some traditional medicines. In one particularly promising clinical trial, the Palauan medicinal plan "Ongael" or "Delal a Kar" has been shown to be effective in treating diabetes mellitus. A local organization – Pacific Academic Institute for Research – has spearheaded this study, as well as others, in partnership with Palau Community College.

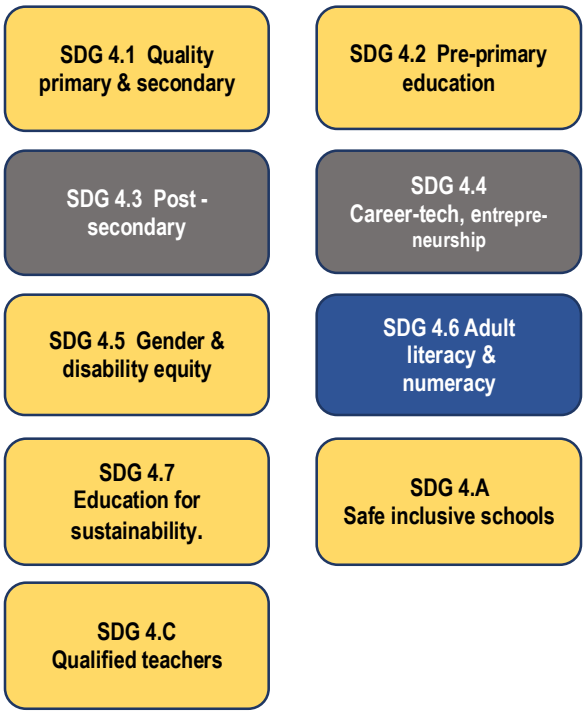
Passage of legislation in 2018 to *Create a national framework for access and fair and equitable sharing of benefits of genetic resources and traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources* (RPPL 10-28) sets out a procedure for creating access and benefit sharing agreements to protect traditional knowledge, the knowledge holder, and ensure equitable distribution of benefits arising from any use of that knowledge. This bill is an essential foundation for encouraging further scientific research into Palau's living traditional medical legacy.

Delal a Kar has shown promise for treating diabetes. (Photo credit Dr. Chris Kitalong)

# Quality Education

## Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote Lifelong learning opportunities for all

MDG 4 called for universal primary school education, a goal that Palau achieved but the world as a whole, did not. Although enrollment levels rose, by 2015, 59 million children of primary school age were still not in school. With SDG 4, the global community commits to the unfinished business of the MDGs but also to a higher aspiration –inclusive, equitable, quality education for all including children, adults, and those who are vulnerable. Palau has incorporated 9 of the 10 SDG targets into the National SDG Framework.[4]




### Palau's Education System

*SDGs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3., 4.4, 4.5*

Palauans have traditionally placed a high value on education. This is reflected in the constitutional mandate for government to provide free education in grades 1-12 for all citizens, a provision extended in practice to all residents pursuant to the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the legal requirement for children 6-17 years of age to be enrolled in school. In FY2017, Palau allocated $11.3 million (13.5 percent of the national budget) for education. School participation rates are high so the focus now is improving quality and ensuring no child is left behind.

***Pre-primary education:*** Ten community-based Head Start Centers funded by a U.S. Federal grant and managed by the NGO, Palau Community Action Agency, and three private church-affiliated kindergartens provide pre-primary education. An estimated 83 percent of pre-school children participate in pre-primary learning (UNESCO, 2017). The Education Master Plan 2017-2026 commits the Ministry of Education (MOE) to working toward free and universal pre-primary education by filling gaps in the network such as recent action establishing kindergartens in the remote islands of Angaur, Peleliu, and Kayangel, which have previously been excluded from the pre-primary network.

***Primary education:*** Seventeen government owned and operated primary schools and two church-owned schools provide primary education. The gross enrollment rate for primary years (ages 6-13) is 112 percent for males and 111 percent for females (MOE Statistics Yearbook, 2016). By the end of grade six, 96 percent of students have achieved minimum competency levels in reading and numeracy (MOE, 2016). All schools have water and sanitation facilities as well as a library, computer laboratory, and access to high-speed internet (MOE, 2018).

In addition to the core subjects, specialized curriculum provide education for development including climate change integrated into environmental studies, ridge-to-reef integrated into 5th grade science, and modules on sustainable tourism and disaster risk reduction. In addition to classroom education, 82 percent of students participate at least once each year in marine studies programs offered by the Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC).

MOE vision: "Our students will be successful in the Palauan society and the world."

[4]Color Coding: Blue (achieved); Green (on-track); Yellow (progressing); Red (off-track); Grey (insufficient data).

**Investing in Our Own and Going Beyond Basics**

The Palau Post-Graduate Scholarship Act of 2019 provides financial support to Palauan students pursuing post-graduate degrees in priority fields – medicine, law, education, special education, and engineering. Students who complete their studies and work in Palau for at least 5 years post-graduation will have their repayment obligations forgiven. This is an example of Palau investing in its own people and going beyond the basics.

***Secondary education:*** One government-owned high school and four church schools provide secondary education. The gross enrollment rate in secondary education is 112 percent for males and 109 percent for females (MOE Statistics Yearbook, 2016). As a result, Palau has achieved high literacy rates for youth ages 15-24 – males, 98.2 percent and females, 99.2 percent (Census, 2015).

***Career-technical education:*** Career guidance classes begin in primary school as an early discovery of interest before students transition to secondary education. At Palau High School, students participate throughout the four years in career academies that include school and work-based learning. Options include agriculture, automotive, business information, health, construction, tourism and hospitality, and liberal arts.

***Post-Secondary education:*** Palau Community College (PCC) is a two-year academic institution accredited by the U.S. Western Association of Schools and Colleges. PCC offers approximately 20 fields of study with certification ranging from certificates to associate degrees. PCC also offers, in partnership with San Diego State University (San Diego, USA), a limited number of bachelor and graduate degrees in education and public administration. PCC is positioning itself as the institution of choice for high school graduates and government has committed to working toward free education for citizens at PCC. As an incentive to hiring, RPPL 9-22 provides a significant tax incentive to local businesses that employ PCC graduates.

An on-island apprenticeship program offered by the U.S. military Civic Action Team provides technical training in several fields. The U.S. Job Corps program also provides technical training to Palau students at off-island sites. For off-island tertiary studies, Palauans have access to a range of scholarship options, including U.S. Federal grants, national government grants and loans, private scholarships, and scholarships supported by overseas development partners including Japan, Australia, and others. In 2019, a new Palau Government Scholarship was established to provide scholarship assistance to Palau students pursing post-graduate education (Post Graduate Scholarship Act, 2019).

***Gender equity:*** Palauan women have higher levels of education attainment than men. 46 percent of women have post-high school education compared to 37 percent of men (Census, 2015). Palauan women, however, are underrepresented in Science, Technology, and Engineering (STEM) fields. Of Palauan citizens educated in engineering or construction, only 6 percent are female. In information and communication technologies, the disparity is 47 percent female to 53 percent male. Women, however, are overrepresented in business and law (71 to 29 percent). There is approximate gender parity in natural science, math, and statistics (48 to 52 percent).

***Children with disabilities:*** National law (*Handicapped Children's Act of 1989*) requires the national government to provide education services to all children, including those with disabilities. To implement the law, a special education program assists children with disabilities through high school graduation or age 21 (whichever comes first).

***Continuous improvement***: The world is constantly changing, and education must change with it. The Palau Education Master Plan, 2017-2026 incorporates several of the SDG 4 targets including (1) universal primary and secondary education; (2) highly qualified teachers and principals; (3) upgrading curriculum; and (4) partnerships for education across the community.

**Innovation to Stem Brain Drain**

One of Palau's most pervasive problems is brain drain of its most highly educated youth. Students who study abroad, are often enticed by substantially higher wage rates, to remain abroad after finishing their education.

In an innovation addressing this issue, the Palau Scholarship Board introduced in 2013, a summer internship scholarship for Palauan students entering their Junior or Senior years of college. Qualifying students are given roundtrip transportation and stipends to work at home during their summer break. The idea is to expose them to opportunities that await them at home following completion of their education.

## Pathways to 2030

Palau has developed a good education system that has achieved the basics. Looking toward 2030, the focus is improving quality and ensuring all children achieve essential competencies required for adult life in a changing world. These competencies include education for sustainable development, combating of gender stereotypes, and family life educaiton that enables young people to make informed decisions about their own body and life.

**Closing gaps**

- Develop alternative education for students for whom learning needs are not met in a traditional classroom**.**
- Expand innovations to stem the "brain drain".

**Improving quality and reach**

- Strengthen education in Palauan language and culture.
- Ensure all teachers achieve minimum teaching credentials, defined at the elementary level as an associated degree and at the secondary level, as a bachelor's degree.[5]
- Enhance women's performance in STEM subjects to achieve gender equality in education and the workplace.
- Ensure all students achieve core competencies required for adult life.

**Building resilience**

- Most of Palau's rural schools are built in locations vulnerable to climate change; a climate informed infrastructure strategy will be needed to ensure climate resilient facilities.
- Critical pre-primary education and services for students with disabilities students are funded largely by U.S. Federal grants under the Compact of Free Association (COFA). Looking toward 2024 when the COFA agreement will be renegotiated, the long-term financial sustainability of these programs needs to be addressed.

[5] Currently 50 percent of elementary teachers have at least an associate degree and 69 percent of secondary teachers have at least a bachelor's degree (Statistical Yearbook, 2017).

# Cities and Human Settlements

## Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable

Globally, 54 percent of the world's population lives in cities. In Palau, 79 percent of the population lives in the Koror-Airai urban area (Census, 2015). Urbanization, however, looks very different in Palau than in other countries. There is nothing that resembles an urban slum as found in most cities of the world.

Palau has integrated 3 of the 10 SDG 11 targets into the National SDG Framework. The focus for discussion in this section, however, will be SDG 11.4 (culture) since this very important element of sustainability from a Palau perspective is not fully explored elsewhere in the SDGs.[6]

**SDG 11.1 Decent housing & basic services for all**

**SDG 11.4 Cultural and natural heritage**

**SDG 11.7 Universal access to safe, inclusive green spaces**

## Housing and Community Services

*SDG 11.1 and 11.7*

***Current housing stock***: The Palau Census and Household Income and Expenditure Surveys collect information about housing characteristics. In general housing conditions are good by Pacific standards. In 2014, 83 percent of housing was constructed of permanent materials, either concrete or timber, while 16 percent was constructed of corrugated iron. As a general characteristic, poorer households tend to have metal (corrugated iron) walls or roofing and/or wood floors while better-off households are more likely to have concrete walls and roofing (HIES, 2014). Virtually all urban residents have access to public water (96 percent), use flush toilets (98 percent), are connected to a public sewer (97 percent), and have electricity (100 percent). Household expenditures for housing and utilities averaged US$1,960 (13.2 percent of total expenditures) (HIES, 2014).

[6] Color Code: Blue (achieved); green (on-track); yellow (progressing); red (off-track); grey (insufficient data).

***Revitalization:*** Despite these favorable indicators, many Palauans have or are in danger of displacement from their home. Displacement has become a crisis due to convergence of multiple factors – competition for land from foreign investors, conversion of residential units to tourist facilities, land disputes, and climate-driven sea level rise. Responding to this crisis, government has negotiated a US$15 million loan from development partners to establish residential subdivisions and single family homes primarily in Babeldaob thereby meeting demand for affordable housing, encouraging overseas Palauans to return home and Koror residents to relocate to their traditional villages and thereby enhancing social cohesion, stimulating economic growth, and building climate resilience when new housing is located in upland locations protected from coastal flooding and tropical storms (SORA, 2019).

These new communities will be planned in accordance with SDG 11.7 -- ensuring green spaces and parks are accessible to all. In addition, a network of new parks and community recreation facilities are being planned to increase access of everyone to outdoor spaces for physical activity.

## Land Rights

A significant issue relating to SDG 11 is access to both terrestrial and marine resources as a result of land tenure issues. Land, including submerged land and coastal areas, leased to non-Palauans often cannot be accessed by Palauans. This has significant impacts on cultural practices and livelihoods.

- Limited access due to foreigners leasing land; this represents a growing proportion of Palau's lands.
- Limited access due to U.S. military land rights outlined in the Compact of Free Association which impacts nearly one-third of Palau's lands.

Traditionally, most of the lands affected were public lands managed for the benefit of all. Privatization of public spaces results in exclusion and marginalization of populations, including those who are most vulnerable. Policies and strategies are needed to address these issues and improve planning and management of public spaces for the well-being of all.

## Cultural and Natural Heritage

*SDG 11.4*

SDG Target 11.4 considers protection and safeguarding of the cultural and heritage of Palau. This is a high priority target for Palau with many actions having been taken or in progress to protect Palau's tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

Several government and semi-government organizations have responsibility for arts, culture, and historic preservation. The Bureau of Cultural and Historic Preservation within the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs is responsible for protection of Palau's tangible cultural and historic heritage. The Bureau maintains the Palau Register of Historic Sites, captures and documents the knowledge of elders, conducts archaeological surveys, identifies and restores sites, and related work involving sites and artifacts. The work supported by the Palau Society of Historians, an advisory board and a technical board.

The Belau National Museum, a semi-government agency established in 1955, is also involved in protecting Palau's intangible and tangible cultural heritage through a permanent collection of artifacts, rotating collections, and a research program. An NGO, Risel Belau, also focuses on issues of language, culture, and heritage.

States are also involved in protecting Palau's tangible and intangible cultural heritage and other ministries play a role in their own sphere of work. For example, the Ministry of Education is involved in teaching Palauan language and culture in the schools while the several government and non-government conservation agencies also touch on cultural heritage because of the close link between Palau's natural resources and its cultural resources.

Because of the multi-sector and multi-agency involvement in this area, it has not been possible to track expenditures by all the parties per the 11.4 indicator.

A few examples of activities and achievements pertaining to Target 11.4 include:

- Celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Mechesil Belau Women's Conference (see SDG 5).
- Passage of legislation to create a national framework for access and fair and equitable sharing of benefits of genetic resources and traditional knowledge (RPPL 10-28).
- Ratification of the UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*.
- Designation of Palau's Rock Islands as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2012 combining both natural and cultural heritage.
- Action by Palau Community College to introduce a degree program in Palauan studies. The program targets the needs of teachers, people working in arts and culture and people working in the tour industry.
- Legislation enacted in 2012 requires that all schools in Palau teach the Palauan language 1st to 12th grade and actively works to imbue Palauan cultural values throughout the curriculum and school life.

## Pathways to 2030

**Closing gaps**

- Consider further the issue of privatization of public spaces – lands and submerged marine areas; identify strategies for ensuring enduring public access to public spaces.

**Improving quality and reach**

- Continue to seek creative mechanisms to teach Palauan culture and language to future generations through schools and the community.

**Building resilience**

- There is a national effort underway to rehabilitate and promote traditional taro cultivation. Several women's groups ('Cheldebechel') and civil society organizations are involved in taro cultivation. Taro cultivation plays a critical role in food security, healthy lifestyles, and sustainable ecosystems.

Pillar 2

# Prosperity, Poverty, and Equality

## Introduction

Sustained and inclusive economic growth drives development by providing resources for education, health, infrastructure, and personal \consumption, Economic growth leads to new and better employment opportunities and eradication of poverty when everyone shares in the fruits of development. To be sustainable, economic growth must not deplete natural resources or do harm to the environment. Under the Prosperity Pillar, the Palau VNR considers five closely linked SDGs:

- SDG 1 and 10, poverty and inequality
- SDG 8, economic growth and decent work
- SDG 9, industry and infrastructure

**Palau Medium-Term Development Strategy**

Sustainable economic growth is reflected in the overarching goal set out in the Palau Medium Term Development Strategy (2009-2014):

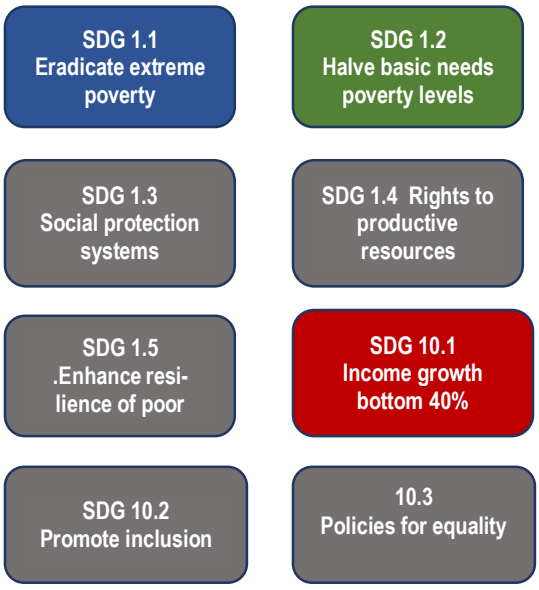
"A sustained and widespread improvement in general standards of living while preserving cultural and environmental values."

# No Poverty and Reduce Inequalities

**End poverty in all its forms everywhere and reduce inequality within and among countries**

Although long an implicit goal for development, poverty eradication was positioned as the overarching rationale for development in the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The MDGs resulted in remarkable progress against poverty; globally rates fell by more than half between 2000 and 2015. Still the number of poor people remained unacceptably high and measuring poverty using national averages as done in the MDG era obscured often higher rates among vulnerable groups - female headed households, persons living with disabilities, minorities, remote populations, among others.

In the SDGs, the global community aims to not just reduce, but to eradicate extreme poverty at national levels and across all relevant sub-populations. Palau incorporates 5 out of 7 SDG 1 targets and 3 out of 10 SDG 10 targets into the National SDG Framework.[7]




[7] Color coding: Blue (achieved); Green (on-track); Yellow (progressing); Red (off-track); Grey (lacks data)

## Social and Cultural Context

In the 1990's, the United Nations initiated dialogue with Pacific Island Governments around the concept of poverty. In a region where food historically was abundant and cultural systems ensure that the weak and vulnerable are cared for by the more able, poverty was and remains a controversial concept. To acknowledge poverty is not simply to acknowledge an economic fact but to recognize that fundamental changes are occurring in Pacific societies and values. The Pacific definition of poverty that emerged from this early dialogue was two-part (UNDP, 1991).

1. Poverty equaled "hardship" broadly defined to include lack of access to basic services.
2. In monetary terms, poverty meant "insufficient resources to meet the basic needs of the immediate household and customary obligations to the extended family and the church".

In 1998, the Palau Committee on Population and Children conducted a series of focus groups to explore the concept of poverty in the Palauan context (Government of Palau and UNICEF, 1998). Participants agreed that the Palau concept of poverty was best encapsulated by the world "*chelebuul*" which integrates four elements of well-being:

- Interpersonal and clan relationships
- Perseverance or personal drive
- Traditional social status (right to inherit a title)
- Access to land.

The consensus across focus groups was on defining wealth in terms of strong interpersonal relationships between an individual and his/her extended family and clan. Poverty, in turn, was defined as either not having or being estranged from family and clan. Participants emphasized that a person can be

wealthy in monetary terms but impoverished in the eyes of the community if he/she has failed to nurture family and clan relationships. In keeping with this concept, poverty eradication for an individual involves nurturing interpersonal and inter-clan relationships and for the nation as a whole, attention to cultural preservation.

In the 20 years since these focus groups were conducted, Palauans have become more comfortable with the concept of income poverty. While cultural preservation and the ethic of "caring and sharing" remain of paramount importance to all, discussions around poverty and culture have diverged. This is unfortunate because a comprehensive discussion of poverty needs to take place within the cultural context recognizing the roles that family, clan, and culture play in preventing and alleviating poverty, reducing vulnerability, and driving progress across the sustainable development agenda.

## Monetary Poverty

*SDGs 1.1, 1.2, 10.1, 10.2., 10.3*

***Extreme poverty:*** Palau does not have data to measure extreme poverty per the World Bank definition[8] used in SDG 1. The local definition equates extreme poverty with food poverty. The 2014 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) found only 0.2 percent of the population below the food poverty line and therefore classified as extremely poor (Bureau of Budget and Planning, 2017).

***National poverty line:*** A national poverty line was computed from the 2006 and 2014 HIES. Poverty rates fell between the two survey years by five percentage points (from 24.9 to 19.4 percent). Palau is therefore on-track to meet the SDG target of halving poverty rates by 2030. It is off-track, however, for meeting a national target of zero poverty. Employment in the formal economic sector and higher levels of education are factors that protect against poverty, especially for women and rural households (Bureau of Budget and Planning, 2017).

***Vulnerability:*** In addition to persons already poor, an additional 1,779 residents (2014) had incomes just above the poverty line. These people are vulnerable to falling into poverty as a result of economic shocks. Increasing the resilience of these persons/households will be essential if Palau is to remain on target toward SDG 1.2.

[8] When the SDGs were negotiated, the World Bank defined extreme poverty as persons living on less than US$1.25 per day (adjusted for purchasing power parity). Subsequently, the definition has been revised to use US$1.90 per day (PPP).

## Equality

*SDGs 1.1, 10.1, 10.2, 10.3*

Equality is integral to SDG 1 with the emphasis on eliminating disparities due to gender, age, geographic location, and disability. Equality is also the focus of SDG 10.

***Gini coefficient***: In this measure of equality, "1" denotes absolute equality and "0" denotes absolute inequality. Palau's Gini Coefficient in 2006 was 0.38 and in 2014, 0.36 (Bureau of Planning and Budget, 2017). This is in line with that for the Asia-Pacific Region, 0.38 (UN ESCAP). The Gini Coefficient for Palau's urban households was 0.47 (2014), up from 0.37 (2006) indicating a widening of urban inequality. For rural households, the Gini Coefficient was 0.36 (2014), down from 0.4 (2006) indicating a narrowing of rural inequality (Bureau of Budget and Planning, 2016).

***Expenditure gap:*** Despite the moderate Gini Coefficient, there is a significant expenditure gap between low- and high-expenditure households. In 2014, low-expenditure households (the lowest 30 percent) controlled 4 percent of household income compared to high-expenditure household (highest 30 percent) who controlled 56 percent of household income (Bureau of Budget and Planning, 2015).

***Gender gap:*** The average monthly per capita income for Palauan households headed by men was US$800 compared to US$660 for households headed by women. This equates to a gender gap of 18 percent (MCCA and Bureau of Planning & Budget, n.d.). The gender gap among non-Palauan households was higher at 22 percent.

**Urban-rural gap:** While national poverty rates declined, poverty rates rose in East Babeldaob and Peleliu but as in 2006, poverty rates were highest in Kayangel and Angaur.

***Ethnic gap:*** Poverty rates are highest among households headed by citizens of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands (34.2 percent) in comparison to households headed by Palauans (21.1 percent), and Filipinos (12.7 percent) (Bureau of Budget and Planning, 2017).

## Social Protection and Access to Productive Resources

*SDGs 1.3 and 1.4*

Social protection refers to policies and programs designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability by creating efficient labor markets, diminishing exposure to economic risks, enhancing resilience and protection against unemployment, sickness, disability and old age. For Palau and the Pacific, the cultural tradition of "sharing and caring" is an integral part of social protection. To supplement the tradition of "caring and sharing", the Palau government provides direct assistance to senior citizens and persons with disabilities as well as support to low-income households through subsidized public services.

***Senior citizens:*** A government social security system pays retirement income to residents 60+ years of age who have worked in Palau (or whose deceased spouse has worked in Palau) whether in public or private sectors. Those who have worked in the public sector are also eligible for a pension under the Civil Service Pension Plan In 2015, 75 percent of senior citizens received a pension and/or social security. Seventeen percent of seniors live below the national poverty line, a rate somewhat lower than for the population at large indicating that social protection for senior citizens is achieving its objectives although 7 percent of senior citizens reported zero income suggesting that some are still left behind.

Other social protections for senior citizens include services at community-based senior centers and home health care for the homebound. Senior citizens receive a 75 percent subsidy for health care costs in the government system and for those who do not work, government pays their Health Care Fund premium from funds derived from tobacco taxes.

***Persons with disabilities:*** Some persons with severe disabilities are eligible to receive social security. Otherwise, persons with severe disabilities who are home-bound are eligible for a monthly government stipend of US$100 per month. Persons who are confined to a wheelchair or who are blind are eligible for a stipend of $70 per month (MCCA, 2019). This is not a "living wage" but a small income stream to provide a measure of self-sufficiency. A recent study, *The 2017 Palau Disability Report* developed by the Office of Planning and Statistics with support from UNICEF and the Pacific Community found that despite equality under the law, there are significant disparities between persons with disabilities and the general population with respect to education, employment and poverty status.

***Protection from unemployment***: Palau's unemployment rate is low, possibly artificially low due to the high rates of out-migration to the United States. SDG working group chairs note with concern that the formal sector labor force is now dominated by non-Palauans (MOF, 2019). Weak labor support services for Palauan workers have been highlighted as contributing to both out-migration and dependence on foreign workers. Improved job placement services and labor laws that protect citizens from exploitive labor practices are needed to better support Palauan workers (See also SDG 8).

***Protection against low income***: A minimum wage (now US$3.50 per hour) is a form of social protection that disproportionally benefits low-wage earners. Other than the stipend for persons with disabilities, there are no direct monetary payments for those who are unemployed or earning a low income. They may, however, be eligible for Lifeline Electric, Water, and Sewer subsidy for the first 150 kilowatts of usage; 60 households participated in this program in 2017. A No-Income Assistance Program provides additional support for utilities; four households participated in this program in 2017. Health care charges in the government system are assessed based on a sliding fee schedule providing an additional subsidy for low income earners and their dependents.

***Protecting access to land:*** Land is a scarce commodity in Palau and land suitable for agriculture and development is even scarcer. Only 14 percent of Palau's land area is considered optimal for agriculture (USDA, 1983); competition is intense for use of these same lands for other purposes – tourism, housing, and commercial development. Under the Palau Constitution, only citizens can own land, but non-citizens can lease land for up to 99 years. During the recent tourism boom, there has been increasing demand for land from non-citizen investors. Since much of these lands are controlled by clans rather than individuals, some Palauans are being displaced from lands on which they have lived, sometimes for generations. At the same time, land pressures resulting from climate-induced sea level rise are becoming evident. To address this problem, Government has negotiated a low-interest loan from development partners to expand the supply of affordable housing with priority to displaced persons. (See also SDG 9).

## Pathways to 2030

Palau has not adopted an official national target for poverty reduction, but members of SDG 1 Working Group generally believe that as a high-income country, the goal should be nothing less than poverty eradication. Considering the 2006 to 2014 trend line, a 'business as usual' approach based on

benefits from an expanding economy cascading down to low income and marginalized populations will reduce poverty rates by half in accordance with SDG target but will not eradicate poverty by 2030. To eradicate poverty, a coordinated strategy will be needed with targeted interventions that address the specific circumstances of those who have fallen behind (currently live in poverty) and those at risk (vulnerable to poverty).

**Closing gaps**

- Enact labor laws that comply with international standards to protect Palauan workers from exploitation in the workplace and provide an accessible mechanism for redressing complaints. Strengthen job placement services for Palauans thus helping to slow out-migration.
- Address high poverty rates in outlying communities (Kayangel, Angaur, Peleliu) and among female-headed households. Ensure equity across all ethnic groups.

**Improving quality and reach**

- The HIES shows that education has a strong protective benefit, especially in rural areas. Investing in high quality pre-primary and elementary education can prevent future poverty. Investment in adult education, general and vocation-specific, can reduce poverty among out of school adults.
- Additional investment in post-secondary education for people with disabilities and employment support services for this population can reduce poverty and enhance equality in accordance with the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

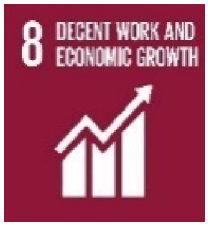
**Building Resilience**

- Palau's cultural tradition of "sharing and caring" is a poverty strategy. The system is under stress due to monetarization and changing values but remains critical to progress toward SDG 1 targets. Traditional leaders and civil society have important roles to play in ensuring that traditional social supports remain strong and "fit for purpose" in a 21st century world.
- Low income populations are particularly vulnerable to economic shocks. During the slow season, they are most likely to have their hours cut or to be laid off. Small business owners – e.g. boat operators, bento makers - are also at risk of episodic poverty during economic downturns. While solutions are challenging, with creativity, innovative and sustainable solutions can be found.
- Climate change is a particularly serious threat to those living in poverty or just above it due to the impact of on ecosystem services on which their livelihoods depend. Climate resilience must be part of an explicit comprehensive poverty prevention and alleviation strategy..

**Progressing with the past:**
**Culture of "sharing and caring"**

Core traditional Palauan values include responsibility to kin and clan, reciprocity, and social security. From birth, every Palauan is imbedded within a network of family and clan relationships with reciprocal obligations, responsibilities, and rights. While in Western culture, people invest in banks or insurance for social security, in Palau, people invest in family and clan who in turn are responsible for the social security of all members.

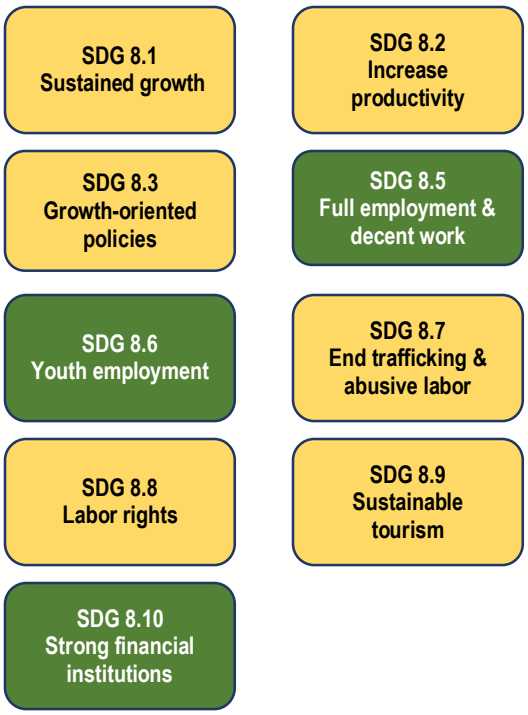
This is a beautiful system that is many ways is still very strong but also under stress due to monetarization and encroaching individualistic values. While government can provide policy space for discussing the role of custom in poverty alleviation, the primary responsibility for protecting, preserving (and sometimes reforming) these age-old cultural values and practices rests with traditional leaders and the community itself. Ongoing work to localize the SDGs and engage communities around the SDGs may provide an opportunity for further considering these matters.




# Economic Growth and Decent Work

**Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full employment and decent work**

Sustained and inclusive economic growth is necessary for sustainable development, poverty eradication, human services and well-being, and environmental protection. Economic growth in turn is supported by increasing labor productivity, reduced unemployment, and access to financial services. Palau incorporates 9 of the 10 SDG 8 targets in its National SDG Framework.[9]

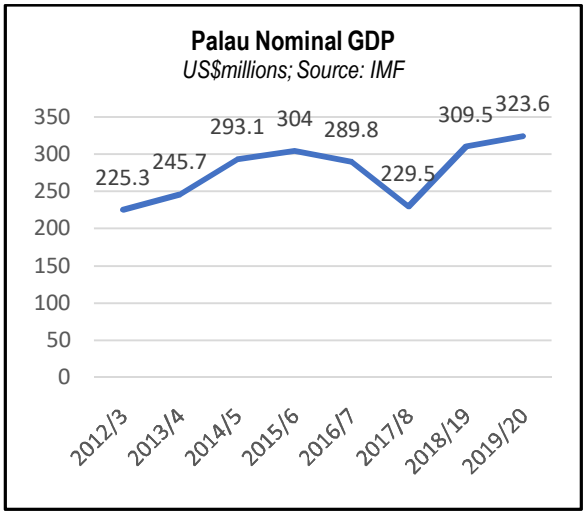



## Palau's Economic Profile

*SDGs 8.1, 8.2, and 8.3*

***Sustained economic growth***: Palau's small island economy is heavily dependent on tourism and foreign grants. Accordingly, the economy is vulnerable to external economic shocks due to global and regional volatility. It is also vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters.

Despite fluctuations, Palau's economic growth has generally been upward. In FY2017, GDP per capita exceeded US$16,000, the highest in Oceania, and moved Palau into the World Bank's high-income category. With this, Palau is on-track toward SDG 8.1.




***Growth oriented policies:*** Government is pursuing policies designed to stimulate growth while reducing volatility and vulnerability.

- A Responsible Tourism Policy has been developed to transition the visitor industry from one based on high-volume to one focused on low-volume, high-value tourism aligned with Palau's environmental and cultural aspirations (see SDG 8.9).
- Government is working to establish a new domestic fishing industry as part of the National Marine Sanctuary (see "Leading Economic Sectors" below).
- Government has adopted a medium-term fiscal strategy that will (1) create a debt management framework; (2) modernize the tax structure; (3) increase domestic investment in infrastructure and accelerate use of the Pub

> "The economy of Palau is Palau's environment and Palau's environment is Palau's economy"
>
> *H.E. Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.*

[9] Color coding: Blue (achieved); Green (on-track), Yellow (progressing; Red (off-track); Grey (lack data).

lic-Private Partnership (PPP) model for financing infrastructure; (4) modernize state owned enterprises; and (5) enhance long-term fiscal sustainability of the Civil Service Pension Fund.

## Leading Economic Sectors

*SDGs 8.3, 8.9, and 8.10*

***Tourism:*** Tourism is Palau's leading economic sector. Before 2014, the industry was dominated by the diving market. In 2014 and 2015, a dramatic spike in packaged travel groups from the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) shifted the industry and changed the nature of the tourism experience in Palau. This shift into mass-market tourism was driven by vertically integrated package tours, bringing visitors who have prepaid their full itinerary, resulting in lower in-country visitor spending. Large numbers of relatively low-revenue tourists strained Palau's management and regulatory authorities and infrastructure. High volumes also threatened the environment and the social-cultural fabric. In response, a new tourism policy has been developed.

The *Palau Responsible Tourism Policy Framework* was adopted in 2015. The policy shifts the industry profile from low-end mass market packaged tours to a high-value model delivering a Pristine Paradise Palau brand experience to discerning travelers. Implementation will require strong partnership and a shared vision across government, the industry, and communities.

**Palau's Responsible Tourism Policy**

***Vision:*** A Pristine Paradise Palau for everyone.

***Mission****:* We intend to grow and sustain a visitor industry that is respectful of our people and environment, ensures the optimum flow and retention of revenue in our economy, and consistently delivers on the Promise of a Pristine Paradise Palau experience to all.

***Marine sector:*** Palau has embraced the concept of a "Blue Pacific" economy based on ocean-based tourism, sustainable fisheries, aquaculture, and biotechnology. Of these, ocean-based tourism remains the largest contributor to the economy. The fisheries sector contributed 4.6 percent to the Palau GDP in 2014 (Gillet, 2016) but much of this catch is not sustainable. The SOE (2019) estimates that 79 percent of the value of nearshore fisheries and 50 percent of the value of offshore fisheries are unsustainable. The contribution of sustainable fisheries to the Palau economy is therefore about 1.8 percent (SOE, 2019). Overall, the demand for fish by the residential and tourism market far exceeds supply but the short-term emphasis needs to be on sustainability of catch, including greater use of pelagic food fish while adjusting catch in near shore reef fisheries to sustainable limits (SOE, 2019); See also SDG 14.

Aquaculture is a relatively new marine industry with potential to contribute to the economy and food security while reducing stress on reef food fish. In 2014, milkfish and giant clam aquaculture was valued at $285,000, a level far below demand for local consumption and export (Gillett, 2016).Constraints to growth include poaching, inadequate supply of seed clams, and reluctance of farmers to assume loans for expansion due to uncertainties in the industry (SOE, 2019).

Pelagic fish have potential to meet demand for local consumption while reducing stress on near shore food fish. The National Marine Sanctuary includes provisions for a new domestic fishing industry to support the local market (see text box).

**Revitalizing Domestic Fisheries**

Palau's National Marine Sanctuary is widely hailed as a conservation measure. It is this but it is also an economic strategy for growing the value of Palau's domestic fisheries to feed residents and visitors while giving near shore reef fisheries a rest.

Although only 20 percent of Palau's EEZ will be open to fisheries, it is envisaged that the value of fish caught and marketed locally will surpass the value of current licensure agreements.

To reap the economic benefits of the PNMS, Palau is exploring strategic partnerships for developing a local fishing fleet, establishing a central fish auction market, building processing and wharf facilities, and identifying value-added products that can be developed from excess catch or by-catch. (See also SDG 14).

***Agriculture:*** Since the 1980's the contribution of agriculture to Palau's economy has steadily declined, now contributing about 3 percent to Palau's GDP. Over the same period food imports have steadily increased. For the period FY 2013-FY2017, food imports averaged $39 million per annum or about 22 percent of total imports (Statistical Yearbook, 2017).

A national policy and plan for *Achieving Resilient Agriculture and Aquaculture* was adopted in 2015. The overarching vision

of this policy is – "a resilient, sustainable, and food secured Palau" The stated goals are to locally produce 50 percent of Palau's food requirements by 2020 and 80 percent by 2025. Although recent statistics on local production are not yet available, it is clear that Palau is off-target in relation to these goals.

Initiatives to support agriculture include:

- Low-interest farm loan facility provided through the National Development Bank of Palau
- A new initiative by the Palau Organic Growers Association, *Building Prosperity for Women Producers, Processors, and Women Owned Businesses Through Organic Value Chains* funded by Australian ODA; the project will support economic empowerment of women by developing organic value chains directly benefiting women
- A pig improvement project and pig slaughterhouse implemented by the Bureau of Agriculture enables local pork to be sold in the tourism market
- Taro patch rehabilitation projects are underway led by community-based women's groups
- Ongoing support to farmers by the Bureau of Agriculture includes tilling services, technical advice, and propagation of seedlings.

**The policy and plan *Achieving Resilient Agriculture and Aquaculture*** calls for

- Local production of 50% of food requirements by 2020
- Local production of 80% of food requirements by 2025

Goals and strategies are organized around: (1) institutional resilience; (2) ecosystem resilience; (3) community resilience; and (4) economic resilience.

***Finance Sector:*** The ratio of bank accounts to population is 1.49 in FY2017 (MOF, 2019). This suggests that virtually every adult has a banking relationship with many persons having multiple relationships. Domestic lending, however, is low at 12 percent of GDP (IMF, 2019).

## Labor Market

*SDGs 8.5, 8.6, 8.7 and 8.8*

***Employed persons***: The number of employed persons increased by 4.1 percent between FY2016 and FY2017. There were 5,576 Palau citizens in the formal sector workforce and 6,290 foreigners (2017). The average wage increased by 2 percent from $10,832 in FY2016 to $11,066 in FY2017. The average wage for citizens was $13,670 and for foreign workers, $8,764. This wage differential reflects market forces but it is a driver for foreign employment. The average wage for women was $11,432 and for men, $10,831 for males (MOF, 2019).

Palau's dependence on foreign labor reflects market condition, outmigration by Palau youth seeking higher wages and more personal freedoms abroad. The increasing domination of the formal economic section by foreign workers is a serious issue economic, social, and cultural issue. Outmigration needs to be slowed and reverse migration encouraged if Palau is to achieve economic sustainability.

***Unemployment:*** The labor market is close to full employment. Unemployment for youth is slightly higher than for the general population but is still low by global standards – 1.3 percent for youth 16-19 years of age and 2.3 percent for youth 20-24 years of age (Census, 2015).

***Working conditions:*** Palau is a member of the International Labor Organization (ILO) but has not ratified any of the eight fundamental ILO Conventions. A Palau Labor Advisory Group (PLAG) was created by Executive Order No. 380. The group is tasked with revamping existing labor laws in accordance with international standards.

Palau is working to eliminate human trafficking with the stated goal of moving from Tier 2 to Tier 1 status in U.S. State Department classification. An Anti-Smuggling and Trafficking Act was enacted in 2005 (amended 2014) and the Ministry of Justice has more recently established a designated unit to implement the act and investigate alleged violations. (See also SDG 16).

***Gender gap:*** Women are more likely than men to be outside the labor force (54 percent of women in contrast to 36 percent of men). When employed, however, the gender wage gap in small (1 percent) although the average obscures occupation-specific gaps ranging from a high of 36 percent (skilled agriculture, forestry, and fisheries workers) to -23 percent (clerical) (Census, 2015 and MCCA, 2018).

| Wage Gap by Gender<br>*Source: 2014 HIES - -Analysis by MCCA & MOF* | |
|---|---|
| **Occupational Group** | **Gender Gap** |
| Managers | 9% |
| Professionals | 18% |
| Technicians & associate professionals | -5% |
| Clerical | -23% |
| Service & sales | 18% |
| Skilled agriculture, forestry, fisheries | 36% |
| Crafts & trades | 1% |
| Operators & assemblers | 28% |
| Elementary occupations | 2% |
| All | 1% |

## Other Economic Indicators

***Debt & External stability*:** The National Government has six major loans outstanding for infrastructure development initially valued at $107.8m with a current balance of $50.3m (FY2017). The total debt service as a percent of recurring budget in FY2016 was 2.9 percent and in FY2017 was 3.1 percent (MOF, 2019; IMF, 2019).

## Pathways to 2030

***Achievements***: In the 25 years post-independence, Palau has evolved from a low-income country to a high-income country while achieving 7 of the 8 MDGs and protecting the environment for the benefit of current and future generations.

***Challenges***: Palau's reliance on tourism creates challenges due to tourism's susceptibility to external economic volatility. Tourism activities raise demand for fuel and food imports increasing Palau's vulnerability to global commodity price fluctuations. A strong US dollar can impact Palau's competitiveness particularly in the tourism industry and slowdown in Asian economies can further impact the industry. The risk of increased frequency and severity of inclement weather conditions resulting from climate change and sea level rise could further erode tourism and growth prospects.

***Priorities:*** Sustaining growth, while protecting the environment, and enhancing resilience to external shocks are current priorities.

**Closing gaps**

- Non-citizens comprise 53 percent of the workforce. With Palau close to full domestic employment, future growth will be based on imported labor unless measures can be instituted to stem out-migration while attracting overseas Palauans to return home. In the 1990's, a population policy was drafted but never officially adopted (CoPopChi, 1998). This work needs to be revisited and a population policy developed to ensure long-term sustainability.
- Continue emphasis on policies and programs that encourage women's participation in the labor force (e.g. universal access to sexual and reproductive health services and elimination of gender based violence) are key to empowering women and keeping girls in school, and women in the workforce.
- Address gaps in Palau's labor laws and ensure a "level playing field" for citizen workers.

**Improving quality and reach**

- The Sustainable Tourism Policy represents the culmination of many years of work to identify a pathway toward an environmentally and culturally friendly visitor industry. Engagement of all stakeholders and careful monitoring of policy implementation, with adjustments as warranted, will be needed moving forward.
- Increasing domestic food production from both marine and agriculture sources is essential for food security and NCD prevention.

**Building resilience**

- Building resilience against fluctuations in the tourism industry is critical for sustained economic growth. For the short-term, development of a domestic fishing industry and revitalization of agriculture will contribute to resilience. Over the medium-term, consideration may be given to a new industry – possibly knowledge based – that will enhance economic sustainability while attracting overseas Palauans to return home.
- Climate change is the single greatest threat to economic resilience in a marine-based economy. Rising seas, higher ocean temperatures, and acidification have the potential to undermine the economy. Palau is committed to both climate mitigation and adaptation measures (see SDGs 7 and 13).

# Industry and Infrastructure

## Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation

Infrastructure is a significant development issue for Palau, industrialization less so. Due to Palau's small size and vulnerable ecosystems, industrialization (aka manufacturing) has not been pursued beyond small value niche products. Palau has integrated only 3 of the SDG 9 targets into the National SDG Framework.[10,11]

**SDG 9.1 Infrastructure development**

**SDG 9.2. Promote sustainable industrialization**

**SDG 9.3. Retrofit industry for sustainability**

## Infrastructure

### SDG 9.1 and 9.3

During Palau's first 25 years as an independent nation, priority has been given to developing the physical infrastructure needed to support prosperity and human well-being while protecting the environment. A national road system has been constructed that ensures virtually all residents, excepting those in the most remote islands, have access to an all-weather road. The airport and seaport have been expanded. A hospital and community health centers have been built along with new or renovated schools. Power, water, sanitation, and communications infrastructure have been upgraded. In 2017 opening an undersea cable opened to connect Palau to high speed internet.

To keep abreast of technological advances while building climate resilience, continuous investment in infrastructure is needed. Projects already in the pipeline include expansion of the international airport and domestic airports in Peleliu and Angaur, a state-of-the-art landfill, new and improved parks, a new corrections facility, rural housing, a "one-stop shop" housing core government services in Koror, and a second undersea cable to build redundancy in communications. In the lead-up to 2030 other necessary investments will include new port facilities, a central fish market, a new hospital, improved rural water systems, and selective relocation of entire communities to upland sites in anticipation of rising sea levels (SORA, 2019).

Now that Palau has achieved high income status, more of the financial burden for infrastructure will be borne domestically. To meet these financial requirements, Palau will establish an infrastructure reserve fund and enter into Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) – for Palau, a new approach to development finance (SOR, 2019). The first PPP project approved in early 2019 will expand the airport with other PPP projects expected to follow soon after (SORA, 2019). High priority will be given to ensuring climate resilience of critical infrastructure such as the hospital (photo below).

## Pathways to 2030

**Building resilience**

- Much of Palau's critical infrastructure and most rural communities are situated in coastal areas susceptible to rising tides. Significant investment will be needed to enhance climate resilience.
- Closely related to the preceding, is a need to support states in developing land use master plans that are both SDG and climate informed (see also SDG 15).

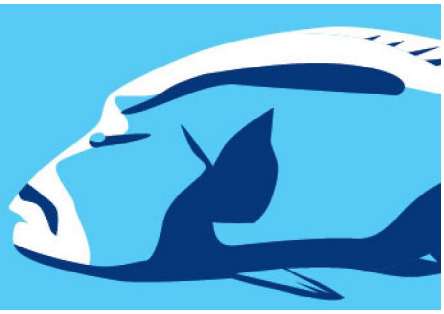
Belau National Hospital, Palau's only secondary care facility is located at sea level; the hospital is among critical infrastructure that needs to be relocated to higher ground in response to climate change.

[10] SDG Target 11.6 (solid waste) is relevant for Palau but has been combined with SDG 12.6 which also addresses solid waste

[11] Color Code: Blue (achieved); Green (on-track); Yellow (progressing); Red (off-track); Grey (insufficient data).

Pillar 3

# Planet – Protecting Our Island Home



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The original definition of sustainable development crafted by the Brundtland Commission in 1987 – ““development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” – emphasized the environment as the heart of sustainability. Although the concept of sustainability has broadened subsequently to encompass people, prosperity, peace, and partnerships, protecting our planet remains a critical element within 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. For Palau, the environment, people, and prosperity are inextricably linked.

## Introduction

Although internationally renowned for its marine environment, Palau has been blessed with ecological riches both above and below the water. Contemporary environmental conservation has evolved from a long tradition of environment awareness and action. Article VI of the Constitution mandates the national government to take positive action to attain conservation of a beautiful, healthful, and resourceful natural environment; this mandate further reflects Palau’s commitment to environmental conservation. In the global arena, Palau’s leaders have been at the forefront of advocacy for sustainable fisheries, ocean preservation, biodiversity protection, and climate action. At home, they have matched their rhetoric with concrete actions that make Palau today a beacon for environmental sustainability.

## Content

Under the environmental pillar, the Palau VNR considers six SDGs

- SDG 6, water and sanitation
- SDG 7, energy
- SDG 12, sustainable protection and consumption
- SDG 13, climate change
- SDG 14, oceans
- SDG 15, lands and forests

> “We do not inherit the earth from our parents; we borrow it from our children.”
>
> *Traditional wisdom*

# Clean Water and Sanitation for All

**Ensure availability and sustainable management of clean water and sanitation for all**

Safe water and sanitation and sustainable management of freshwater ecosystems are essential for human and environmental well-being, economic prosperity, and social integration. Water and sanitation are recognized by the United Nations as among the core human rights. SDG 6 commits to completing the unfinished work of the MDGs for sanitation and to achieving a higher ambition for water – safe, affordable, and continuous water for all. Palau has incorporated 5 of 8 SDG 6 targets into the National SDG Framework.[12]

**SDG 6.1**
**Universal access to safe & affordable drinking water**

**SDG 6.2**
**Adequate & equitable sanitation for all**

**SDG 6.4**
**Water use efficiency & sustainable water withdrawals**

**SDG 6.5**
**Integrated water resource management**

**SDG 6.6**
**Protect & restore water related ecosystems**

## Water and Sanitation

*SDGs 6.1 and 6.2*

***Water:*** Every household in Palau has access to water; 97 percent have access to public water systems; the remaining households rely on rainwater catchments (Census, 2015). Most households lacking access to public water are located on the sparsely populated, remote atolls of Kayangel, Sonsorol, and Hatohobei.

There are 20 public water systems, all monitored regularly by the Palau Environmental Quality Protection Board for chlorine residual, bacteria, and turbidity. The Koror-Airai system serving 80 percent of the population meets national safe water standards. Rural systems often fail to meet standards for bacteria and turbidity. Many households supplement the public water system with catchments for drinking purposes while some households purchase water either because they lack access to safe water or because they do not trust the safety of the public water system. For low-income households, boiling or purchasing water can be costly. These common practices indicate that Palau is not yet finished with SDG 6.

A comprehensive water sector plan and a water safety plan were developed in 2010 for the Koror-Airai system. Implementation has focused on a Japan-assisted project to replace mains and distribution line in the Koror-Airai system (completion 2019). This is an investment in health, efficiency, and conservation since pre-project water loss was estimated at 48 percent due to the poor condition of the distribution lines.

***Sanitation:*** All households have a toilet facility of some type; 91.8 percent use flush toilets and 7.8 percent use "benjos" (or Type III toilets). Public sewer systems are available only in Koror-Airai and Melekeok. In 2015, 42.8 percent of homes in Koror and Melekeok were connected to the public sewer system while 43.2 percent used on-site septic systems (Census, 2015). A US$26.9 million Asian Development Bank project was launched in 2013 to rehabilitate the sewer system in Koror and extend the system to the rapidly urbanizing Airai community. This project is slated for completion in 2019.

## Freshwater Resources

*SDGs 6.4, 6.5, and 6.6*

Palau does not have date that is good enough to assess progress toward SDG 6.4 (sustainable water withdrawals). Koror and Babeldaob rely on surface water resources. Outlying islands rely on a combination of ground water and catchments. Peleliu is the site of a solar desalination project that significantly increases water availability and safety (see text box on page following). All water sources are subject to depletion during the dry season and prolonged droughts.

Besides drought, threats to Palau's water resources include man-made contamination and weather variability exacerbated by climate change. Uncontrolled development, poor land use practices, and deforestation in combination with drought and storm activity are causing land degradation and sedimentation problems in or near significant watersheds. Surface and

[12] Color Code: Blue (achieved); Green (on-track); Yellow (progressing); Red (off-track); Grey (insufficient data).

ground water are subject to pollution and to depletion resulting from poorly planned development.

A Babeldaob Watershed Alliance was formed in 2008 bringing together communities, government agencies, conservationists and traditional leader to protect watersheds using a "ridge-to-reef" approach.

## Integrated Water Resource Management

*SDG 6.5*

Palau has adopted a four-pronged approach to water management.

(1) Upgrade water systems and reduce water subsidies; work in progress initially targeting the Koror-Airai system that serves 80 percent of the population.
(2) Use existing Protected Area Network legislation together with buffer zone regulations to protect critical watersheds; encourage and support land use planning led by state governments.
(3) Engage the community in water conservation through comprehensive public water conservation education.
(4) Secure new technologies to address sustainability issues (e.g. Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion; desalination; atmospheric water generation, and other options).

## Pathways to 2030

Because Palau is close to meeting SDG 6 targets, there is risk of underestimating the importance of continuing the work to completion.

**Closing gaps**

- The Koror-Airai water improvements address safety and efficiency of the system but because these improvements only replace distribution lines; individual households may still have water safety issues arising in their connection lines.
- Rural communities lack assurance of safe drinking water delivered through their public water systems. Further investments are needed in both infrastructure and operations to ensure rural water systems consistently meet national safe water standards.
- Ensure that where "benjos" (Type III toilets) are used, they adhere to strict environmental health guidelines including unit density and distance from wells and/or aquatic environments.
- In densely populated rural communities, further development of public sewerage will be needed for the well-being of residents and the environment and to promote economic development.

**Improving quality and reach**

- Education and awareness about water conservation is ongoing and needs to be continued,
- More research is needed to determine sustainable water withdrawals from surface and ground sources under different climate conditions.

**Building resilience**

- All new construction should include provisions for rainwater harvesting and storage. While ideally this will be part of Palau's building code, until such time as a code is enacted, it can be achieved either through revision to EQPB regulations or state building permit processes or as a requirement for accessing housing loans through the National Development Bank or Palau Housing Authority..
- Palau is forecasted to experience more frequent and longer droughts as a result of climate change. Planned water redundancy is needed to ensure that safe alternative sources are available during droughts and other emergencies.
- Protection of freshwater resources needs to be a priority objective of land use master planning (see also SDG 15).

**Innovation for Sustainability**

A solar water generation system and saltwater desalination plant on the outlying island of Peleliu (resident population 450) has increased water supply from 19 to 150 liters per person per day, increased water safety and security, eliminated use of 41 tons of diesel fuel per annum and reduced carbon emissions by 28 tons. This project was supported by the Government of Japan and the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat.

# Energy for All

## Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all

SDG 7 recognizes universal access to modern, clean energy as an enabler of sustainability that underpins the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with special linkages to SDG 6 (water and sanitation) and SDG 13 (climate action). Palau has incorporated 3 of the 5 SDG 7 targets in the National SDG Framework.[13]

**SDG 7.1**
**Universal access to modern energy**

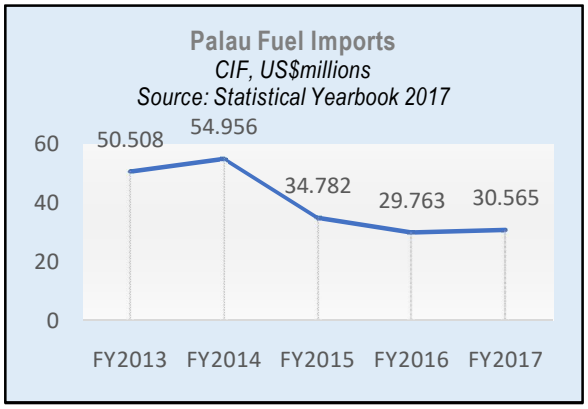
**SDG 7.2**
**Increase share of renewable energy**

**SDG 7.3**
**Double energy efficiency**

## Overview

Palau has achieved universal access to modern energy (SDG 7.1) and under the 2010 National Energy Policy, made significant progress toward increased energy efficiency (SDG 7.3) as evidenced by a sharp decline in fuel imports (see graph).

Work toward SDG 7.2 (renewable energy) has progressed more slowly. Several small solar projects have been developed with support from multiple donors including the European Union, Japan, UAE, and New Zealand.




These systems involve solar panels at public sites (capitol, airport, hospital, sports facilities, and state government offices) that feed into the national grid, as well as rooftop solar systems on houses and businesses in line with the Net Metering Act. The contribution of these projects to total energy requirements is small but growing, now standing at 3.3 percent (National Energy Office, 2019). The remote northern island of Kayangel will become 100 percent solar powered in July 2019.

Maintenance of the solar installations, however, has proven challenging due to shortage of spare parts and skilled technicians. A New Zealand assisted project (upcoming) will address this gap by training local technicians for solar operations and maintenance.

### Pathway to 2030

The National Energy Master Plan (2019) emphasizes efficiency and transition from diesel generation to renewable energy. A request for proposals is now out for an Independent Power Producer (IPP) to develop a solar + storage grid system for Babeldaob and Koror. Once the IPP is in place, the transition to a renewable energy future will be rapid.

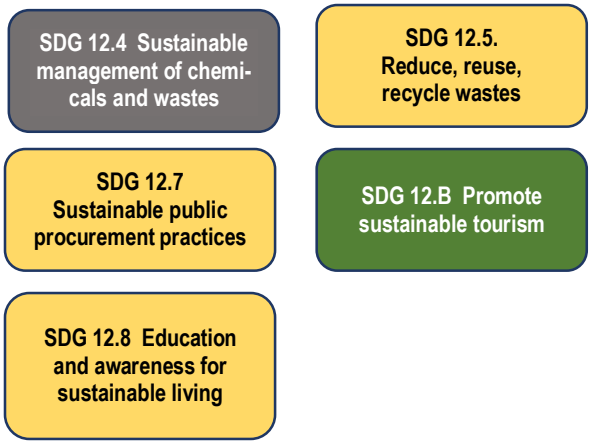
While the focus is on the energy generation sub-sector, a second component of the Energy Plan addresses the transportation sub-sector. For sea transport, a new fleet of vessels for domestic transport is envisioned using a combination of sail, solar, and coconut oil (see SDG 13) (SORA, 2019). For land transport, a three-pronged approach is envisaged based on transition to electric vehicles, development of public transportation, and creating an environment conducive to alternative transport – walking and biking (Palau Climate Change Policy, 2015).

[13] Color coding: Blue (achieved); Green (on-track); Yellow (progressing), Red (off-track); Grey (inadequate data).

# Sustainable Production & Consumption

## Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

SDG 12 is about "decoupling" economic growth from unsustainable resource use. As Palau's economy continues to grow led by the tourism sector, this will become an increasingly relevant goal. For now, Palau has incorporated 5 of the 12 targets into the National SDG Framework.[14]




## Palau Context

Most products consumed in Palau are imported. For this reason, measuring Palau's material footprint must consider not only the materials used to produce the product(s) but the fuel used in their importation and if recycled at their end of their life, the fuel used to ship recycled material to overseas processing centers. Data are not available to measure progress using the "material footprint" statistic that is cited in SDG 12.1. Discussion here will highlight measures taken to reduce Palau's material footprint at a more general level.

## Solid Waste

*SDGs 12.4 and 12.5*

For now, the national landfill is located in Koror. The landfill uses a semi-aerobic "Fukuoka" system with a series of dikes protecting the adjacent aquatic environment. A new landfill is under construction on Babeldaob, conveniently located to serve Koror and all ten Babeldaob states.

[14] Color coding: Blue (Achieved); Green (on-track); Yellow (progressing); Red (off-track); Grey (insufficient data).

Partially as a result of increased tourism and partially as a result of an increasingly consumer-oriented society, the volume of solid waste increased by 63 percent between 2005 and 2014 (from 0.55 pounds per person per day in 2005 to 0.9 pounds per person per day in 2014). Since 2006, Koror State has operated a highly successful "3-R" (reduce, reuse, recycle) program that diverts 51 percent of solid waste away from the landfill. Components of the program include composting, beverage container deposit redemption, plastic-to-energy project, glass crafting, scrap metal program, and tire shredding. Despite significant progress, a 2018 assessment finds there is still work to be done to expand recycling.

| Type | Rate of recycling | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | High >70% | Average 50-69% | Poor <50% | None |
| Paper | | | X | |
| Plastic | | X | | |
| Metal | | X | | |
| Construction | | | X | |
| E-waste | | | | X |
| Beverage containers | | X | | |
| Source: Palau Country Report 2018 Asia-Pacific 3-R Forum | | | | |

## Examples of Other Initiatives

*SDGs 2.7, 2.8, and 2.B*

Other relevant initiatives include:

- The Plastic Bag Use Reduction Law (RPPL 10-14) bans retail distribution of plastic bags effective January 1, 2020;
- The Responsible Tourism Education Act of 2018 requires businesses to educate visitors on tourism policies, encourages use of reusable alternatives to single use plastics or Styrofoam, and bans reef toxic sunscreen;
- Food-safe plastic alternatives are now continuously available in local outlets at competitive prices;
- A school curriculum that goes alongside the Responsible Tourism Act teaches sustainable practices to Palau's own children.

Additionally, the President through Executive Order has banned single-use plastics in the Executive Branch of Government and has mandated that pelagic fish be served (rather than reef fish) at Executive Branch functions. (See also SDG 14).

Palau has developed a Sustainable Tourism Policy that seeks to minimize the footprint of tourism on the natural environment while maximizing tourism revenues. See the Palau Pledge alongside now required for all visitors. See also SDG 14.

## Pathways to 2030

Palau has started on a pathway toward sustainable production and consumption but much is needed to accelerate progress.

**Filling gaps**

- Recycling needs to extend to a wider range of products. E-waste and junked cars are among priorities. In particular for cars, legislation is needed to make importers, especially of used secondhand vehicles and tires, responsible for the cost of repatriation at the end of the product's useful life.

**Expanding quality and reach**

- The 3-R initiative is primarily Koror based but needs to extend across the country with more active engagement of stakeholders and sustained social marketing. As a major economic sector, government needs to lead by example.

**Building resilience**

- Palau culture and tradition is replete with examples of practices and beliefs that promote sustainable consumption. One is the conservation ethic instilled in every child, "take only what you need, think always of tomorrow". SDG 12 is one toward which Palau can truly progress with the past.

**Palau Pledge**

Palau is the first nation on earth to change its immigration laws for the cause of environmental protection. Upon entry, visitors sign a passport pledge to act in an ecologically responsible way for the sake of Palau's children and future generations.

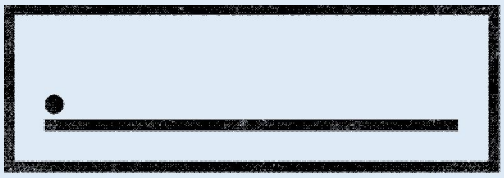
The text:

Children of Palau.
I take this pledge,
As your guest,
To preserve and protect
Your beautiful and unique
Island home.

I vow to tread lightly,
Act kindly and
Explore mindfully.

I shall not take what is not given.
I shall not harm
What does not harm me.

The only footprints
I shall leave are those
That will not wash away.



PALAU PLEDGE

"The Palau Pledge", a project of the Friends of the Palau National Marine Sanctuary, a Palau-based NGO.

# Climate Action

## Take urgent action to address climate change and its impacts

SDG 13 addresses two inter-linked issues, climate change and disaster risk reduction. Because negotiations on the 2030 Agenda were ongoing simultaneously with negotiations on the Paris Agreement to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, SDG negotiators purposely left the text of SDG 13 general to avoid duplicative effort. Palau, together with other small island developing states, was an outspoken advocate for a strong climate agreement limiting global temperature increase to 1.5$^{0}$C and was the second country (after Fiji) to ratify the Paris Agreement. Palau integrates 2 of the 5 SDG 13 targets into the National SDG Framework.[15]

**SDG 13.1 Climate hazards & natural disasters**

**SDG 13.2. Climate change integrated into policies & plans**

## Climate Mitigation: Paris Agreement

Mitigation refers to measures to slow or reverse climate change by reducing or sequestering greenhouse gas emissions. By agreement, SDG 13 does not contain mitigation targets as these are determined by each country for itself through the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) process pursuant to the Paris Agreement. This report, however, includes a brief summary of Palau's NDC and its associated progress.

Palau's greenhouse gas emissions are miniscule in the global picture but relatively high per capita – average of 12.3 metric tons per capita (Office of Climate Change). Emissions are driven by a fossil-fuel based energy sector accounting for 84-to-96 percent of emissions (Palau Climate Change Policy, 2015).

Because the energy sector is the leading emitter, Palau's NDC prioritizes energy. The target is a 22 percent reduction in emissions below 2005 levels by 2025. This is to be achieved by a combination of energy efficiency and transition to renewable energy sources (Palau NDC, 2015). The Palau *Action Plan: The Way Forward to a Clean Energy Future* is being implemented. (See SDG 7).

Energy is not the only sector that emits greenhouse gases. Other relevant sectors include waste management, construction, and transportation. For waste management, Palau is exploring methane recovery from the national landfill. For construction, Palau is promoting energy efficiency through a national building code, now under consideration by the congress. For transportation, Palau is pursuing an innovative marine vessel design fueled by renewable energy. (See textbox about the Sustainable Sea Transportation initiative on the page following). On land, Palau is pursuing a Complete the Streets Initiative that supports use of alternative transport – walking, biking, and public transportation –in addition to transitioning to fuel efficient vehicles over the medium-term (Palau Climate Change Policy, 2015).

'Complete the Streets' – promote walking and biking through safe, attractive multi-purposes road designs.

## Climate Adaptation

*SDG 13.1*

Adaptation refers to measures to reduce the impact of climate change on human well-being, including through disaster risk management. All five of the global SDG 13 targets integrate both adaptation and disasters risk reduction. (Note that SDG Target 11.5. also addresses disaster risk reduction).

***Palau Climate Change Policy:*** The Palau Climate Change Policy of 2015 responds to SDG targets 13.1, 13.2, and 13.B. with three overarching policy objectives.

[15] Color Code: Blue (achieved); Green (on-track); Yellow (progressing); Red (off-track); Grey (insufficient data).

- Enhance adaptation and across all sectors.
- Improve ability to manage unexpected disasters and minimize disaster risks.
- Mitigate climate change by maximizing energy efficiency, protecting carbon sinks (e.g. oceans and forests), and minimizing greenhouse gas emissions.

The policy addresses climate mitigation and adaptation across 9 sectors (agriculture and fisheries, health, biodiversity conservation and natural resource management, society and culture, tourism, critical infrastructure, utilities, finance and economic development, and education). Within limitations imposed by available resources, actions are ongoing across all sectors.

The policy identifies six priorities for action.

- Water – improve management and maintenance of existing systems, watershed protection, drought and flood preparedness, and centralized water treatment in urban areas (see SDG 6 and SDG 15).
- Agriculture – promote climate resilient agriculture and aquaculture (see SDG 8).
- Sustainably manage coastal ecosystems and protect ocean health as this is an important sink for greenhouse gases (see SDG 14).
- Protect forests which are important climate sinks (see SDG 15).
- Human health – increase public awareness about mosquito-borne diseases and reduce mosquito breeding sites (see SDG 3).
- Policy and planning – develop a comprehensive vulnerability and adaptation strategy that also addresses wider development, social and environmental issues.

## Integrate climate change in planning

*SDG 13.2*

While the Climate Change Policy represents Palau's primary policy response to SDG 13, climate change is also integrated into other policy documents per SDG Target 13.2. These include:

- Management Action Plan of 2016
- Medium Term Development Strategy (2009-2014)
- National Disaster Reduction and Management Framework
- Second National Climate Change Communication
- Palau's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) to greenhouse gas emission reductions
- Palau's Non-Communicable Disease Control and Strategic Action Plan
- Palau Gender Policy
- Palau's Responsible Tourism Policy Framework
- Education Master Plan (2017-2026)

**Sustainable Sea Transportation Initiative**

In a joint venture with the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Kiribati and the Republic of Nauru, we are requesting a $50 million grant from the Green Climate Fund to finance 50 ocean-going vessels that will depend on renewable energy for their power. These fifty-foot long sailboats use three modes of power 1) traditional sails, 2) solar panels for electricity saved to batteries, and 3) coconut oil for engine propulsion -- sails when there's wind -- solar panels when there is sun and no wind -- and coconut oil when there is no sun or wind and the battery is dead. Palau has already trained three crew members in New Zealand who are manning the first vessel constructed in New Zealand, the Vaka Motu, which should arrive in Palau in June (2019). If the GCF grant proposal is accepted, Palau will construct ten initial vessels to be used for transportation, tourism, fishing, research and surveillance.

*President Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.*
*State of the Republic Address, 2019*

***Climate change education:*** As part of the Education Master Plan (2017-2026), climate change and disaster risk management are integrated into the science curriculum of public-schools. Mindszenty High School and Maris Stella Elementary School, both private schools, have also accepted the material into their curriculum. Support to teachers has been provided through teacher training for the new science curriculum framework. Education within communities is conducted collectively and individually by members of the National Environ-

mental Protection Council, the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO), the Red Cross, and civil society. Discussion under SDG 5 highlights work ongoing that specifically targets disaster preparedness education for rural women.

## Disaster Risk Management

*SDG 13.1*

Palau is vulnerable to a range of natural and human-caused disasters including those exacerbated by climate change, namely typhoons, droughts, flooding, sea level rise, and salt-water intrusion. Following many disaster-free years, Palau was hit with major typhoons in 2012 and 2013 and by severe droughts in 1998 and 2016. These events highlighted a need for building codes and integrative planning at state and national levels inclusive of vulnerability and adaption assessments.

**World Bank disaster projections for Palau**

- More frequent inclement weather events; damages projected at US$2.7 million per year (average).
- In the next 50 years, 50 percent chance of damages in excess of $30 million and an 18 percent chance of damages exceeding $247 million.

A revised National Disaster Risk Management Framework integrating internationally recognized "best practices" was completed in 2016.

- Training on Damage and Post Disaster Needs Assessment conducted by NEMO.
- Disaster Risk Reduction Action and Evacuation Plans developed for all states.
- Climate change vulnerability assessments conducted in ten states including the highly vulnerable Southwest Islands.
- Work is in progress to identify and map vulnerable areas as a support to upcoming state-led land use planning.
- Community-based disaster risk reduction toolkit that addressed the needs of women and vulnerable groups has been developed and implemented in 10 states.

## Pathways to 2030

Palau is doing its share to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by taking measures that reduce emissions, enhance human and environmental well-being, and stimulate economic growth. While working at home and through global advocacy to scale-back greenhouse gas emissions, Palau is also committed to prudent actions that acknowledge the inevitability of adverse climate impacts.

**Closing gaps**

- Work with global partners to access country-specific climate data.
- Ensure that humanitarian preparedness and response planning include provisions to address the special needs of women in emergency situation, including the increasing risk of gender-based violence.
- Ensure uninterrupted sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning, during emergencies to protect maternal and child health.
- Enact a climate-informed building code that considers climate mitigation and adaption measures. Among other things, a state-of-the-art code will ensure buildings are constructed to minimize damage during adverse weather, promote energy efficiency, encourage or require water source redundancy for major projects, and enhance accessibility of public spaces for older persons and persons with disabilities.
- Complete the work begun by the Association of Governments in 2001 for development of land use master plans.

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**Improving quality and reach**

- Increase the supply of skilled personnel to manage and maintain climate responses.
- Sustain community engagement and education including through schools.

**Building resilience**

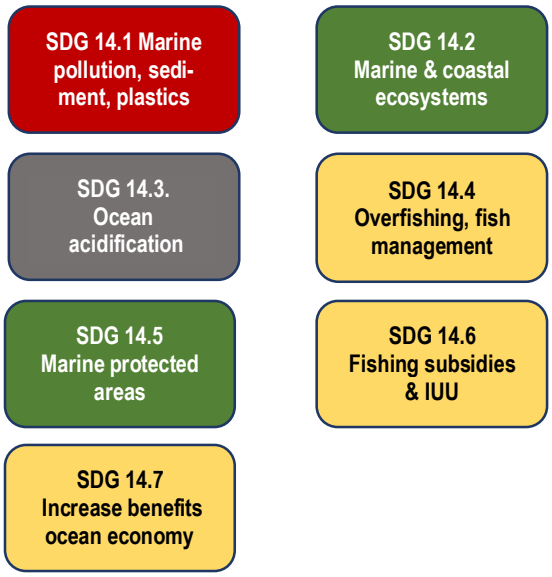
- Mainstream climate adaption across all plans and policies – national, state, and private sector; Implement plans and policies already adopted; prepare communities for major changes, including relocation of vulnerable coastal communities.
- Funding for climate adaptation is a significant constraint to implementing Palau's Climate Change Policy. The policy is costed at US$500 million but only US$22.8 million have been made available to date (Interim Report on the Progress made on the Implementation of the Palau Climate Change Policy, 2018). To access the needed financing Palau seeks to become a certified National Implementing Agency (NIE) for the Green Climate Fund, the largest pool of financing available to assist countries on the front lines, including small island states.

# Oceans

## Conserve and Sustainably Use the Oceans, Seas, and Marine Resources

Oceans play an essential role in human well-being and social and economic development contributing an estimated $28 trillion to the world economy and helping regulate the global climate system. Oceans, however, are under threat from overfishing, acidification, rising temperatures, and land-based pollution. And while every country must do its share within its own jurisdiction, 64 percent of oceans are beyond the jurisdiction of any nation. Ocean conservation therefore depends on global cooperation.

As a large ocean state, the well-being of oceans – those within national jurisdiction and those beyond – is inextricably linked to Palau's journey toward sustainability. Palau is a leading global advocate for oceans and a leading actor in the domestic arena. Palau has incorporated 7 of the 10 SDG 14 targets into the National SDG Framework.[16]




## Overview

Palau's exclusive economic zone encompasses approximately 600,000 square kilometers and contains a rich diversity of marine life. Palau's near-shore marine area also hosts endangered and vulnerable species such as the dugong, hawksbill and green turtles, saltwater crocodile and giant clams.

In addition to the visible coral reefs, mangroves, and seagrass beds, Palau also has deep algal beds, mud basins, current swept lagoon bottoms, rich tidal channels, and anoxic basins. The wealth of Palau's marine environment attracts many partners – bilateral and multilateral donors, non-government organizations, research and academic institutions – that support and assist Palau with marine research and conservation efforts. Palau is also fortunate to have two resident world-class marine research organizations – the Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC) and the Palau Coral Reef Research Foundation (PCRRF).

While SDG 14 contains 10 targets and 10 associated indicators, Palau's own domestic marine monitoring considers an expanded list of 62 indicators (SOE, 2019). Of these, 55 percent are rated in good, fair or improving condition while 45 percent are rated in poor or declining condition (SOE, 2019). While Palau celebrates its achievements, it is acutely aware that much more needs to be done.

## Marine Pollution

*SDG 14.1*

Although the SDG 14.1 indicator refers to an "index of coastal eutrophication", this index is still being developed by an international working group led by the United Nations Environmental Program. Although the index is not yet available as a monitoring tool, it is widely recognized that marine pollution is a serious and growing problem.

For Palau, sediment from land-based development is recognized as the number one stressor on reefs and reef biodiversity. Research shows a clear link between earthmoving, sediment runoff, coral cover, and near shore biodiversity. The number of earthmoving permits issued by EQPB is closely correlated with increasing sediment (Golbuu, et al, 2011). It is estimated that sediment rates have increased 300 to 500 percent in the last twenty years and the number of earthmov-

[16]Color Code: Blue (achieved); Green (on-track);Yellow (progressing); Red (off-track); Grey (insufficient data,

ing permits sharply increased in 2018, indicator of a worsening problem (SOE, 2019). The Palau Environmental Quality Protection Board manages the earthmoving permitting system that is intended to restrict activities in sensitive areas and require use of best practices everywhere to minimize runoff. The board, however, lacks adequate capacity to effectively monitor and enforce permit requirements (SOE, 2019).

## Management of Palau's Exclusive Economic Zone

*SDG 14.2*

Currently fishing in Palau's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is permitted through a Vessel Day Scheme (VDS) pursuant to the Parties to the Nauru Agreement. Commercial fishing activities in the EEZ will cease in January 2020 when a National Marine Sanctuary (PNMS) becomes effective. Under the PNMS, 80 percent of the EEZ (500,000 square miles) will become a marine sanctuary. The remaining 20 percent will be reserved for traditional fishing and newly established domestic fishing fleets serving Palau's domestic and tourist food fish markets (see also SDG 8).

## Ocean Acidification

*SDG 14.3*

PICRC has developed baseline data on marine acidity at a suite of sentinel sites and has installed a monitoring station to collect continuous data. PICRC is also undertaking research to identify, propagate, and plant coral species that exhibit resilience to acidification.

## Sustainability of Fish Stocks

*SDG 14.4 and 14.6*

***Pelagic food fish:*** The main offshore species targeted are Yellowfin, Bigeye, Skipjack and Albacore. Research by the Pacific Commission derived from reported catch data indicates all species are currently fished within sustainable limits although Bigeye stocks are vulnerable to over-exploitation.

***Reef food fish:*** Assessing the sustainability of fishing in Palau's near shore environment is constrained by sparse data. Only a small number of targeted species have been studied and results are not always consistent (SOE, 2019). PICRC, however, is taking measures to systematically address this information gap.

In general, studies indicate that current management actions (e.g. minimum legal mesh size for gillnets and closure of fisheries for certain species during spawning season) have resulted in positive impact (Moore, et al, 2015; MRET, 2019). The Nature Conservancy reports that four of eight commonly targeted food fishes are fished within sustainable limits (Prince, 2015) while a second study reports that five species are within sustainable limits (Liindfield, 2015). The Palau State of the Environment Report (2019), however, sounds caution about the current state of food fisheries noting that "near shore fisheries are in critical condition and require a coordinated management plan" to withstand multiple stressors – sedimentation, overfishing, and climate change."

Uncertainty regarding the status of reef food fish stocks became apparent during development of this report. An interesting conundrum has emerged. Although it is recognized that stocks are generally declining, it is also clear that local demand for food reef fish is not met. Palau's small resident population (~20,000 people) would suggest that higher levels of reef fish consumption would normally be met by a reef area the size of Palau's. A challenge is to identify, and address gaps in knowledge about reef fish consumption. While it is known that substantial quantities (>90 tons per year) of reef food species are exported in the personal cooler trade each year (mostly to Palauans resident in Guam and Hawaii), there are currently no data systematically collected on restaurant and hotel sales of fish. Since tourist numbers are 6 to 9 times that of residents, this is a critical information gap that needs to be addressed, beginning with the development of data collection protocols and dedicated resources (MNRET, 2019).

**Tourists and Fish**

Using computer stimulations, a recent scientific study identifies consumption of reef fish by tourists as a significant contributor to declining reef food fisheries. Noting that the visitor population exceeds the resident population by up to 9 times, the study calls for a 70 percent reduction in reef fish consumption by visitors with pelagic fish used fill the demand for food fish in the visitor market.

*Nippon Foundation (Japan)*
*Nereus Project, University of British Columbia*

Given the general consensus that reef food fish stocks are declining despite management measures that individually appear to be effective, for the purpose of this VNR, SDG 14.4 is shown as requiring further action.

SDG 14.6 addresses harmful fishery subsidies. Relevant data are not collected locally and could not be obtained in time for this report. Palau does not provide direct fishery subsidies.

## Marine Protected Areas

*SDG 14.5*

Under the Palau Constitution, states (local governments) own and manage near shore marine resources within 3 nautical miles of land. Accordingly, the decision to create a marine protected area within the near shore is a state prerogative. States can declare and manage protected areas without national government oversight, or they can choose to register sites within the Palau Protected Area Network (PAN). PAN sites are eligible for technical and financial assistance from the proceeds of a Green Fee (departure tax) assessed on visitors. The national goal is to protect 30 percent of near shore areas by 2020, Current data indicate that just under 15 percent of the near shore is managed in a PAN-registered site while 71 percent is managed under one or more PAN, state, or traditional systems.

In addition to the single global indicator – coverage of marine protected areas – Palau has added two national indicators of MPA effectiveness, (a) ratio of commercial fish biomass for protected areas and non-protected areas and (b) ratio of coral cover in different reef habitats. For both indicators, baseline data are available for 2016 (see Annex A, SDG 14). Subsequent monitoring data will support assessment of MPA effectiveness in relation to these two measures.

## Economic Benefits of Ocean Resources

*SDG 14.7*

The purse-seine vessel day scheme (VDS) of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA), formally initiated in 2014, has gained significant scarcity value since inception. Starting from an initial value of $2.8 million (2014), value increased to $5.9M (2015), $5.3M (2016), and $9.2 million (2017). Considering that there is very little purse-seine effort in Palau's waters, the value of the VDS for Palau derives mainly from the ability to trade vessel days among members of the PNA. Total fishing license fees for oceanic fisheries were $7.2M (2015), $6.8M (2016), and $9.8M (2017), comprised of the royalties from fishing rights fees and royalties from the VDS. Under the Palau National Marine Sanctuary, Palau hopes to increase locally derived revenues based on a sustainable domestic fishing industry (see SDG 8).

**Progressing with the Past:**
**Traditional "*Bul*" as the Foundation for MPAs**

Surrounded by water, Palauans have developed a life which is inextricably linked with the oceans. We derive food, identity, and traditions from our relationship with the ocean. The long standing success of this symbiotic relationship is based on responsibility that each Palauan is taught from childhood that they are caretakers of the sea.

During the El Nino event of 1997, many corals died, fish left, and with them left a great deal of our livelihood. However, we went back to our roots and saw building on traditional approaches with modern scientific advances as the way forward. Palau's practical experience with the ecosystem approach extends back thousands of years. The traditional practice of "*bul*" is an important example. *Bul* involves the Council of Chiefs placing reef areas off limits to fishing during known fish spawning and feeding periods. This respects vulnerabilities in the ecosystem while ensuring that there will be robust fish to catch during other times of the year. This traditional *bul* system has become the basis for Palau's network of protected areas and its new Protected Area Network (PAN) law. The PAN law looks first to local leaders and their traditional guidance, and then to scientists, to identify vulnerable ecosystems and coordinate the community, national, and international assistance necessary to institute appropriate protection. The PAN law is intended not only to respect local ecosystems and meet Palau's commitments under the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), but is also serving as a model for Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) across Micronesia.

*Extract from a speech by Noah Idechong Conservationist and former Member of Palau National Congress before the United Nations*

## Pathways to 2030

Ensuring sustainable management of ocean resources is one of Palau's highest national priorities.

**Closing gaps**

- Palau has a robust system of marine monitoring led and managed by local institutions. Two gaps identified during

preparation of this report are (1) monitoring of sedimentation, a significant threat to nearshore ecosystems and biodiversity and (2) food fish consumed in the hotel and restaurant sector.

- Land based pollution, especially sedimentation, is a known stressor for coral reefs. The earth moving permit system needs to be reviewed and revised to more effectively reduce sedimentation.
- There is a broad consensus that reef food fish are overharvested. Measures are needed to reduce reef fish demand. "Choose pelagic" is one measure that aims to divert demand from reef fish to pelagic fish. Measures may also be needed to curtail, at least temporarily, export of reef fish via the personal use "cooler trade",

**Improving quality and reach**

- Data show that 71 percent of Palau's near shore area is subject to some form of protection although only 15 percent of the area is in a PAN site. Increasing the number of protected areas registered under PAN will help ensure quality management and consistent monitoring.

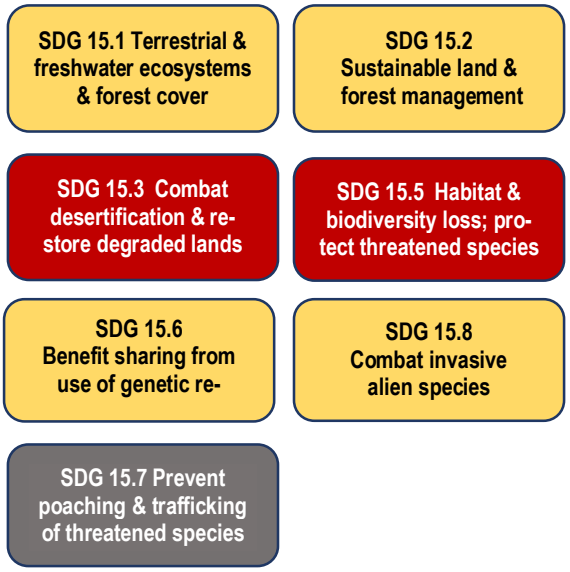
**Building resilience**

- Palau is committed to climate-informed management of its marine environment. This work must be accelerated in view of the devastating potential impacts that climate change will have on Palau's marine environment and thereby on the well-being of people and the economy.

# Land and Forests

## Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation

SDG 15 aims to conserve and restore terrestrial ecosystems – forests, wetlands, drylands and mountains. Halting deforestation is also vital to stabilizing the climate and protecting the oceans from sediment and other land-based pollutants. Palau incorporates 7 out of 12 SDG 15 targets into the National SDG Framework[17].




## Palau Terrestrial Ecosystems

With a land area of 160.2 mi$^2$ (415 km$^2$), Palau is the 16$^{th}$ smallest country in the world and the 4$^{th}$ smallest Pacific Island nations, following the Marshall Islands, Nauru and Tuvalu. The Palau archipelago consists of about 700 islands, stretching 400 miles (650 km) from north to south, and representing four distinct land types (i.e., volcanic, high limestone, low platform, and atolls) and nine primary forest types dominated by upland forests and mangroves. While Palau's terrestrial ecosystems are overshadowed in the global press by the marine environment, Palau forests are home to diverse endemic and native species and three globally significant terrestrial or mixed sites:: Rock Islands Southern Lagoon World Heritage Site, Ngermiosphere Reserve, and Lake Ngardok Nature Reserve Ramsar Site.

Palau's diverse topography and habitats, isolation, and proximity to Southeast Asia contribute to high terrestrial biodiversity including approximately 1,260 species and varieties of plants of which 830 are native and at least 194 are endemic, most found only on Babeldaob (OERC, 2014).

Terrestrial fauna include:

- Approximately 5,000 species of insects
- 141 species of birds, of which 11 species and 9 subspecies are endemic
- 40 species of freshwater fish, of which 4 are endemic
- 46 species of terrestrial reptiles and amphibians
- 3 species of bat, 2 of which are endemic.

In addition to their direct biodiversity values, Palau's forests provide vital ecological services that maintain the health and ecological integrity of the terrestrial and marine ecosystems (e.g. sediment trapping, climate stability, nurseries for reef fish, soil production and conservation, etc.). Palau's natural resources and exceptional biodiversity have shaped, and continue to influence, the nation's culture and economy.

## Forest Cover

*SDG 15.1*

Forests cover an estimated 87% of Palau's land area with cover having increased over the past 50 years (SOE, 2017). Although this level of cover is high, coverage is not uniform across the country. Forest coverage in Koror and Angaur is less than 7 percent while coverage in Peleliu plummeted over the period 1988 to 2005. Since each forest type is habitat for its own unique species, high national coverage obscures local biodiversity vulnerability. Forest quality must also be considered. Thirty percent of Palau lands are classified as disturbed due to fire, animal damage, wind, tree disease, invasive species, and cutting; the major threats are unsustainable human use, fire, and climate change (SOE, 2017).

[17] Color coding: Blue (achieved); Green (on-track); Yellow (progressing); Red (off-track); Grey (insufficient data).

## Sustainable Land Management

*SDG 15.1 and 15.2*

The national target for terrestrial protected areas (TPAs) is 20 percent. While this has been achieved, only 14 percent of TPAs are part of the nationwide Protected Area Network and coverage by forest type is not uniform. The forests of the Rock Island Southern Lagoon World Heritage site are 100 percent protected; mangroves are 40 percent protected (target 75 percent); while only 10 percent of the ecologically sensitive and biodiversity rich forests of Babeldaob are protected (SOE, 2017).

Protected area coverage is important, but sustainable land management both within and outside of protected areas is equally important. Palau adopted a Mangrove Management Plan in 2000 which sets a target of "no net loss" but forest management is largely a state function and it is unclear the extent to which this plan is a "living" document that guides day-to-day management decisions. Likewise, a Sustainable Forest Plan was drafted in 2018 which also has a 'no net loss" target but has not yet been officially adopted.

The one planning document that is widely agreed to be vital is a Land Use Master Plan. The Association of Governor's in 2001 contracted a firm based in California to develop land-use master plans for each state. Unfortunately, the final product was a land-use constraint map, rather than a comprehensive land-use plan. Funding has been secured from the Asian Development Bank to restart the land use planning effort in 2019 (ADB, 2017).

## Species Protection

*SDG 15.5 and 15.7*

The population status of many native and endemic species has never been assessed; lack of knowledge is therefore a significant threat to species protection (SOE, 2017). Native or endemic species currently on the IUCN Red List include:

- Mammals, 2 species out of 2, 100% listed
- Reptiles and amphibians, 1 out of 46 species, 2% listed
- Birds, 7 out of 12, 58% listed[18]

Of these species, urgent action is needed to protect the Belochel (Micronesian pigeon) now nearing extinction as well as the Micronesian megapode (SOE, 2017). An estimated 8 percent of native flora are threatened (SPREP, 2016). There are 46 known native freshwater fish species, but none have been assessed for status and thus none are listed (SOE, 2017).

While it is widely known that poaching of threatened and endangered species occurs but there are no reliable statistics about the extent of the problem. The Belochel and sea turtle eggs – both local delicacies - are fully protected but thought to be widely poached.

The iconic Biib (Palauan Fruit Dove pictured) has experienced a dramatic drop in population (46-66% decline over the period 2010-2014) but is not yet on the Red List (SOE, 2017).

## Species

*SDG 15.8*

Invasive species – flora and fauna - are a significant threat to Palau's biodiversity. The Palau National Invasive Species Committee (NISC), created in 2004, developed a *National Invasive Species Strategy* (NISS) now upgraded to a *National Invasive Species and Biosecurity Strategic Plan* adopted in 2017. Work is sanctioned by bio-security legislation enacted in 2016 (RPPL 9-58).

## Benefits Sharing

*SDG 15.6*

On 22 August 2018, the President signed legislation *Creating a national framework for access and equitable sharing of benefits of genetic resources and traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources within the Republic and for related purposes*. This law, administered by the Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment, and Tourism, aligns Palau with the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing. Palau is also a party to the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA) and work is in progress on an access and benefit sharing agreement.

18 Palau birds on the Red List: Micronesian Pigeon, Ground Dove, Palau Kingfisher, Palau Nightjar, Giant White Eye, Nicobar Pigeon (near threatened); Micronesian Megapode (endangered).

## Pathways to 2030

Palau is party to many regional and international conventions relating to the terrestrial (as well as marine environment). Extern partners assisting Palau with terrestrial resource conservation and management include the US Forestry Service and the South Pacific Regional Environment Program. Domestic partners include Palau Conservation Society, Ebiil Society (alongside), and many community-based NGOs. The flow of resources into the terrestrial sector is much lower than for the marine sector. The State of the Environment Reports (2017 and 2019) that many new initiatives are underway (e.g. alien species control) or soon to launch (e.g. land use planning), but more attention is needed to address information and management deficits in the terrestrial environment.

**Closing gaps**

- Information is a major gap that impedes sustainable management of land, forests, and biodiversity. Many of Palau's native and endemic species have never been assessed thereby making it impossible to monitor or effectively manage populations.
- Only Koror has a fully developed land use master plan and zoning system. This is a gap in Palau's policy framework that requires immediate action.

**Improving quality and reach**

- Lack of information and awareness is a deterrent to conservation and sustainable management of land and forest resources. Most people do not knowingly set out to harm the environment when they "skirt" earthmoving permit conditions, use fire to clear land, or import exotic plants without bio-security clearance. Most are simply not aware of the impact these individual actions have on the larger environment. More awareness and efforts to revitalize traditional conservation management practices can have a significant impact on human behavior.

**Featured Partnership**: The Ebiil Society is a Ngarchelong-based NGO originally founded to protect Ebill Channel, an important grouper spawning area. Recognizing that protection of the Channel required protection of adjacent forests, the Society expanded and today, has become an important force for conservation education and forest restoration throughout Babeldaob. Among its work, the Society runs an innovative summer camp for children teaching traditional resource management skills and associated values.

**Building resilience**

- Improving land and forest management is critical for the health of Palau's marine ecosystem. Pollution and sediment is a major stressor on a marine ecosystem already taxed by climate change.
- The impacts of climate change on forest ecosystems and on species that call those ecosystems home, is not as well understood as the impacts on the marine environment pointing once again to the need for more research and monitoring in support of climate-informed land use planning.

Pillar

# 4 Participation, Peace, Partnership

Pillar 4 contains three SDGs - 5, 16, and 17 - that collectively call upon government, civil society, and the private sector to promote equitable participation, peaceful and inclusive societies, and partnerships for the SDGs.

***SDG 5*** addresses gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls – securing the rights of women to participate equally at all levels of society thereby fully realizing the promises of the SDGs.

***SDG 16*** promotes peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, promises access to justice for all, and promotes accountability, transparency, and inclusive institutions at all levels. This SDG includes special provisions for ensuring the rights and social integration of children, youth, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

***SDG 17*** strengthens the means of implementation for the SDGs and seeks to revitalize global and domestic partnerships for the SDGs.

# Gender Equality

## Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Palau women participating in the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1994) returned home inspired to make a difference for Palauan women and their country. Palau has continued to participate in post-Beijing follow-up including the Beijing +25 country review submitted in May 2019. Palau has integrated 6 of the 9 SDG 5 indicators into its National SDG Framework.[19]

| | |
|---|---|
| SDG 5.1 End all forms of discrimination against women | SDG 5.2. Eliminate violence against women, trafficking & exploitation |
| SDG 5.3 Eliminate gender-based harmful practices | SDG 5.4 Recognize & value unpaid care & domestic work |
| SDG 5.5 Women's full participation in leadership & society | SDG 5.6. Universal access to sexual & reproductive health |

## Palau Cultural Context

Palau is a matriarchal and matrilineal society in which women have traditionally held positions of power and respect in equality with their male counterparts. Although the roles and responsibilities of men and women differ, these are not the differences of a dominant-subordinate relationship but rather a duality in which the success of each gender depends on support and assistance provided by the other.

In contemporary society, Palauan women enjoy equality under the Constitution (Article 4.5) and law (Title 1 of the National Code). Women generally have higher levels of education and better health than men (see SDGs 3 and 4). While less likely to be employed in the formal economic sector than men, when employed, the average gender wage gap is around 1 percent across all occupational categories (see SDG 8). In public service, women are well represented at senior levels in the Judicial Branch of government and in policy making positions in the Executive Branch. They remain under-represented in the national congress (Olbiil Era Kelulau), the cabinet, and elected offices at state level. Despite this, their numbers at all levels of leadership are increasing.

## Legal Frameworks

*SDG 5.1*

Assuring women's rights through legal frameworks is a first step in eliminating discrimination. Title 1(407) of the Palau National Code provides for gender equality and nondiscrimination. Palau National Gender Mainstreaming Policy (2018) further guarantees the equal rights of men and women to participate in all spheres of life in an atmosphere of equality and respect.

The women of Palau come together annually in the Mechesil Belau Conference to advocate for policies and programs that support women and families. The outcomes of this conference include decisions affecting tradition (e.g. birth ceremonies, funerals, house buying, and other customs) as well as modern life. The Mechesil Belau recently celebrated its 25th anniversary having successfully advocated for 25 national laws, 3 constitutional amendments, and 1 traditional law on culture, health, education, and the environment (Beijing +25, 2019).

A Gender Division has been establishment under the Bureau of Aging, Disabilities, and Gender within the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs (MCCA) to support initiatives promoting gender equality and to serve as a focal point on gender matters. Among other actions, the Division has spearheaded gender disaggregation of data in national statistics in support of the SDGs.

**Recognizing unpaid and domestic work**

In a departure from past practices, beginning with the 2015 census, the Bureau of Planning and Budget classified persons engaged in unpaid or domestic work as "in the labor force". Previously such persons were classified as outside the labor force. This change responds directly to SDG 5.4.

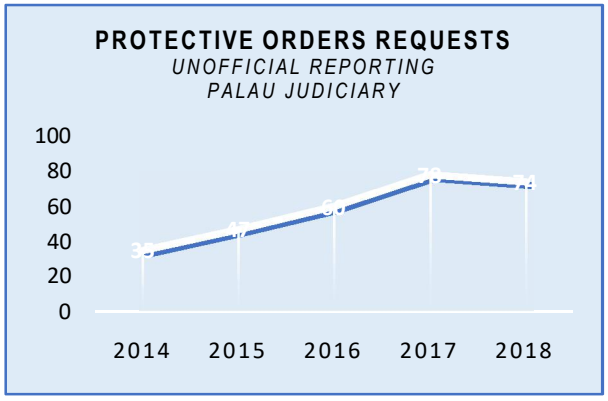
[19] Color Code: Blue (achieved); Green (on-track); Yellow (progressing); Red (off-track); Grey (insufficient data).

Priority programs underway promoting women's equality and empowerment include (1) increasing economic opportunities for women entrepreneurs; (2) strengthening national responses to violence against women including expanded support services; and (3) strengthening the enabling environment within government to increase gender sensitive recruitment, policy formation, gender analysis, service provision, and disaggregation of data. Palau receives financial and technical support for gender mainstreaming from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and from the Pacific Community, among others.

## Violence Against Women and Girls

*(SDGs 5.2 and 5.3)*

***Domestic Violence:*** The Family Protection Act (FPA) of 2012 addresses violence against women. The act is enforced collaboratively by the Ministries of Justice, Health, Community and Cultural Affairs and the Judiciary. The Judiciary has adopted a policy of immediate response to requests for protective orders 24/7 and has established a temporary "safe house" within the court compound to house victims for up to 48 hours if a protective order cannot be immediately executed. A Family Protection Act Coordinator employed by MCCA coordinates FPA implementation among the partners. Applications by women for protective orders have steadily increased since the law went in effect. This may reflect increasing violence or it may reflect awareness about options for recourse.




In 2014, the Ministry of Health, with support from UNFPA and the Australian Government, conducted a Family Health and safety Survey. This survey compiled the first quantifiable data on violence against women according to the core indicators recommended by the UN Statistical Commission. The survey found that 25 percent of women will experience gender-based physical or sexual violence in their lifetime and that in the 12 months preceding the survey, 8 percent of women experienced physical or sexual violence.

**Discrimination in inheritance**

Legal reviews have identified only one law that overtly discriminates against women. In this case discrimination is against a wife in the first instance and against female children in the second instance. Under 25PNC 201(a) land purchased by an owner who dies without a will is inherited by the owner's oldest legitimate male child. If there are no male heirs, the land goes to the oldest female child of the marriage in which such lands were acquired.

These rates are comparable to those found in similar surveys across the Asia-Pacific Region but lower than elsewhere in Oceania. The Youth Risk Behavior Survey series in high schools has found that 17.9 percent of students reported forced sexual intercourse, 29.4 percent report sexual violence, and 26.3 percent report physical violence in a dating relationship (YRBS, 2013). These high rates of youth-to-youth violence suggest early intervention during the school years may be warranted to prevent family violence in the future.

While government agencies are responding more effectively and efficiently to FPA cases, the increase in requests for protective orders requests suggests that the law is not changing underlying attitudes that contribute to family violence. While government services focus primarily on responding to family violence, one NGO, Semesemel a Klengelakl, has formed with the mission of identifying families at risk and working with the whole family to improve communications, facilitate problem solving, and thereby prevent violence and breakdown. The Bureau of Public Safety also organizes an annual "White Ribbon" Campaign to draw attention to the problem of violence against women and the role of men in overcoming the problem.

The Family Health Survey was conducted in 2014 and in the five years following a number of interventions are being implemented. While it is time to begin planning for a follow-up survey, a more robust "real time" system of monitoring and reporting is needed, Surveys yield valuable information but are costly to mount and should not be the principal means for monitoring progress against a high priority target.

During consultations, concern was voiced by community members and service providers about lack of specialized counseling services and support for victims of Violence Against Women. Previously the Ministry of Health employed a Victims Advocate serving all victims of violence – family and non-family, children, women and men; this position has been

discontinued leaving victims on their own to locate and navigate available services.

***Human trafficking***: Palau enacted the Anti-Smuggling and Human Trafficking Act in 2005 (amended 2014) which prohibits all forms of trafficking and prescribes penalties ranging from 10 to 50 years imprisonment and fines of up to $50,000, or $500,000 for cases with aggravating circumstances. A Human Trafficking office was created (Executive Order 412), within the Ministry of Justice (2018). This issue is discussed in greater depth under SDG 16.

***Harmful practices.*** Female genital mutilation is not practiced in Palau. While there is no minimum age for customary marriages in Palau, the age of legal marriage is 18 for males and 16 for females (who are required to have consent of a parent or guardian if under the age of 18). Although marriages when a party is under the age of 18 are believed to be rare, the law needs to be amended to align Palau with international standards.

## Women's Economic and Political Empowerment

*SDG 5.4 and 5.5*

Although there are no legal impediments to women's employment, women are less likely to be employed in the formal economic sector than men but when employed, the gender wage gap is small (1 percent averaged across all occupations) (Census, 2015).

There are no data regarding the gender division of labor within the home although it is widely recognized that women carry multiple burdens with work, care giving (children, elderly, and persons with disabilities or chronic health conditions) and customary responsibilities. Three concerns cited by women as impediments to their economic empowerment are (1) lack of mandatory maternity leave, (2) shortage of childcare facilities, and (3) lack of legal protections against workplace sexual harassment (MCCA Women's Economic Empowerment Consultations, 2017 and 2019).

There are no legal barriers to women's ownership of land although one law has been identified that overtly discriminate against women in inheritance (see text box).

***Women in leadership***: There are no legal barriers to women in leadership, although their traditional roles have been as the "power behind". In part for this reason, it has taken time since the establishment of constitutional government for women to assume positions of leadership in government and to a lesser extent in business. Currently,

- In the Executive Branch of government, women hold 2 out of 8 cabinet positions (25 percent).
- In the national congress, women hold 2 out of 13 seats in the Senate (15 percent) and 2 out of 16 seats in the House of Delegates (12.5 percent).
- In the Judiciary, women hold 4 out of 9 judicial appointments (44 percent).
- In state governments, women hold 4 out of 16 governorships (25 percent).
- Considering both public and private sectors, women hold 42 percent of management positions (2015 census), up from 29 percent in 2005.

One NGO, Center for Women Empowerment Belau (C-WEB) is dedicated to encouraging women to seek public office, assisting them to succeed once elected, and advocating with elected leaders for issues of special concern to women.

## Disaster and Climate Resilience

The impacts of disasters and climate change on men and women differ; these differences need to be understood and considered during planning and decision making. Palau has mainstreamed gender into the most recent work on disaster risk reduction with programs informed by gender-disaggregated data.

Gender is less explicitly addressed in the National Climate Policy adopted in 2015. The work of climate adaptation, however, prioritizes women's concerns such as the impact of climate change on agriculture and health. Many rural community women's organizations are leading or otherwise involved in adaptation work. The Dilisor Agriculture Association of Ngarchelong (DANN) has been particularly successful in restoring taro cultivation in that state but many community-based groups are undertaking similar work in their own communities.

Women and women's organizations are assuming particularly active roles in responding to disaster and climate vulnerability especially at community levels. A new initiative underway is disaster resilience training for women of Babeldaob. This is a collaborative effort by two NGOS – C-WEB and Palau Red Cross – and funded by UN Women and the Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund. The focus of this training is on practical measures to be taken before, during, and after a disaster. The training will also equip women with the knowledge and skills they need to take active roles in disaster preparedness planning.

## Pathways to 2030

Palauan women have traditionally held leadership positions in their families, clans and communities. Empowerment of women to transfer these traditional roles into contemporary life is still ongoing while both men and women continue to learn about the concept of "gender mainstreaming" and its practical applications to planning, policy, and decision-making.

**Closing gaps**

- Universal maternity leave is needed to support women in their multiple roles while providing children with the best possible start in life.[20]
- Also needed is legislation to address sexual harassment in the workplace.
- Childcare facilities need to be expanded; ideally facilities should be community-based and support children's acquisition of Palauan language, culture, and values.
- Services that support victims of violence need to be strengthened, including counseling. The position of Victim's Advocate needs to be reinstated.
- Gender discriminatory laws need to be changed: (a) setting the legal minimum age of marriage at 18 for both males and females and (b) creating gender-neutral inheritance laws by amending 25PNC 201(a).

**Improving quality and reach**

- Active measures are needed to implement the Gender Mainstreaming Policy across the public and private sectors; regular communications regarding implementation status are needed by women and women's organizations.
- While significant progress is being made on gender disaggregated data, the Beijing +25 reports notes three indicators recommended by the UN Statistical Commission have not yet been developed for Palau (1) proportion of women with access to credit; (2) proportion of women owning land; and (3) proportion of children under age 3 in formal childcare.
- A 2nd Family Health Survey is needed but at the same time, a system of monitoring needs to be established that does not rely on costly and infrequent surveys.
- Additional research is needed to better understand the underlying causes of gender-based violence in order to design more effective preventive measures.

**Building Resilience**

- Women need to active participate in all aspects of climate and disaster planning and response. Women need to be empowered with the skills they need to effectively advocate for their special needs to be reflected in disaster, climate, and land use planning and policies.

[20] Under current law, maternity leave is legislatively mandated only for permanent civil servants in the national government. Maternity leave legislation is now before the National Congress.

# Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

**Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.**

Peace, justice and effective, accountable and inclusive governing institutions are at the core of sustainable development. Palau incorporates 6 of the 12 SDG 16 targets into the National SDG Framework.

**SDG 16.1 Reduce all forms of violence and related deaths**

**SDG 16.2 End child abuse, neglect, trafficking & exploitation**

**SDG 16.3 Promote the rule of law and ensure equal justice for all**

**SDG 16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory decision making**

**SDG 16.10 Public access to information & protect fundamental freedoms**

**SDG 16.9. Provide legal identify for all including birth registration**

## Violence and Justice

*SDGs 16.1 and 16.3*

**Judiciary**: The Palau system of governance features an independent Judiciary committed to preserving and enhancing the rule of law by providing a just, efficient, and accessible mechanism for the resolution of conflicts (Palau Judiciary, 2019).

***Ombudsman Office***: Executive Order No 203 established an Ombudsman Office. This office assists individuals with grievances regarding services, programs or activities of the Government. The Office does not have decision making authority; however, it reviews grievances and provides reports to the President. Furthermore, the office provides inquiry and mediation services and makes referrals for assistance (UPR, 2016).

***Micronesian Legal Services Corporation***: The mission of MLSC is to provide equal access to justice and high quality civil legal assistance to low income people. The office in the Republic of Palau provides legal services for: child support; marriages; divorces; probation; contracts; land matters; small claims; and wills (UPR, 2016).

***Public defender:*** The Office of the Public Defender is under the Ministry of State. The Public Defender is charged by the Constitution with representing all indigent persons charged with a crime in Palau. This office represents approximately 95 percent of criminal cases (UPR, 2016).

***Homicides:*** The average rate of homicide in Palau (2015-2018) is 8.3 deaths per 100,000 population. This is slightly higher than the global average (4.6-6.8 events per 100,000 population) but given the small population bases, rates can shift dramatically from one year to the next. The actual number of homicides ranged from 0 (2016) to 3 (2015).

***Illicit activities:*** Palau has a "no-guns" provision in its constitution. There are strict laws against the importation or possession of firearms by any person except a sworn law enforcement officer in the active conduct of his/her duties. Illicit arms flows are therefore not an issue in Palau.

Information is not currently available to assess illicit financial flows but banks in Palau are subject to supervision by the Financial Institutions Commission. The Commission is responsible for protecting the interests of consumer, preventing systemic risks to the financial system, and protecting Palau's reputation in the international financial community (FIC, 2019).

On a related matter, Palau has acceded to the *United Nations Convention against Corruption* and is currently in its second reporting cycle (MOS, 2019).

## Child Protection

*SDGs16.2 and 16.9*

***Child protection***: Palau ratified the International Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1995, immediately following independence, and took actions subsequently to bring national law into compliance with the Convention. Child Protection Baseline Research (2012) found that laws, regulations, and procedures are fully compliant with the CRC (27 percent), partially compliant (29 percent), and non-compliant (44 percent). Subsequent amendments to the section 17 PNC 1801-8 of the penal code (July 2014) address some of the deficits identified in the baseline report around child exploitation, enticement, and pornography. Amendments have also created a public

sexual offender registry. The MCCA, with support from UNICEF, is currently taking the lead to address other issues raised in the Child Protection Baseline Report as well as in Palau's periodic report to the International Committee on Children's Rights.

The Ministry of Education has abolished corporal punishment in schools. Although there is no legislation against corporal punishment in homes and the community, the public has gradually embraced alternative means of discipline as indicated by the Child Protection Baseline Research (2012). Survey respondents indicated that the most effective means of child discipline are: (1) setting a good example (32 percent of children and 32 percent of adults); (2) consistent rules and effective communication (31 percent of adults and 27 percent of children); and (3) encouraging good behavior (26 percent of children and 30 percent of adults). According to the Ministry of Justice an average of 12 cases of suspected child abuse and/or neglect are investigated per annum.

***Legal Identity:*** Palau law requires that all births be registered within 1 week following delivery. A name for the child is required at the time of registration. Since all births occur at Belau National Hospital, compliance with birth registration is 100 percent. Registration is particularly important since Palau law bestows rights of citizenship and land ownership on the basis of parentage. Birth registration is the most common means for a person to establish his/her rights as a citizen and member of his/her respective clan(s).

The Palau constitution requires that to qualify for Palau citizenship, a person must be biologically of Palau descent. There are a small number of persons not of Palauan descent who have been adopted by Palau citizens and who are stateless because they neither qualify for citizenship under Palau law nor under the laws of the countries from which their biological parents originated. This has been a long-standing challenge for Palau and the affected families and remains an unresolved issue. Twice constitutional amendments have been proposed to allow children of non-Palauan descent adopted before the age of 3 to qualify for citizenship and both times, the voting public has defeated the measure. Currently a measure is before the Congress to create a new passport category for these individuals. It would not grant citizenship rights but would enable them to travel outside of Palau.

## Human Trafficking

*SDGs 16.2 and 16.3*

The prevalence of the human trafficking in Palau is unknown but it is believed to disproportionately affect the migrant worker population which constitutes approximately 1/3 of the total population. Between March 2017 and March 2018, the Office of the Attorney General investigated or prosecuted 14 cases of human trafficking involving 33 victims, all foreign nationals. In no case was a Palauan victim identified (IOM, 2018).

Government is making concerted efforts to address the problem of human trafficking.

***International law:*** In May 2019, Palau acceded to the *United Nations Transnational Organized Convention*, "Palermo Convention" and its three instruments. This gives government more leverage to work with the international community to combat human trafficking and smuggling.

Palau joined the International Organization on Migration in mid-2018. Its first request to the IOM was for assistance in addressing the problem of human trafficking. A rapid assessment was conducted by IOM in late 2018. The report contains an extensive list of recommendations too lengthy to replicate here. This section incorporates some of the key points in the report.

**Domestic law:** The Palauan Constitution provides an overarching legal framework for addressing human trafficking and the associated exploitation. Article IV provides for the right to be free from torture, cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment, the right to be free from "slavery or involuntary servitude except to punish crime," and the protection of children from exploitation. It also guarantees "equality under law and non-discrimination.

Palau's *Citizenship Act* regulates the recruitment and employment of non-resident workers and is overseen by the Bureau for Labor and Immigration. Palau's *Anti-People Smuggling and Trafficking Act,* adopted in 2005 and amended in 2014, criminalizes 'people trafficking' with separate provisions for child trafficking. Although this law is generally compliant with international standards, the IOM report does recommend further revisions.

In 2017, the President issued Executive Order No 405 to establish a Special Presidential Task Force to identify ways to combat human trafficking. Several important actions have been taken based on the Task Force report.

- A national action plan, *Fundamentals to Combat Human Trafficking in the Republic of Palau* (NAP) was prepared together with an implementation plan.
- An Anti-Human Trafficking Office was established within the Ministry of Justice.
- A safe house was created for temporary housing of victims of trafficking in need of short-term accommodation.

- Public information materials were produced and a hotline established.

While these actions represent a good start in developing the legal foundation and services necessary to address the problem, more work is still needed as underscored by the IOM Report (2018).

## Good Governance and Effective Institutions

*SDGs 16.3, 16.7, and 16.10*

***Law enforcement:*** The Ministry of Justice is committed to the effective, non-discriminatory, and transparent enforcement of Palau laws and regulations. Accordingly, in 2017-2018, the Ministry has acted to strengthen operations. Examples include:

- Regulations governing the Bureau of Public Safety and for the Division of Labor updated
- Police Practice Committee established
- Narcotics Enforcement Agency established
- Anti-Human Trafficking Office established
- Border management system implemented in the Division of Immigration
- Memorandum of Understanding developed between Justice, MNRET (Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment, and Tourism), and the States of Kayangel and Ngarchelong to strengthen surveillance of the Northern Reefs
- New patrol boat "Kedam" donated by the Nippon Foundation to improve surveillance of the Exclusive Economic Zone.

***Freedom of Information:*** The Palau Constitution and National Code protect freedom of information (SDG 16.10). Article 5.12 of the Constitution states, "A citizen has the right to examine any government document and to observe the official deliberations of any agency of government." The Open Government Act of 2014 further provides that "actions of the government be conducted openly, that all deliberations be transparent, and that all public government documents be open for inspection."

***Human Rights surveillance:*** As noted, Palau has ratified the CRC and the CRPD. It has signed the other 7 core human rights treaties.

While there is no dedicated Human Rights Office, the functions of human rights monitoring and reporting are jointly managed by the Ministries of State and of Community and Cultural Affairs. They are supported as necessary by the Ministry of Justice for enforcement actions and by all other ministries for sector-specific actions. Civil Society is openly invited to participate in human rights monitoring and reporting. For details on human rights in Palau not explicitly addressed by the SDGs, refer to Palau's most recent Universal Periodic Review to the United Nations Human Rights Council (2016).

Palau has issued a standing invitation to all Special Rapporteurs and Special Representatives of the United Nations Human Rights Council to visit and consider Palau's progress in areas relating to children, persons with disabilities, violence against women, climate change, human trafficking and migrant workers.

## Promoting Inclusivity "Leaving No One Behind"

*SDG 16.7*

This section examines inclusivity in relation to two social groups – youth and persons with disabilities.

***Social and cultural context***: Palau has a strong cultural tradition of inclusivity entirely compatible with the spirit of SDG 16. In the words of the Minister of Community and Cultural Affairs,

"One of the most natural and unique customs about being a Palauan is that as soon as we are born to this earth, we all naturally fall into a fitting system from our mother and our father's place in the family, clan, and village. This birthright of belonging means that nobody is left out in our cultural context. However, today, we see a shift where people are becoming more isolated and individualized. Such isolation has serious ramifications (when people) … may be left to cope with their crises and issues of wellbeing as individuals without the support of the family, clan, and village (Temengil-Chilton, National Youth Policy, 2016).

Continuing this culture of inclusivity is critical for ensuring that no one is left behind in the quest for sustainable development.

***Including youth***: Youth have traditionally had an important role in their communities, doing the hard work needed to sustain community life while learning traditions, skills and leadership from their elders. The Palau government recognizes the importance of youth in contemporary affairs as both resources for development and stakeholders with rights to participate and have a voice in decision-making.

Youth affairs are coordinated by a Bureau of Youth within the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs supported by a National Youth Policy Committee. Both groups work in close partnership with the Palau National Youth Congress, comprised of youth representatives from all the 16 states.

Palau's first National Youth Policy was developed in 2005. A second policy was developed in 2016 (covering the period 2016-2021). This policy followed a highly participatory process involving a cross section of youth (redefined in the policy as ages 13-24) and the agencies that serve them. The vision that evolved from consultations is "All young people (will) live in a safe, healthy, and happy environment that supports their transition to adulthood with resilience while providing them with the opportunities and skills they need to learn, work and engage in community life and to influence decisions that affect them." Actions were identified across 8 domains:

- Strong families
- Health and healthy lifestyles
- Youth serving institutions
- Arts, culture, sports, and recreation
- Education and skills development
- Employment and entrepreneurship
- Youth engagement
- Justice and inclusion

***Including persons with disabilities:*** Palau ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2013 and prepared a National Disability Inclusive Policy in 2015. The goal of the policy is to ensure an inclusive society in which all persons with disabilities can fulfil their full potential and live as self-sufficient, contributing members of their community and the nation.

Palau's report to the CRPD Treaty Body indicates that there are few legal barriers to full inclusion of persons with disabilities but many practical barriers to making "rights real" such as inaccessible public facilities, sidewalks that impede mobility, lack of specialized rehabilitative services, and difficulty in accessing and the high cost of assistive devices. Persons with disabilities also report attitudinal barriers which define persons with disabilities by their disability rather than their ability and paternalistic attitudes that deny persons with disabilities full independent agency.

The Palau Government, in partnership with Omekesang and Palau Parents Empowered, is committed to full implementation of the CRPD and the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all spheres of life.

**Featured Partnership:**
**Omekesang**

Omekesang is the only Disabled Persons Organization in Palau for, of, and by Persons with Disabilities. Originally chartered in 1997, it was re-established following a period of hiatus in 2010. Omekesang is a strong advocate for an inclusive and accessible Palau and works closely with a second NGO – Palau Parents Empowered – to educate the public and policy makers about the needs of persons with disabilities and to advocate for inclusive policies across all sectors.

## Pathways to 2030

**Closing gaps**

- By progressing with the past, reinforce the Palauan cultural value of inclusivity whereby every person belongs to a nurturing family and clan.
- Close gaps that impede full inclusion of persons with disabilities and fully implement the National Disabilities Policy. These gaps range from inaccessible public facilities to lack of appropriate services and continuing attitudinal barriers.
- Continue to strive, including through diplomatic means, for legally and politically acceptable solutions to the problem of "statelessness" among some children adopted by Palauans but ineligible for citizenship either in Palau or in the country of their birth parents.
- For the Ministry of Justice and Bureau of Public Safety, (1) improve procedures for the emergency evacuation of sick and injured persons from outlying states (Kayangel, Peleliu, Angaur, and the Southwest) to the hospital in Koror; (2) develop foreign language translation services supporting the work of the Ministry; and (3) strengthen capacity for effective surveillance of the EEZ.

**Improving quality and reach**

- Implement the National Youth Policy and empower youth for sustainable living.
- Expand police/fire presence to all states but especially the outlying states of Peleliu, Angaur, and Kayangel.

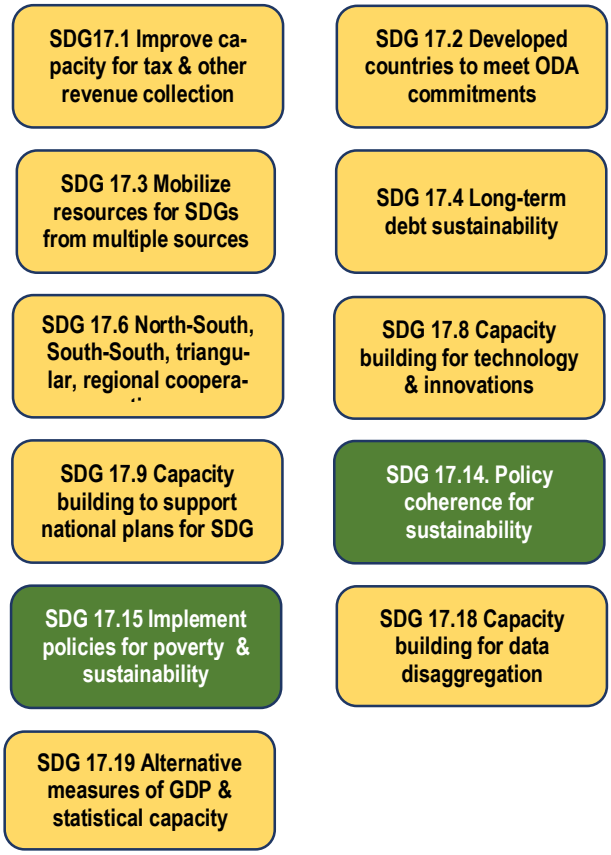
**Building resilience**

- Actively engage with youth, persons with disabilities, and the institutions that serve them on the implementation of the SDGs, the National Climate Change Policy, the National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and other planning documents to ensure that no one is left behind.

# Partnership for the Goals

## Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

SDG 17 is about fostering the means of implementing the SDGs with priority given to forging partnerships for development. Palau is well-positioned to build on a firm foundation of existing partnerships that have supported its development journey since independence. Palau has incorporated 11 of the 19 SDG 17 targets into its National SDG Framework.




## Domestic Financing for SDGs

*SDG 17.1*

Over the period FY2012 to FY2019, tax revenues have increased from 22 to 28 percent of GDP while GDP has significantly expanded (IMF, 2019). Palau's work toward SDG 17.1.and related targets is encapsulated in the recently unveiled Medium Term Fiscal Strategy (SORA, 2019):

(1) Modernize Palau's tax structure (SDG 17.1)
(2) Create a debt management framework (SDG 17.4)
(3) Modernize financing for infrastructure (SDG 17.3, 17.9)
    - Establish infrastructure reserve fund for capital projects funded by domestic revenues
    - Pursue Public Private Partnerships
    - Expand general reserve fund to channel excess funds toward capital investment
    - Ensure all government operating costs are funded from domestic revenues
(4) Strengthen fiscal policy (SDG 17.1)
    - Modernize State Owned Enterprise policy
    - The COFA trust fund as a perpetual fund
    - Reform of the Civil Service Pension Fund to ensure long-term fiscal sustainability.

## Debt Sustainability

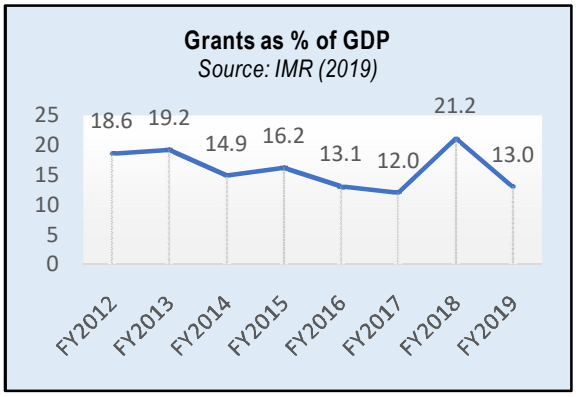
*SDG 17.4*

Debt service as a proportion of government recurrent expenditures is currently low – 3.2% (FY 2017) and 3% (FY 2018). It is the policy of government to manage debt conservatively to ensure that investments generate sufficient revenue to meet debt servicing and repayment obligations. Additional measures to ensure debt sustainability may be forthcoming in response to the Medium-Term Fiscal Strategy (see above).

## Official Development Assistance

*SDG 17.2*

Historically, overseas development assistance in the form of grants has been an important source of financing in Palau, especially for infrastructure development. For the period FY2012 to FY2019, grants have averaged 12 percent of GDP but with significant fluctuations (see graph) (IMF, 2019). As a high-income country, Palau may face challenges in continuing to attract ODA in the form of grants. As noted, steps are being taken to increase the flow of development finance from both domestic sources and to explore alternative innovative financing modalities such as Public-Private Partnerships (discussed below).




xecutive Order No. 349 established a Grants Office within the Office of the President for purposes of (1) aid coordination; (2) grant monitoring; (3) managing a grant database; and (4) grant development assistance and training for both public and private organizations. The Office is intended as a "One Stop Shop" for both organizations (public and private) seeking grant support and for grantors. Moving forward in a more challenging and competitive grant environment, this Office will play an increasingly strategic role in sourcing grant funding as a supplement to domestic revenues.

## Policies for Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication

***SDGs 17.9, 17.14, 17.15, 17.18, and 17.19***

Palau's strategy for implementing the SDGs is not to create a separate plan and policy framework – in essence approaching the SDGs as a silo – but to integrate the SDGs into ongoing processes. Accordingly, SDGs will be integrated into the revised Master Development Plan that will in time replace *Palau 2020*, the blueprint for development adopted in 1996 that has guided Palau through its first 2.5 decades as an independent nation. The SDGs will also be integrated into planning and budget processes thereby ensuring that all government entities are incentivized to play their part in SDG implementation and that regular monitoring of progress against indicators is achieved.

Beyond this, further work will be undertaken to strengthen local partnerships for the SDGs, especially with civil society, state governments, and traditional leaders. The subtheme "progressing with the past" will provide an opportunity for community reflection on the elements of Palau culture and traditions that can provide guidance for the future.

## Partnerships for the SDGs: Regional and Global

*SDGs 17.2, 17.3., and 17.6*

Palau has many development partners, both global and regional, that have provided consistent support through the first 25 years of nationhood. Palau is deeply grateful for their past support and their assurances of continued future support. Nevertheless, Palau seeks to position itself strategically to avail of new partnership mechanisms, many having been developed or revitalized in pursuit of the SDGs.

***Public Private Partnerships (SDG 17.3)***: For Palau, PPPs are a new financing mechanism. The first PPP, approved in 2019, will renovate and expand the International Airport. A second PPP still under development will fund Palau's leap into renewable energy (see SDG 7). As government officials and the public become more familiar and comfortable with PPP arrangements, Government anticipates significant expansion of PPPs as the way forward to meet new infrastructure requirements (SORA, 2019).

***South-South cooperation (SDG 17.3):*** The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) was established to promote, coordinate and support South-South and triangular cooperation globally and within the United Nations system. This funding mechanism is also new to Palau; there are currently three projects in the pipeline for funding through South-South Cooperation.

- **Rehabilitation of Community Health Centres** funded by India-United Nations Development Partnership Fund.
- **Solarization of Head of State Residences in the Pacific** funded by India-United Nations Development Partnership Fund and implemented by UNDP, the Pacific Islands Development Forum, and Solar Head of State (SHOS).
- **Revitalization of Education** funded by IBSA Fund (India, Brazil, South Africa Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation) will provide students and teachers with safe and reliable transportation and infrastructure to enable a healthy learning environment. The project will provide a school bus, fiberglass boat, teacher training facility, a High School resource center, and 10 new roofs on elementary schools. (See also SDG 4).

***GEF Green Climate Fund:*** The Green Climate Fund is the world's largest pool of climate financing. As previously noted (SDG 13), Palau is striving to become accredited as a Nation-

al Implementing Entity (NIE) under the fund thereby qualifying for direct access to Green Climate Fund financing.

***Framework for Pacific Regionalism (SDG 17.6)***: A Framework for Pacific Regionalism was adopted by Pacific Island leaders in July 2014. The Framework envisages "a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead free, health, and productive lives." The leaders subsequently identified "Blue Pacific" as the overarching narrative for advancing Pacific Regionalism within the Framework. With this theme, Forum Leaders aim to harness the shared ocean identity, geography, and resources to focus policy development that will drive positive change in the Pacific's socio-cultural, political, and economic development" (Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, 2018). Objectives of Regionalism include:

- Sustainable development that combines economic, social and cultural development in ways that improve livelihoods and well-being and use environmental resources 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.

***Pacific Sport for Peace and Development***: Access to sport has been recognized in the UNESCO International Charter on Physical Education and Sport and core human rights instruments as a fundamental human right. In Palau and the wider Pacific, sport is a thriving sector with potential to contribute toward SDGs implementation. Six of the 17 SDGs have been identified as areas where sport can make significant contributions.

- SDG 3, Health
- SDG 4, Education
- SDG 5, Gender equality
- SDG 8, Economic growth and decent work
- SDG 11, Cities and human settlements
- SDG 16, Peaceful and inclusive societies

Pursuant to the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, Pacific Sport Compass is a regional initiative to promote sport for development through a comprehensive sport policy for sustainable development. As part of the sport for development process, a new regional project, *Raising the Voice for Sport in the Pacific*, will strengthen regional coordination and advocacy, and develop concrete mechanisms for influencing policy processes and through sport, to influence and support other policy areas such as health, education, gender, disability, and youth. A regional task force representing sport authorities, governments, and civil society provides project guidance with envisaged outcomes -

- Develop regional coordination and partnerships across state and non-state actors
- Coordinate national and regional research on the contributions of sport to sustainable development
- Review and enhance national sport policy
- Develop knowledge and information sharing mechanisms
- Support governments in setting policies priorities in sport and development
- Develop a measurable framework to support regional policy implementation
- Build capacity of regional non-state actors in advocacy and policy development.

**Sport and the 2030 Agenda**

Palau President, Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr. was a strong advocate for inclusion of sport in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Although not included as an SDG target, the role of sport in development was strongly reflected in the preamble.

"Sport is also an important enable of sustainable development. We recognize the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals, and community as well as to the health, education, and social inclusion objectives."

*Paragraph 37*
*2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*

## Partnership for the SDGs – Domestic

SDG 17.3 and 17.9

***SDG working groups***: In the lead-up to this national report, Presidential Executive Order No. 419 (December 2018) established eight SDG thematic working groups. These groups have been engaged throughout the VNR process identifying data sources, selecting targets and indicators, preparing initial drafts, and reviewing repeated consolidated drafts prepared by the SDG coordination unit. The work of these groups, however, is far from finished. They will be continuously engaged going forward in expanding partnerships, monitoring progress,

and integrating the SDGs into sector plans, policies, and projects.

***Belau Association of NGOS (BANGO):*** As a culmination of several years of work, BANGO was organized and chartered in 2018. BANGO is a national coordinating body for civil society, non-government, and community-based organizations in Palau. In the lead-up to this national report, BANGO effectively engaged with the SDG coordinating unit and the Office of the President regarding inclusion of civil society in the working group structure. Subsequently, BANGO appointed CSO representatives to all SDG Working Groups. Moving forward, BANGO, the SDG coordinating unit, and the UN Office in Palau have agreed to work collaboratively to inform and engage civil society groups around the SDGs. The support of BANGO will be essential to ensure inclusive engagement at the grassroots.

During a recent BANGO meeting, member organizations were asked to stand as each SDG was read if their organization was working on that goal. Except for SDG 7 (energy), multiple NGO-CSO partners were identified for each goal and all organizations indicated work across multiple goals. Unfortunately, this information has not yet been formally mapped, a gap that needs to be closed moving forward. The informal exercise, however, underscores the important role that civil society plays as the voice of the SDGs at the grassroots

***State Governments***: Since this first national report is Palau's baseline for the SDGs, much of initial work has revolved around data produced at the national level. Because of this initial focus on data, state governments have not been as engaged in SDG reporting as was originally envisaged. The next phase of work will feature a coordinated strategy to inform and engage state government officials and traditional leaders around the SDGs.

## Pathways to 2030

**Closing gaps**

- Fully engage all possible domestic stakeholders in SDG implementation – civil society, state governments, traditional leaders, and the private sector.

**Improving quality and reach**

- Harness the power of the SDGs as a framework for updating the National Master Development Plan and strengthening budget, planning, and monitoring processes.
- Position Palau to take full advantage of innovative financing mechanisms – Public-Private Partnerships, South-South Cooperation, Green Climate Fund, Pacific Regionalism, and others as they are identified.

***Building resilience***

- Build fiscal sustainability by addressing tax code updates, debt sustainability, and infrastructure investment and maintenance (see SORA 2019).

# Sustainable, Resilient, Inclusive Pathways to a Sustainable 2030

## Overarching Priorities

Although the SDGs cover many different elements of sustainability, all important, for Palau, the overarching priorities are:

- In the people pillar, non-communicable diseases
- In the prosperity pillar, equity
- In the planet pillar, climate change and oceans
- In the partnership pillar, effective and durable partnerships - domestic, regional, and global.

## Progress Summary

Of the 95 targets integrated into Palau's National SDG Framework,

- 10 have been achieved; the future focus is maintaining progress.
- 14 are on-track to achieve with 'business as usual'; no significant new strategies or acceleration are expected to be needed.
- 49 remain work in progress for which accelerated action will be necessary to achieve targets by 2030.
- 6 are off-track; new strategies and significant acceleration of action will be needed to achieve targets by 2030.
- 16 have insufficient data to assess progress; in most cases, these targets have only one data point requiring further statistical work to determine performance status.

The off-track (red) targets are obviously the most critical. These include three of the four top priority SDGs – SDG 3, NCDs; SDG 1 and 10, equity; SDG 14, oceans; and SDG 13 climate change.

## Means of Implementation

Building on strong performance against the MDGs, Palau has made good progress against the SDGs. Palau continues to face challenges, however, in implementation. Based on the assessment of progress in Section 2 of this report, gaps remain in key means of implementation, financing, human and institutional capacity, national systems and whole of government processes, statistics for monitoring SDG performance, and partnerships. Several measures have been taken to address each, with mixed success, and further initiatives are necessary to fulfill Palau's pathways to achieving the 2030 Development Agenda.

***Financing for development***: A primary challenge remains the expiry in 2024 of the Compact Agreement with the United States of America, which funds a large proportion of Palau's infrastructure and key services – public health, early childhood education, and special education services for children with disabilities to name a few. In the event that the Compact funding ceases or is significantly reduced, new sources of revenue for public investments and services will be needed to offset the loss. New and augmented domestic revenue measures, together with stable and predictable inflows of investment from bilateral and multilateral, and appropriate public-private partnerships will be essential over the medium-term to finance investment. Improved access to global climate financing will provide revenues needed to strengthen Palau's infrastructure and environmental resilience.

***Partnerships:*** Durable and effective partnerships – domestic, regional, and global - need to be further harnessed to ensure that all resources and means available amongst development partners are leveraged for sustainable results. While Palau's VNR provides an opportunity for collective reflection and action, sustaining momentum will be required.

***Capacity building***: Human capacity and institutional strengthening require targeted and ongoing attention to raise productivity and efficiencies for service delivery and planned development results.

***Integration:*** Work is in progress to integrate national and SDG priorities into planning and budgeting processes. Palau's government agencies prepare medium-term work programs which provide the basis for their budget requests. Reports on funds received are submitted in the following fiscal year through the Annual Performance Report (APR). Identifying relevant SDG targets and adopting their associated indicators as performance measures will enable government ministries to better identify the budgetary resources needed to achieve the various sector and SDG targets. Presently, the national budget process adopts a Medium-Term Budget Framework (MTBF), which includes a strategic planning framework with identified Key Results Areas (KRAs). The inclusion of the core SDG indicators into the KRAs is central towards facilitating greater accountability and transparency in the national budgetary review process and improving the allocation of scarce resources to priority issues. Additionally, with the accompanying standardized and measurable indicators, reporting on implementation efforts will be more systematic and effective for both plans and budgets. Moving forward, the identified gaps between national priorities and the SDGs can be used to guide discussions around generating new targets and indicators that may better reflect implementation progress of national priorities.

# ANNEXES

**Annex A -** Indicators; Annex

**Annex B -** Bibliography; Annex

**Annex C -** Working group members

# ANNEX A: INDICATORS

The following tables show the best data available for assessing Palau's situation vis-à-vis the SDG targets and indicators as compiled by the SDG working groups and culled from other relevant documents.

Some notes are relevant.

(1) Color coding
Color coding is done at the TARGET level and reflects available data plus expert judgment

| | |
|---|---|
| Blue | Target has been achieved; focus going forward is to sustain progress |
| Green | Target is on track to be achieved according to a business as usual trajectory; no special efforts are needed |
| Yellow | Work is in progress; acceleration will be needed to achieve the target by 2030 |
| Red | Target is off-track; accelerated effort and some new strategies will be needed to achieve the target by 2030 |
| Grey | There is insufficient data to assess progress |

(2) Indicator numbering
Indicators for which there are data that correspond directly to the global data set are labeled with a "G".
Indicators for which local data has been substituted for the global data are marked with a "P".
Indicators labeled with P(MDG) are holdovers from the MDGs that Palau and/or the Pacific Region have decided to retain for the SDG era.

# Palau SDG Target & Indicator Summary

| SDG # | Topic | Global Targets | Palau Selected Core Targets | Palau Core Targets Implementation Status | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Blue - Sustain Improve | Green - On track | Yellow - Progressing | Red - Off-track | Grey - Insufficient data |
| SDG 1 | Poverty | 7 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| SDG 2 | Hunger | 8 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| SDG 3 | Health | 13 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| SDG 4 | Education | 10 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 2 |
| SDG 5 | Gender | 9 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| SDG 6 | Water & Sanitation | 8 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| SDG 7 | Energy | 5 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| SDG 8 | Economy & Work | 12 | 9 | 0 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| SDG 9 | Industry & Infrastructure | 8 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| SDG 10 | Inequality | 10 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| SDG 11 | Cities & Communities | 10 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| SDG 12 | Production & Consumption | 11 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| SDG 13 | Climate Change | 5 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| SDG 14 | Oceans | 10 | 7 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| SDG 15 | Land & Forests | 12 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| SDG 16 | Peace & Justice | 12 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| SDG 17 | Partnerships | 19 | 11 | 0 | 2 | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| | | 169 | 95 | 10 | 14 | 49 | 6 | 16 |

# SDG 1. POVERTY

| Target | Indicator | Baseline | | | Latest Available | | | 2030 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Value | Year | Source | Value | Year | Source | |
| **Target 1.1. By 2030 eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.1.1.1. Proportion of population below the food poverty line. | | | | | | | |
| | | 0.0% | 2006 | HIES | 0.2% | 2014 | HIES | 0.0% |
| **Target 1.2. Reduce poverty by at least half according to national definitions** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.1.2.1. Proportion of people living below the national basic needs poverty line. | | | | | | | |
| | | 24.9% | 2006 | HIES | 19.4% | 2014 | HIES | 9.7% |
| | Indicator G.1.2.2. Proportion of females living below the national basic needs poverty line. | | | | | | | |
| | | 25.8% | 2006 | HIES | NAv. | | | 9.7% |
| | Indicator P.1.2.3. Proportion of children (0-14) living below the national basic needs poverty line. | | | | | | | |
| | | 30.9% | 2006 | HIES | 24.5% | 2014 | HIES | 12.25% |
| **Target 1.3. Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.1.3.1. Proportion of persons age 60+ receiving pension or social security. | | | | | | | |
| | | 63.4% | 2004 | Census | 75% | 2014 | Census | Not set |
| | Indicator P.1.3.2. Proportion of persons covered by social assistance programs. | | | | | | | |
| | | 2.9% | 2006 | HIES | | | | Not set |
| | Indicator P.1.3.3. Proportion of poorest quintile covered by social assistance programs. | | | | | | | |
| | | 8.7% | 2006 | HIES | | | | Not set |
| | Indicator P.1.3.4. Proportion of persons covered by social insurance programs. | | | | | | | |
| | | 36.4 | 2006 | HIES | | | | Not set |
| **Target 1.4. By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.1.4.1. Proportion of population with access to public water. | | | | | | | |
| | | 95.6% | 2005 | Census | 96.7% | 2015 | Census | 100% |
| **Target 1.5. By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social, and environmental shocks/disasters.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.1.5.1. Number of persons affected by disaster per 100,000 population. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |
| | Indicator G.1.5.2. Direct disaster economic loss as a proportion of GDP. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |
| | Indicator G.1.5.3. Countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies. | | | | | | | |
| | | Yes | 2015 | NEMO | Yes | 2019 | NEMO | Yes |

| SDG 2. HUNGER, FOOD, NUTRITION, SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTUE | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Target | Indicator | Baseline | | | Latest Available | | | 2030 Target |
| | | Value | Year | Source | Value | Year | Source | |
| Target 2.1. By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food all year round. | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.2.1.1. Prevalence of undernourishment | | | | | | | |
| | | 0-2 cases | 2013 | MDG Report | 0 | 2017 | MOH | 0 |
| | Indicator P.2.1.2. Locally produced food as a proportion of total food expenditures. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | 16% | 2014 | HIES | 75% |
| Target 2.2. By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition. | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.2.2.1. Prevalence of stunting among children under 5 years of age. | | | | | | | |
| | | 0 | 2013 | MDG Report | 0 | 2017 | MOH | 0 |
| | Indicator G.2.2.2. Prevalence of wasting among children under 5 years of age. | | | | | | | |
| | | 0 | 2013 | MDG Report | 0 | 2017 | MOH | 0 |
| | Indicator P.2.2.3. Proportion of births< 2,500 grams. | | | | | | | |
| | | 12.5% | 2015 | MOH-MCH | 7.5% | 2016 | MOH-MCH | 7% by 2025 |
| | Indicator P.2.2.4. Proportion of infants exclusively breastfed until 6 months of age.[21] | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | 47% | 2018 | MOH | 100% |
| | Indicator P.2.2.5. Prevalence of overweight and obesity among school children. | | | | | | | |
| | | 33% | 2014 | MOH-NCD | 32% | 2017 | MOH-NCD | 20% |
| | Indicator P.2.2.6. Prevalence of overweight and obesity among adults | | | | | | | |
| | | 77.6% | 2014 | MOH-NCD | 71.7% | 2017 | MOH-NCD | Not set |

[21] This figure shown is disputed by many providers. For further discussion, please refer to SDG 2 in the main report.

# SDG 3. HEALTH

| Target | Indicator | Baseline | | | Latest Available | | | 2030 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Value | Year | Source | Value | Year | Source | |
| **Target 3.1. By 2030, reduce the maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.3.1.1. Maternal mortality ratio. | | | | | | | |
| | | 0 | 2015 | MOH | 0 | 2017 | MOH | 0 |
| | Indicator G.3.1.2. Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel. | | | | | | | |
| | | 100% | 2015 | MOH | 100% | 2017 | MOH | 100% |
| **Target 3.2. By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age; reduce neonatal mortality to 12 per 1,000 live births or below.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.3.2.1. U5MR (deaths 0-4 years of age per 1,000 live births). | | | | | | | |
| | | Rate 16.8<br>4 deaths | 2015 | MOH | Rate 22.8<br>5 deaths | 2017 | MOH | 0 |
| | Indicator G.3.2.2. Neonatal Mortality Rate (deaths 0-28 days per 1,000 live births). | | | | | | | |
| | | Rate 8.4<br>2 deaths | 2016 | MOH | Rate 13.7<br>3 deaths | 2017 | MOH | 0 |
| **Target 3.3. By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water borne diseases, and other communicable diseases.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.3.3.1. Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population. | | | | | | | |
| | | 1 case | 2015 | MOH | 1 case | 2017 | MOH | 0 |
| | Indicator G.3.3.2. Tuberculosis incidence per 1,000 population. | | | | | | | |
| | | Rate 0.79<br>Count 14 | 2015 | MOH | Rate 1.13<br>Count 20 | 2017 | MOH | 0 |
| **Target 3.4. By 2030, reduce by one-third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases and promote mental health and well-being.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.3.4.1. Mortality attributed to cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes, & COPD. | | | | | | | |
| | | 70% | 2015 | MOH-NCD | 80% | 2017 | MOH-NCD | 25% reduction by 2025 |
| | Indicator G.3.4.2. Suicide mortality rate. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |
| **Target 3.5. Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.3.5.1. Coverage of treatment interventions (pharmacological, psychosocial, and rehabilitation and aftercare services) for substance use disorders. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |
| | Indicator G.3.5.2. Harmful use of alcohol defined as alcohol consumption per capita (ages 15 years +) within a calendar year in liters of pure alcohol. | | | | | | | |
| | | 7.9 liters | 2010 | MOH | N/Av. | | | No set |
| | Indicator P.3.5.3. Proportion of adults engaging in binge drinking (5 or more drinks for men and 4 or more for women at one sitting). | | | | | | | |
| | | Men 44%<br>Women 17% | 2014 | MOH STEPS Survey | Men 38.7%<br>Women 19.6% | 2017 | MOH Hybrid Survey | Not set |
| | Indicator P.3.5.4. Proportion of youth engaging in binge drinking. | | | | | | | |
| | | All 33%<br>Men 40%<br>Women 26% | 2014 | YRBS | All 24.1%<br>Men 31.2%<br>Women 17.8% | 2018 | YRBS | Not set |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Target 3.7. By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.3.7.1. Proportion of women of reproductive age (ages 15-49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods.[22] | | | | | | | |
| | | 63.8% | 2015 | MOH | 63.8% | 2015 | MOH | Not set |
| | Indicator G.3.7.2. Adolescent birth rate (ages 10-14 years; ages 15-19 years) per 1,000 women in age group | | | | | | | |
| | | 27 | 2015 | MOH | 18 | 2017 | MOH | Not set |
| **Target 3.8. Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.3.8.1. Coverage of essential health services. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | 100% | 2019 | MOH | 100% |
| | Indicator P.3.8.2. Household expenditures on health as a percent of total expenditure. | | | | | | | |
| | | | 2006 | HIES | 2% | 2014 | HIES | Not set |
| **Target 3.A. Strengthen the implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.3.A.1. Prevalence of current tobacco users (all forms) by persons aged 20+ years of age. | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 56.5% | 2016 | MOH Hybrid Survey | Not set |
| | Indicator P.3.A.2. Prevalence of current cigarette smoking by persons 20+ years of age. | | | | | | | |
| | | All 16.6% | 2014 | MOH STEPS | All 20.6% | 2017 | MOH Hybrid Survey | Not set |
| | | Men 24% | | | Men 30.7% | | | |
| | | Women 8.4% | | | Women 9.9% | | | |
| | Indicator P.3.A.3. Percentage of GDP per capita required to purchase 100 packs of 20 cigarettes of the most sold brand. | | | | | | | |
| | | 3.59% | 2015 | CTFP | 4.2% | 2017 | CTFP | Not set |
| **Target P(MDG).1. Percent of 2 year olds immunized against measles.** | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 96% | 2016 | World Bank | 100% |

[22] Statistics here include only women who obtain family planning services through the MOH. Not included are women obtaining services at private clinics or using non-prescription methods.

# SDG 4. EDUCATION

| Target | Indicator | Baseline | | | Latest Available | | | 2030 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Value | Year | Source | Value | Year | Source | |
| **Target 4.1. By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.[23]** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P(MDG).1. Net enrollment rate in primary education. | | | | | | | |
| | | 85% | 2005 | MOE | N/Av. | | | 100% |
| | Indicator P(MDG).2. Gross enrollment in primary education. | | | | | | | |
| | | Male 113.5% | 2014 | MOE statistical yearbook | Male 112% | 2016 | MOE statistical yearbook | No set |
| | | Female 113.8% | | | Female 110.6% | | | |
| | Indicator P(MDG).3. Proportion of children enrolled in Grade 1 who reach the last grade in primary education. | | | | | | | |
| | | 90% | 2014 | MOE Statistical Yearbook | 76.5% | 2016 | MOE Statistical Yearbook | 100% |
| | Indictor P(MDG).4. Gross enrollment in secondary education. | | | | | | | |
| | | Male 112.7% | 2014 | MOE Statistical Yearbook | Male 112% | 2016 | MOE Statistical Yearbook | Not set |
| | | Female 125% | | | Female 109.1% | | | |
| | Indicator G.4.1.5.A. Proportion of children in grade 4 achieving a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics. | | | | | | | |
| | | Read 89% | 2015 | MOE Statistical Yearbook | Read 89% | 2015 | MOE Statistical Yearbook | 100% for both |
| | | Math 99% | | | Math 99% | | | |
| | Indicator G.4.1.5.B. Proportion of children at the end of primary (Grade 6) achieving a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics. | | | | | | | |
| | | Read 96% | 2015 | MOE Statistics Yearbook | Read 96% | 2015 | MOE Statistical Yearbook | 100% for both |
| | | Math 96% | | | Math 96% | | | |
| | Indicator G.4.1.1.(c). Proportion of children at the end of lower secondary achieving a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | 100% |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | |
| **Target 4.2. By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.4.2.2. Participation rate in organized learning (1 year before official primary entry age). | | | | | | | |
| | | All 90.4% | 2014 | MOE | All 83% | 2017 | UNESCO | 100% |
| | | Female 80.4% | 2014 | MOE | | | | |
| | | Male 100.0% | 2014 | MOE | | | | |
| **Target 4.3. By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.4.3.1. Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |

[23] Those indicators showing as "P(MDG).#" are indicators that appeared in the MDGs but not the SDGs. By agreement Pacific Island countries have retained these in their SDG indicator list.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Target 4.4. By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.4.4.1. Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not Set |
| **Target 4.5.A. By 2030, eliminate disparities in education – gender.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.4.5.1. Gender parity index | | | | | | | |
| | | Pre-primary N/Av. | 2014 | MOE Statistical Yearbook | Pre-primary 1.22 | 2019 | MOE | 1.00 |
| | | Primary 1.0 | | | Primary 0.96 | | | 1.00 |
| | | Secondary 1.11 | | | Secondary 1.06 | | | 1.00 |
| | Indicator P.4.5.2. Post high school education by gender. | | | | | | | |
| | | Women 46% | 2015 | Census | Women 46% | 2015 | Census | Not set |
| | | Men 37% | | | Men 37% | | | |
| **Target 4.5.(b) By 2030, eliminate disparities in education - disability status.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.4.5.2. Literacy rate (reading) persons age 18-49 with disability versus without disability | | | | | | | |
| | | Disabled 48% | 2015 | UNICEF (Census) | Disabled 48% | 2015 | UNICEF (Census) | Not set |
| | | Not dis-abled 98.6% | | | Not dis-abled 98.6% | | | |
| **Target 4.6. By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.4.6.1. Adult literacy, persons 15+ by gender. | | | | | | | |
| | | Male 99.5% | 2015 | Census | Male 99.5% | 2015 | Census | 100% |
| | | Female 99.5% | 2015 | Census | Female 99.5% | 2015 | Census | 100% |
| | Indicator P(MDG).4.6.12. Literacy rates ages 15-24 years. | | | | | | | |
| | | 99.70% | 2005 | Census | 99.40% | 2015 | Census | 100% |
| **Target 4.7. By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.4.7.1. Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment. | | | | | | | |
| | | See main report | | | See main report | | | Not set |
| Target 4.A. Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.4.A.1. Proportion of schools with access to: (a) electricity; (b) the Internet for pedagogical purposes; (c) computers for pedagogical purposes; (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities; (e) basic drinking water; (f) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic hand washing facilities (as per the WASH indicator definitions). | | | | | | | |
| | | Electricity 100% | 2018 | MOE | Electricity 100% | 2018 | MOE | 100% |
| | | Internet 100% | | | Internet 100% | | | 100% |
| | | Computer | | | Computer | | | 100% |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 100% | | | 100% | | | |
| | | Water 100% | | | Water 100% | | | 100% |
| | | Sanitation 100% | 2018 | MOE | Sanitation 100% | 2018 | MOE | 100% |
| | | Washing 100% | 2018 | MOE | Washing 100% | 2018 | MOE | 100% |
| **Target 4.C. By 2030 substantially expand the number of qualified teachers.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.4.C.1. Proportion of teachers across all education levels who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (defined as Associate Degree for primary teachers and bachelor's degree for high school teachers). | | | | | | | |
| | | Primary 43% | 2016 | Statistics Yearbook | Primary 53% | 2018 | Statistics Year book | 100% |
| | | Secondary 62% | | | Secondary 71% | | | 100% |

# SDG 5: EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

| Target | Indicator | Baseline | | | Latest Available | | | 2030 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Value | Year | Source | Value | Year | Source | |
| **Target 5.1. End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.5.1.1. Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex. | | | | | | | |
| | | Yes | 2006 | MCCA | Yes | 2006 | MCCA | Yes |
| **Target 5.2. Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.5.2.1. Lifetime prevalence of physical or sexual violence (proportion of ever-partnered women and girls ages 15-64 years subjected to physical or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner) | | | | | | | |
| | | All ages 25.2% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | All ages 25.2% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Not set |
| | | Age 15-19 19.8% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Age 15-19 19.8% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Not set |
| | | Age 20-24 20.7% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Age 20-24 20.7% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Not set |
| | Indicator G.5.2.2. Proportion of ever partered women 15-64 years subjected to physical and/or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner in past 12 months. | | | | | | | |
| | | All ages 8.4% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | All ages 8.4% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Not set |
| | | Age 15-19 7.8% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Age 15-19 7.8% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Not set |
| | | Age 20-24 17.3% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Age 20-24 17.3% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Not set |
| | Indicator P.5.2.3. Lifetime prevalence of sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner, women 15-64 years. | | | | | | | |
| | | Age 15-64 15% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Age 15-64 15% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Not set |
| | Indicator G.5.2.4. Proportion of women ages 15-64 subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in previous 12 months by age. | | | | | | | |
| | | Age 15-64 3.4% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Age 15-64 3.4% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Not set |
| | | Age 15-19 2.5% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Age 15-19 2.5% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Not set |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Age 20-24 7.1% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Age 20-24 7.1% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Not set |
| | Indicator P.5.2.5. Lifetime prevalence of physical violence by person other than an intimate partner, women 15-64 years. | | | | | | | |
| | | All 13.9% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | All 13.9% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Not set |
| | Indicator P.5.2.6. Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age. | | | | | | | |
| | | All 2.5% | 2014 | Family Health Survey | All 2.5% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Not set |
| | | Age 15-19 9.1% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Age 15-19 9.1% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Not set |
| | | Age 20-24 8.4% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Age 20-24 8.4% | 2013 | Family Health Survey | Not set |
| **Target 5.3. Eliminate all harmful practices (e.g. child, early and forced marriage, FEM, etc).** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.5.3.1. Proportion of women 20-24 years of age who were married or in union (a) before age 15 and (b) before age 18. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not Set |
| **Target 5.4. Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.5.4.1. Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age, location | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |
| | Indicator P.5.4.2. Adults 18+ in labor force whose main economic activity is unpaid. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | Men 6.3% | 2015 | Census | Not set |
| | | N/Av. | | | Women 19.4% | 2015 | Census | Not set |
| | Indicator P.5.4.3. Proportion of adults 15+ years outside the labor force. | | | | | | | |
| | | Men 37% | 2006 | HIES | Men 39% | 2014 | HIES | Not set |
| | | Women 50.2% | 2006 | HIES | Women 60% | 2014 | HIES | Not set |
| **Target 5.5. Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Target G.5.5.1. Proportion of seats held by women in national congress. | | | | | | | |
| | | 0% | 2001 | MCCA | 16% | 2019 | MCCA | Not set |
| | Target P.5.5.2. Proportion of cabinet positions held by women. | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 40% | 2019 | MCCA | Not set |
| | Target P.5.5.2. Proportion of state governorships held by women. | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 25% | 2019 | MCCA | Not set |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Target P.5.5.3. Proportion of management positions held by women (public & private sectors). | | | | | | | |
| | | 29.20% | 2005 | Census | 41.20% | 2015 | Census | Not set |
| **Target 5.6. Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Target G.5.6.1. Proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |
| | Target G.5.6.2. Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee women aged 15-49 years access to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education. | | | | | | | |
| | | 1 | 2000 | MOH | 1 | 2019 | MOH | 1 |

| SDG 6: WATER AND SANITATION | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Target | Indicator | Baseline | | | Latest Available | | | 2030 Target |
| | | Value | Year | Source | Value | Year | Source | |
| **Target 6.1. By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.6.1.1. Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | 100% |
| | Indicator P.6.1.1. Proportion of households with access to public water systems. | | | | | | | |
| | | 95.70% | 2005 | Census | 96.90% | 2015 | Census | 100% |
| | Indicator P.6.1.2. Proportion of households with access to safe public water supplies. | | | | | | | |
| | | 62.90% | 2005 | Census | 65.10% | 2015 | Census | 100% |
| **Target 6.2. By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.6.2.1. Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services, including a hand-washing facility with soap and water | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | |
| | Indicator P.6.2.2. Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services. | | | | | | | |
| | | 88.20% | 2005 | Census | 95% | 2015 | Census | 100% |
| **Target 6.4. By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.6.4.1. Change in water-use efficiency over time. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |
| | Indicator P.6.4.2. Physical efficiency of water used (GDP per liter of water used). | | | | | | | |
| | | $0.09 | 2014 | MNRET | $0.16 | 2016 | MNRET | Not set |
| | Indicator P.6.5.3. Economic efficiency of water used (GDP per value of water used). | | | | | | | |
| | | $99.00 | 2014 | MNRET | $62.00 | 2016 | MNRT | Not set. |
| | Indicator G.6.4.4. Level of water stress: freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |
| | Indicator G.6.4.5. Water use per capita. | | | | | | | |
| | | 2,871 ml | 2014 | MNRET | 1990 ml | 2016 | MNRET | Not set |
| **Target** 6.5. By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels. (Note transboundary reference not relevant). | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.6.5.1. Degree of integrated water resources management implementation (0-100). | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |
| **Target 6.6. By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.6.6.1. Change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |

| SDG 7: ENERGY FOR ALL | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Target | Indicator | Baseline | | | Latest Available | | | 2030 Target |
| | | Value | Year | Source | Value | Year | Source | |
| **Target 7.1. By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.7.1.1. Proportion of population with access to electricity. | | | | | | | |
| | | 100% | 2015 | MPIIC | 100% | 2017 | MPIIC | 100% |
| **Target 7.2. By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.7.2.1. Renewable energy share in the total final energy consumption. | | | | | | | |
| | | <1% | 2015 | MPIIC | <1% | 2017 | MPIIC | 2025 45% |
| **Target 7.3. By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.7.3.1.(a). Energy intensity measured by GJ of energy use per $ million of GDP. | | | | | | | |
| | | 9,049 GJ/$million GDP | 2014 | MPIIC | 6,289 GJ/$1million GDP | 2016 | MPIIC | Not set |
| | Indicator G.7.3.1.(b). GDP per KJ of energy use. | | | | | | | |
| | | $0.11 | 2014 | MPIIC | $0.16 | 2016 | MPIIC | Not set |

| SDG 8: ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DECENT WORK | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Target | Indicator | Baseline | | | Latest Available | | | 2030 Target |
| | | Value | Year | Source | Value | Year | Source | |
| **Target 8.1. Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.8.1.1. Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita. | | | | | | | |
| | | 8.80% | 2015 | MOF | -3.90% | 2017 | MOF | Not set |
| **Target 8.2. Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labor-intensive sectors.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.8.2.1. Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person. | | | | | | | |
| | | 4.30% | 2015 | MOF | -7.40% | 2017 | MOF | Not set |
| **Target 8.3. Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.8.3.1. Proportion of informal employment in nonagricultural employment, by sex. | | | | | | | |
| | | All 6% | 2005 | Census | All 19% | 2015 | Census | Not set |
| | | Male 3% | | | Male 5% | | | |
| | | Female 3% | | | Female 13% | | | |
| **Target 8.5. By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.8.5.1. Average annual earnings of female and male employees, by occupation, age and persons with disabilities. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |
| | Indicator G.8.5.2.(a). Unemployment rate persons 15+ by sex, age and location. | | | | | | | |
| | | Male All 2.27% | 2005 | Census | Male All 0.98% | 2015 | Census | Not set |
| | | Male Urban 1.96% | | | Male Urban 0.91% | | | |
| | | Male Rural 3.53% | | | Male Rural 1.28% | | | |
| | | Female All 1.9% | | | Female all 0.67% | | | |
| | | Female Urban 1.51% | | | Female Urban 0.65% | | | |
| | | Female rural 3.49% | | | Female Urban 0.79% | | | |
| | Indicator G.8.5.2.(b). Unemployment rate persons 15+ by disability status. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | Disabled 0.8% | 2015 | UNICEF based on | Not set |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | Not dis-abled 1.3% | | Census | |
| **Target 8.6. By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.8.6.1. Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | 2005 | Census | N/Av. | 2015 | Census | Not set |
| | Indicator P.8.6.2. Proportion of youth (aged 15-24) unemployed and seeking work. | | | | | | | |
| | | 27.6% | 2005 | Census | 16-19 Yrs 1.3% | 2015 | Census | Not set |
| | | 9.7% | | | 20-24 Yrs 2.3% | | | |
| **Target 8.7. Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labor, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labor, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labor in all its forms.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.8.7.1. Proportion of persons 16-17 year old in labor force. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |
| **Target 8.8. Protect labor rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.8.8.2. Increase in national compliance of labor rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on International Labor Organization (ILO) textual sources and national legislation by sex and migrant status. | | | | | | | |
| | | Not Applica-ble | 2005 | MOF | Underway | 2015 | MOF | Not set |
| **Target 8.9. By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.8.9.1. Tourism direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP and in growth rate. | | | | | | | |
| | | 2.20% | 2015 | MOF | -8.50% | 2017 | MOF | Not set |
| | Indicator G.8.9.2. Number of jobs in tourism industries as a proportion of total jobs and growth rate of jobs, by sex. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |
| **Target 8.10. Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.8.10.2. Proportion of adults (18 years and older) with an account at a bank or other financial institution (excludes credit unions). | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.8.10.2.(a) Deposit accounts per adult (ages 18+); excludes credit unions. | | | | | | | |
| | | 1.59 | 2012 | MOF | 1.49 | 2017 | MOF | Not set |
| | Indicator P.8.10.2.(b) Loan accounts per adult (ages 18+); excludes credit unions. | | | | | | | |
| | | 0.37 | 2012 | MOF | 0.43 | 2017 | MOF | Not set |

| SDG 9: INDUSTRY & INFRASTRUCTURE | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Target | Indicator | Baseline | | | Latest Available | | | 2030 Target |
| | | Value | Year | Source | Value | Year | Source | |
| **Target 9.1. Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.9.1.1. Proportion of rural population living within 2 km of an all-season road. | | | | | | | |
| | | 99% | 2015 | | 99% | 2015 | | 100% |
| | Indicator G.9.1.2.(a) Passenger volumes by air: number of flights and passengers deplaning. | | | | | | | |
| | | Flights 1,872 | 2012 | Statistical Yearbook | Flights 1,354 | 2017 | Statistical Yearbook | Not set |
| | | Passenger 135,841 | | | Passenger 140,563 | | | |
| | Indicator G.9.1.2.(b) Freight volumes by sea: # containers; container feet | | | | | | | |
| | | Container 1408 | 2012 | Statistical Yearbook | Container 3016 | 2017 | Statistical Yearbook | Not set |
| | | Container feet 35,680 | | | Container feet 429,700 | | | |
| **Target 9.2. Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and, by 2030, significantly raise industry's share of employment and gross domestic product.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.9.2.1. Manufacturing value added as a proportion of GDP and per capita. | | | | | | | |
| | | 10.60% | 2015 | MPIIC | -0.90% | 2017 | MPICC | Not set |
| | Indicator G.9.2.2. Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment. | | | | | | | |
| | | 2.30% | 2005 | Census | 1.70% | 2017 | Census | Not set |
| **Target 9.3. By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.9.3.1. CO2 emission per unit of value added. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |

| SDG 10: INEQUALITY | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Target | Indicator | Baseline | | | Latest Available | | | 2030 Target |
| | | Value | Year | Source | Value | Year | Source | |
| **Target 10.1. By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.10.1.1. Expenditures of bottom 40% of households as proportion of expenditures by all households. | | | | | | | |
| | | 25.40% | 2006 | HIES | 24.00% | 2015 | HIES | Not set |
| | Indicator P.10.1.2. Expenditures of top 40% of households as proportion of expenditures by all households. | | | | | | | |
| | | 56.70% | 2006 | HIES | 59.80% | 2015 | HIES | Not set |
| | Indicator P.10.1.2. Population Gini coefficients for by place of residence. | | | | | | | |
| | | All 0.38 | 2006 | HIES | All 0.36 | 2015 | HIES | Not set |
| | | Urban 0.37 | | | Urban 0.47 | | | |
| | | Rural 0.40 | | | Rural 0.36 | | | |
| **Target 10.2. By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.10.2.1. Proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income, by age, sex and persons with disabilities. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |
| **Target 10.4. Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.10.4.1. Labor share of GDP, comprising wages and social protection transfers. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |

| SDG 11: SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND SETTLEMENTS | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Target | Indicator | Baseline | | | Latest Available | | | 2030 Target |
| | | Value | Year | Source | Value | Year | Source | |
| **Target 11.1. By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.11.1.1. Proportion of urban population (Koror-Airai) living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing | | | | | | | |
| | | No public water 1.14% | 2005 | Census | No public water 1.2% | 2015 | Census | 0.00% |
| | | No tub or shower 0.2% | | | No tub or shower 0.7% | | | 0.00% |
| | | No flush toilet 3.4% | | | No flush toilet 4.2% | | | 0.00% |
| | | Not connected sewer or septic 5.6% | | | Not connected sewer or septic 3.0% | | | 0.00% |
| **Target 11.4. Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.11.4.1. Total expenditure (public and private) per capita spent on the preservation, protection and conservation of all cultural and natural heritage, by type of heritage (cultural, natural, mixed and World Heritage Centre designation), level of government (national, regional and local/municipal), type of expenditure (operating expenditure/investment) and type of private funding (donations in kind, private non-profit sector and sponsorship) | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not Set |
| **Target 11.7. By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.11.7.1. Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |
| | Indicator G.11.7.2. Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |

## SDG 12: SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION & CONSUMPTION

| | | Baseline | | | Latest Available | | | 2030 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Value | Year | Source | Value | Year | Source | |
| **Target 12.4. By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.12.4.1.(a). Number of parties to international multilateral environmental agreements on hazardous waste, and other chemicals that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each relevant agreement: (a) Basel Convention. | | | | | | | |
| | | Acceded 2011 | 2011 | MOS | Acceded 2011 | 2011 | MOS | --- |
| | Indicator G.12.4.1.(b) Stockholm Convention. | | | | | | | |
| | | Acceded 2011 | 2011 | MOS | Acceded 2011 | 2011 | MOS | --- |
| | Indicator G.12.2. Hazardous waste generated per capita and proportion of hazardous waste treated, by type of treatment. | | | | | | | |
| | | PCB – None | 2007 | EQBP | No update | | | Not set |
| | | DDT – None | | | No update | | | |
| | | Dioxin & furan 649.6mg TEQ/A | | | No update | | | |
| **Target 12.5. By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling, and reuse.** | | | | | | | | |
| **Target 11.6. By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.11.6.1. Waste generated per capita per day (Koror only). | | | | | | | |
| | | 0.55 lbs | 2005 | KSG | 0.9 lbs | 2014 | KSG | Not set |
| | Indicator G.13.5.1. National recycling rate, tons of material recycled | | | | | | | |
| | | 231.29 | 2015 | MPIIC | 256.26 | 2017 | MPIIC | Not set |
| | Indicator P.11.6.2 & P.12.5.2. Proportion of solid waste recycled/composted (Koror only). | | | | | | | |
| | | Almost nil | 2005 | KSG | 51% | 2015 | KSG | 65% |
| **Target 12.7. Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.12.7.1. Countries implementing sustainable public procurement policies and action plans. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | 2015 | BPSS | N/Av. | 2017 | BPSS | Not set |
| **Target 12.8. By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator 12.8.1. Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development (including climate change education) are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment. | | | | | | | |
| | (1) Climate education mainstreamed in grade 5 science curriculum | | | | | | | |
| | (2) Ridge-to-reef module also mainstreamed in environmental studies | | | | | | | |
| | (3) Sustainable tourism module mainstreamed in education | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (4) Disaster risk preparedness mainstreamed into education | | | | | | | |
| | (5) An average of 87% of students participate each school year in oceans education offered by PICRC | | | | | | | |
| **Target 12.B. Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator 12.B.1. Number of sustainable tourism strategies or policies and implemented action plans with agreed monitoring and evaluation tools. | | | | | | | |
| | | 0 | 2015 | MNRET | 1 | 2017 | MNRET | 1 |

| SDG 13: CLIMATE ACTION | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Target | Indicator | Baseline | | | Latest Available | | | 2030 Target |
| | | Value | Year | Source | Value | Year | Source | |
| **Target 13.1. Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.13.1.1. Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies | | | | | | | |
| | | 0 | | | 16 | 2018 | NEMO | Not set |
| | Indicator G.13.1.2. Number of deaths, missing persons and persons affected by disaster per 100,000 people. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |
| | Indicator G.13.1.3. Number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies. | | | | | | | |
| | | Nat'l Disaster Risk Manage't Framework | 2010 | NEMO | Nat'l Disaster Risk Manage't Framework | 2016 | NEMO | 1 |
| **Target 13.2. Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.13.2.1. Countries that have a National Climate Change Policy. | | | | | | | |
| | | 1 | 2015 | MOF | 1 | 2017 | MOF | 1 regular updates |

# SDG 14: OCEANS

| Target | Indicator | Baseline | | | Latest Available | | | 2030 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Value | Year | Source | Value | Year | Source | |
| **Target 14.1. By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.14.1.1. Index of coastal eutrophication and floating plastic debris density. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |
| **Target 14.2. By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.14.2.1. Proportion of national exclusive economic zones managed using ecosystem-based approaches. | | | | | | | |
| | | 0 | 2015 | MNRET | 80% | 2020 | MNRET | 80% |
| **Target 14.3. Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.14.3.1. Average marine acidity (pH) measured at agreed suite of representative sampling stations. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | Wet surface: 8.01 | 2018 | PICRC | Not set |
| | | | | | Wet bottom: 8.01 | | | |
| | | | | | Dry surface: 8.00 | | | |
| | | | | | Dry bottom: 7.99 | | | |
| **Target 14.4. By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.14.4.1. Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | N/Av. | | | Not set |
| **Target 14.5. By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.14.5.1. Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas. | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | PAN sites 14.8% | 2019 | TNC | 30% |
| | | | | | All sites 71.0% | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Indicator P.14.5.2. Ratio of fisheries species biomass inside and outside of MPAs. | | | | | | | |
| | | PICRC (2016) commercial reef fish biomass (g/m-2) in different reef habitats. At 3 meters depth: 12.8 at Inner Reef, 58.5 at Outer Reef East, 54.2 at Outer Reef West, and 11.8 at Patch Reef. At 10 meters depth: 16.7 at Inner Reef, 22.8 at Outer Reef East, 78.6 at Outer Reef West, and 9.6 at Patch Reef. | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.14.5.3. Percentage of coral cover at different reef habitats. | | | | | | | |
| | | PICRC (2016) At 3 meters depth: 59.5% at Inner Reef, 6.1% at Outer Reef East, 31.6% at Outer Reef West, and 31.2% at Patch Reef. At 10 meters depth, coral coverage was: 39.6% at Inner Reef, 7.4% at Outer Reef East, 53.9% at Outer Reef West, and 24.4% at Patch Reef. | | | | | | |
| **Target 14.6. By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.14.6.1. Does Palau have measures in place to combat illegal, unreported and un-regulated fishing and degree of implementation of agreed international instruments | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | Yes | 2019 | MNRET | Not set |
| **Target 14.7. By 2030, increase economic benefits from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.14.7.1. Sustainable fisheries as a percentage of GDP. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | 1.8% | 2019 | SOE Rept | Not set |

# SDG 15: LAND AND FOREST

| | | Baseline | | | Latest Available | | | 2030 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Value | Year | Source | Value | Year | Source | |
| **Target 15.1. By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.15.1.1.Forest area as a proportion of total land area. | | | | | | | |
| | | 82% | 2007 | SOE 2017 | 87.62% | 2017 | SOE 2017 | No net loss |
| | Indicator G.15.1.2. Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type. | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | Total 20% | 2015 | SOE 2017 | 20% |
| | | | | | RI 100% | | | 100% |
| | | | | | Babeldaob 10% | | | 20% |
| | | | | | Mangrove 40% | | | 75% |
| **Target 15.2. By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase reforestation globally.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.15.2.1. Progress towards sustainable forest management. | | | | | | | |
| | | Draft Sustainable Forest Management Policy | | | | 2018 | SOE 2019 | Not set |
| **Target 15.3. By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.15.3.1. Proportion of total land area that is degraded. | | | | | | | |
| | | 25% | 2014 | Forest Inventory & Analy-sis | 25% | 2014 | Forest Inventory & Analy-sis | Not set |
| **Target 15.5. Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.15.5.1. Endemic and native species on the IUCN Red List. | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | Mammals (2/2) 100% | 2017 | SOE | 0 |
| | | | | | Amphibians & reptiles (1/46) 2% | | | |
| | | | | | Birds (7/12) 58% | | | |
| | | | | | Plants, 8% | | | |
| **Target 15.6. Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.15.6.1. Number of countries that have adopted legislative, administrative and policy frameworks to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits. | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | Progress | 2019 | Working Group | Not set |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Target 15.7. Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.15.7.1. Proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av | | | N/Av | | | |
| **Table 15.8. By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.15.8.1. Proportion of countries adopting relevant national legislation and adequately resourcing the prevention or control of invasive alien species | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | Legislation Yes | 2017 | SOE | Not Set |
| | | | | | Resources No | | | |

## SDG 16: PEACE, JUSTICE, STRONG INSTITUTIONS

| | | Baseline | | | Latest Available | | | 2030 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Value | Year | Source | Value | Year | Source | |
| **Target 16.1: Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.16.1.1. Number of homicides per 100,000 population, by sex and age. | | | | | | | |
| | | Count 3 | 2015 | MOJ | Count 2 | 2018 | MOJ | |
| | | Rate 17 | | | 11.3 | | | Not Set |
| **Target 16.2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children .** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.16.2.1. Proportion of children aged 1-17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month. | | | | | | | |
| | | Count 3 | 2015 | MOJ | Count 20 | 2017 | MOJ | 0 |
| | Indicator G.2.2. Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation. | | | | | | | |
| | | Count 0 | 2016 | MOJ | Count 2 | 2018 | MOJ | 0 |
| | Indicator G.16.2.3. Proportion of young women and men aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18 | | | | | | | |
| | | Count 9 | 2016 | MOJ | Count 8 | 2018 | MOJ | 0 |
| **Target 16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.16.3.1. Proportion of victims of (domestic) violence in the previous 12 months who reported their victimization to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms. | | | | | | | |
| | | Charges 35 | 2015 | MOJ | Charges 44 | 2018 | MOJ | Not set |
| | | CRO 47 | | | CRO 78 | | | |
| **Target 16.6. Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.16.6.1. Primary government expenditures as a proportion of original approved budget, by sector | | | | | | | |
| | | Budget US$79,893,600. | FY2015 | MOJ | Budget US$87,608,175. | FY2018 | MJO | Not set |
| | | Expenditures US$73,814,824 | | | Expenditures US$81,474,450 | | | |
| | | Expenditures as % of budget 92% | | | Expenditures as % of budget 93% | | | |
| | Indicator G.16.6.2. Proportion of the population satisfied with their last experience of public services. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | | | 73% | 2017 | MOJ | Not set |
| **Target G.16.7. Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.16.7.1. Proportions of positions (by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislatures, public service, and judiciary) compared to national distributions. | | | | | | | |
| | | Judiciary 72% women | 2016 | PPSS | Judiciary 54% women | 2017 | PPSS | Not set |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Executive 49% women | | | Executive 49% women | | | |
| | Indicator G.16.7.2. Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | 2015 | MOJ | 78.70% | 2017 | MOJ | Not set |
| **Target G.16.9. By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.16.9.1. Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age. | | | | | | | |
| | | 100% | 2015 | MOJ | 100% | 2017 | MOJ | 100% |
| **Target 16.10. Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.16.10.1. Number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists, associated media personnel, trade unionists and human rights advocates in the previous 12 months. | | | | | | | |
| | | 0 | 2015 | MOJ | 0 | 2017 | MOJ | 0 |
| | Indicator G.16.10.2. Number of countries that adopt and implement constitutional, statutory and/or policy guarantees for public access to information. | | | | | | | |
| | | 1 | 2014 | MOJ | 1 | 2014 | MOJ | 1 |
| | | Baseline | | | Latest Available | | | 2030 Target |
| | | Value | Year | Source | Value | Year | Source | |

| SDG 17: MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Baseline | | | Latest Available | | | 2030 Target |
| | | Value | Year | Source | Value | Year | Source | |
| **Goal 17: Part 1 - Finance** | | | | | | | | |
| **Target 17.1. Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.17.1.1. Total government revenue as a proportion of GDP, by source. | | | | | | | |
| | | 40% | 2015 | MOS | 40% | 2017 | MOS | Not set |
| | Indicator G.17.1.2. Proportion of domestic budget funded by domestic taxes. | | | | | | | |
| | | 70% | 2015 | MOS | 60% | 2017 | MOS | Not set |
| **Target 17.2. Developed countries to implement fully their official development assistance commitments.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.17.2.1. Official development assistance (ODA) and official aid received in current US dollars (millions). | | | | | | | |
| | | US$13.93 | 2015 | World Bank | US$22.140 | 2017 | World Bank | Not set |
| | Indicator P.17.2.2. Gross Domestic Product | | | | | | | |
| | | US$293.1m | 2015 | World Bank | US291.5m | 2017 | World Bank | Not set |
| | Indicator G.17.2.2. Net official development assistance as a percentage of GDP. | | | | | | | |
| | | 14.90% | 2015 | MOS | 12.90% | 2017 | MOS | Not set |
| **Target 17.3. Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.17.3.1. Indicator G.17.3.1. Foreign direct investments (FDI), official development assistance and South-South Cooperation as a proportion of total domestic budget. | | | | | | | |
| | | 50% | 2015 | MOS | 40% | 2017 | MOS | Not set |
| | Indicator G.17.3.2. Volume of remittances (in United States dollars) as a proportion of total GDP. | | | | | | | |
| | | Check | 2015 | MOS | Check | 2017 | MOS | Not set |
| **Target 17.4. Assist developing countries in attaining long-term debt sustainability.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.17.4.1. Debt service as a proportion of exports of goods and services. | | | | | | | |
| | | 2% | 2015 | MOS | 2% | 2017 | MOS | Not set |
| **Goal 17 Part 2 - Technology** | | | | | | | | |
| **Target 17.6. Enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge sharing on mutually agreed terms.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.17.6.2. Fixed Internet broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, by speed. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | 2015 | MOS | N/Av. | 2017 | MOS | Not set |
| **Target 17.8. Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.17.8.1. Proportion of individuals using the internet. | | | | | | | |
| | | N/Av. | 2015 | MOS | N/Av. | 2017 | MOS | Not set |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **SDG 17. Part 3 Capacity Building** | | | | | | | | |
| **Target 17.9. Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the sustainable development goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.17.9.1. Dollar value of financial and technical assistance (including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation) provided to Palau. | | | | | | | |
| | | US$1.7m | 2016 | MOS | US$1.7m | 2016 | MOS | Not set |
| **SDG 17. Part 5 Systemic Issues** | | | | | | | | |
| **Target 17.14. Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.17.14.1. Number of countries with mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence of sustainable development. | | | | | | | |
| | | Palau has the Master Plan, supported by various mid-term plans (e.g., Medium Term Development Strategy [MTDS] and Management Action Plan [MAP]) | | | | | | |
| **Target 17.15. Respect each country's policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator P.17.15.1. Proportion of new development interventions drawn from country-led result frameworks by recipients of development cooperation. | | | | | | | |
| | | 100% | 2015 | MOS | 100% | 2017 | MOS | 100% |
| | Indicator P.17.15.2. Proportion of results indicators drawn from country-led results frameworks by recipients of development cooperation. | | | | | | | |
| | | 100% | 2015 | MOS | 100% | 2017 | MOS | 100% |
| | Indicator P.17.15.3. Proportion of results indicators drawn from country-led results frameworks by recipients of development cooperation. | | | | | | | |
| | | 100% | 2015 | MOS | 100% | 2017 | MOS | 100% |
| **Target 17.18. By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts** | | | | | | | | |
| | Indicator G.17.18.1. By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts. | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | TBD | 2019 | VNR Report Office | Not set |
| | Indicator G.17.18.3. Does Palau have an adopted national statistical plan? | | | | | | | |
| | | No | 2015 | MOS | No | 2019 | MOS | Yes |
| **Target 17.19. By 2030, build on existing initiatives to develop measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement gross domestic product, and support statistical capacity-building in developing countries.** | | | | | | | | |
| | Target G.17.19.1. Value of all resources made available to strengthen statistical capacity. | | | | | | | |
| | | US$34,808 | 2015 | MOS | US$34,808 | 2017 | MOS | Not set |
| | Target G.17.19.2. National population census conducted in past 10 years. | | | | | | | |
| | | Yes | 2005 | MOS | Yes | 2015 | MOS | |

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# Palau National SDG Report Team

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[24] *Keiden Kintol served as chairperson, January-May 2019; Elway Ikeda assumed the position in May 2019*

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| Tmong | Udui | Epidemiologist | Bureau of Public Health | MOH |
| Candace | Koshiba | Program Manager | Prevention Unit, Public Health | MOH |
| Mindy | Sugiyama | Sr. Epidemiology Specialist | Bureau of Public Health | MOH |
| Damien Omenkar | Wally | International Health Coordinator | Bureau of Public Health | MOH |
| Fred | Sengebau | Director | Bureau of Agriculture | MNRET |
| Pua | Michaels | Chief | Bureau of Agriculture | MNRET |
| Melson | Miko | Director | Bureau of Youth, Sports, Recreation | MCCA |
| Thomas | Taro | Vice-President | Palau Community College | |
| Dr. Chris | Kitalong | | Pacific Academic Institute of Research | |
| Annabel | Lyman | Secretary | Coalition for a Tobacco Free Palau | |
| Valerie | Whipps | Chairperson | Coalition for a Tobacco Free Palau | |
| Philomena | Temengil | Member | Belau Association of NGOs (BANGO) | |
| **Working Group #3** | | | | |
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| Rita | Ngirmidol | Statistics Specialist | Bureau of Education Administration | MOE |
| Keizi | Shiro | | Bureau of Education Administration | MOE |
| Arlene | Alexander | Adm. Assistant | Bureau of Education Administration | MOE |
| Kimberly | Kinzio | | Palau Community Action Agency | |
| Dr. Patrick | Tellei | President | Palau Community College | |
| **Working Group #4** | | | | |
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| Dr. Vanessa | Jaiteh | Fisheries Special-ist | Bureau of Marine Resources | MNRET |
| Mikki | Dochez | | Bureau of Marine Resources | MNRET |
| Dr. Yimnang | Golbuu | Chief Executive Officer | Palau International Coral Reef Center | |
| Gwen | Sisior | Sr. Project | | MNRET |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Manager | | |
| Pua | Michaels | Chief | Bureau of Agriculture | MNRET |
| Siual | Blesam | Chief Executive Officer | Environmental Quality Protection Board | |
| Terek | Matul | Administrative Officer | Environmental Quality Protection Board | |
| Leena | Muller | GEF R2R IV Specialist | | MNRET |
| Bola | Majekobaje | Executive Director | Palau Conservation Society | |
| Umai | Basilius | Program Manager | Palau Conservation Society | |
| Ann | Singeo | Executive Chair | Ebiil Society | |
| Lynna | Thomas | Senior Project Specialists | Bureau Budget & Planning | MOF |
| **Working Group #5** | | | | |
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| Stalin | Pedro | Special Assistant to the Minister | Office of the Minister | MPIIC |
| Joe "Tutii" | Chilton | Energy Specialist | Palau Energy Administration | MPIIC |
| Gerald | Tulop | Energy Specialist | Palau Energy Administration | MPIIC |
| Peter | Polloi | Special Advisor | Aviation | MPIIC |
| Jonathan | Temol | Chief | Bureau of Commercial Development | MPIIC |
| Ken | Sugiyama | Manager | Renewable Energy Division | PPUC |
| **Working Group #6 -** | | | | |
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| Kyonori | Tellames | Associate Planning Analyst | Bureau of Budget & Planning | MOF |
| Bunker | Ruluked | | Bureau of Budget & Planning | MOF |
| Sunny | Ngirmang | Director | Bureau of Arts, Culture, Historic Preservation | MCCA |
| Calvin | Ikesiil | Chief | Bureau of Public Works | MPIIC |
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| Ernestine | Rengiil | Attorney General | | MOJ |
| Aloys | Alonz | Director | Bureau of Public Safety | MOJ |
| Sylverius | Tellei | Acting Director | Bureau of Immigration | MOJ |
| Ismael | Aguon | Director | Drug Enforcement Agency | MOJ |
| Joni | Ngeluk | | | MOJ |
| Margie | Ngirmidol | Admin. Officer | Bureau of Public Safety | MOJ |
| Valerie | Ikesakes | Admin Officer | | MOJ |
| Rebecca | Bedangel | Information Officer | Bureau of Public Safety | MOJ |
| Jorlyne | David | Admin Assistant | | MOJ |
| Ernest | Ongidobel | Chief of Staff | Office of the Vice President | MOJ |
| Portia | Franz | Special Assistant | Office of the Vice President | MOJ |
| Jennifer | Anson | Admin Officer | | MOJ |
| Flavin | Misch | Acting Chief | Bureau of Immigration | MOJ |
| Allison | Sengebua | Chief | Clerk of Courts | Supreme Court |
| Mayla Makka | Oimei | | Courtroom clerk & interpreter | Supreme Court |

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| Kyonori | Tellames | | Bureau of Budget & Planning | MOF |
| Bengkal | Imeong | HIRS Admin. | Bureau of Public Service System | MOF |
| Lahaina | Ngirkelau | | Bureau of Public Service System | MOF |
| Sairong | Nabeyama | Chief of HR | Bureau of Public Service System | MOF |
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| **Working Group #8** | | | | |
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| Shelley | Remengesau | Special Assistant | Ministry of State | MOS |
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| Sharon | Sakuma | | UN Joint Presence Office | |
| Dr. Judy | Otto | | United Nations Development Program | |

# Pathway to 2030

Progressing with Our Past
Toward a Resilient, Sustainable,
and Equitable Future

**1st Voluntary National Review on the SDGs**

**Republic of Palau** June 2019