



Report from the Pacific Islands Advisory Group (PIAG)

PB-26 –3.6, 15-16 June 2023,

Tony Milne,



PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM



2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent

The 2050 Strategy is an opportunity to identify our challenges, build on our strengths and collectively determine the future of our Blue Pacific Continent.

“We are the Blue Pacific Continent... and we are the frontlines of the climate change crisis. Our islands, our ocean, our people already face the devastating impacts of climate change including rising seas, king tides and ravaging cyclones. Limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees – this is our survival roadmap”.

COP26 Statement by the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum, Mr Henry Puna, 10 November 2021.



Protect and secure our people, place and prospects

Background

2019

- GEO Week 2019 ⇔ GEO Ministerial Summit Declaration
- GEO Week Pacific Island Program ⇔ EO in the Pacific Talanoa Statement

2020

- Establishment of the Pacific Island Advisory Group (PIAG) to GEO Executive Committee
- Endorsement of the PIAG Terms of Reference by ExCOM53

2021

- AO GEO Symposium, GEO Week 2021
- Draft PIAG Engagement Strategy & Workplan => ExCOM 55

2022

- PIAG Charter and Terms of Reference extended until end of 2024, approved by ExCOM.
- PIAG GEO Track day held at on 1 December 2022, at the Oceania Geospatial Symposium.



Leaders and delegates from across the PICTs and the wider GEO community at the Pacific Island Forum, GEO Week 2019, Canberra, November 2019.

Completed and Ongoing Activities

| AREA OF FOCUS | COMPLETE |
|---------------|---|
| SCOPE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPC and SPREP have designed a survey to develop a request to CEOS on satellite data requirements and use to improve data access and update across the Pacific (ONGOING). Drafting of a capability statement of the PIAG / GEO for the PICTs (ONGOING). |
| CONSULT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PIAG and CEOS duplex session (COMPLETE - 1 December 2022). University of South Pacific (USP), as a multinational university, applied to become a GEO PO. Renewed membership from USP (COMPLETE). Online training on Natural Resources Satellite Remote Sensing Technologies and Applications (COMPLETE - September 2022). More than 10,000 scenes of 2-meter and sub-meter multi-sensor satellite images are available, free of charge for PICTs (COMPLETE). |
| CONNECT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a LinkedIn Community as an outcome of the OGS to virtually connect EO communities across the Pacific to a single online forum (ONGOING). Support engagement with GIS User Groups across the Pacific (ONGOING). Maintain and grow networks and relationships with the Pacific Geospatial and Surveying Council (PGSC) (ONGOING). |
| ALIGN | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SAR workshop to build capacity and raise awareness of the use of the technology to advance the 2030 Agenda and support the Sendai Framework (COMPLETE). Opportunities to explore with New Caledonia (OEIL / Australia) and New Zealand (ONGOING). Provided technical inputs (Australia) to the first Space for Islands Nations Conference (SINC) 2023 Maldives (COMPLETE). OGS Session addressing global agendas, including SDG monitoring and assessment (COMPLETE) SAR workshop to build capacity and raise awareness of the use of technology to advance the 2030 Agenda and support the Sendai Framework (COMPLETE) |
| ADVISE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GEO Track Day organised during the OGS to further promote and agree on the role of PIAG for the PICTs and GEO (COMPLETE). |

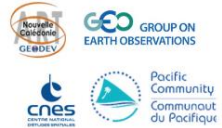
Achievement Spotlight - PIAG and GEO Track Day

Purpose of Session

- Held at the Oceania Geospatial Symposium in Noumea, New Caledonia.
- Encourage dialogue between key GEO, Government and Agency representatives across the Pacific region.
- Strengthen mutual understanding and links between GEO and PICTs.
- Development of a strategy for PICT-GEO engagement and establishing key objectives for PIAG in 2023-2024.



Co-organizers



Oceania Geospatial Symposium (OGS) 2022 – Tauhā, Noumea, 28 Nov – 04 Dec

Achievement Spotlight – PIAG and GEO Track Day

Key outcomes

- Strong consensus towards continued support towards Pacific-led solutions.
- Renewed support and commitment from PICT Governments to work closely with GEO in future events, including the 2023 GEO Ministerial Summit.
- OGS to continue as a regional, multi-sector forum in 2024.
- Actions from the joint live session with the CEOS Plenary include PIAG and Pacific stakeholders to formulate their requirements for satellite EO data and services across the PIA region. To submit a clearly defined formal request to CEOS.



Co-organizers



The Way Forward

1. The PIAG Charter, scheduled to sunset in late 2024, continues to build momentum.
2. Through the Engagement Strategy, PIAG has made substantial progress in communicating about GEO and EO applications.
3. Moving forward, emerging collaborations aim to support opportunities for long term capacity building and EO-community building across the Pacific Islands Countries and Territories (PICTs).

Upcoming Activities

1. Activities towards REACT: A new Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society (GRSS) Technical Committee for Earth Observation Supporting Pacific Islands and Territories
2. Support and input for Pacific Pilot Initiative Programs
3. Continued expansion of the PIAG membership (increased PICTs representation)
4. Support for upcoming Training and workshop opportunities - International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS)

IEEE Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society (GRSS) has just approved seed funding for the two Pacific Proposals which will become Pilot Initiatives in the GEO 2023-25 Work Programme.

https://www.earthobservations.org/geo_wp_23_25.php

- "Cook Islands UAV-based Remote Sensing Workshop/Summer School" \$15K, and
- "Pilot Earth Observation Projects on Mitigating Pacific Islands Climate and Sea Level Change Impacts" was also approved for \$16K.

Both plan to operate in an "incubator" environment with community support and to reach out to other funding sources going forward.



Current PIAG members

| Organisation | Members |
|---|--------------------------------|
| South Pacific Regional Engagement Programme (SPREP) | Vani Koroisamanunu |
| The Pacific Community (SPC) (Co-lead) | Andrick Lal, Sachindra Singh |
| The University of the South Pacific (USP) | Joeli Varo |
| Micronesia Conservation Trust | Tamara Greenstone Alefaio |
| Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society (GRSS), Australia | Tony Milne |
| United National Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) | Keran Wang, Hamid Mehmood |
| INSIGHT, New Caledonia (Co-lead) | Jean Massenet |
| LASAC China (Co-lead) | Fanghong Ye, Xinming Tang |
| Beihang University, China | Guifei Jing |
| University of Auckland | Delwyn Moller |
| Victoria University of Wellington | Alejandro C. Frery |
| Regional Climate Services, National Oceania and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) | John Marra |
| CSIRO, Australia (Co-lead) | Flora Kerblat |
| Geoscience Australia, Australia (Co-lead) | Rachel Horwood, Megan Wiczorek |

Thank You

Communicate and Collaborate with GEO:

