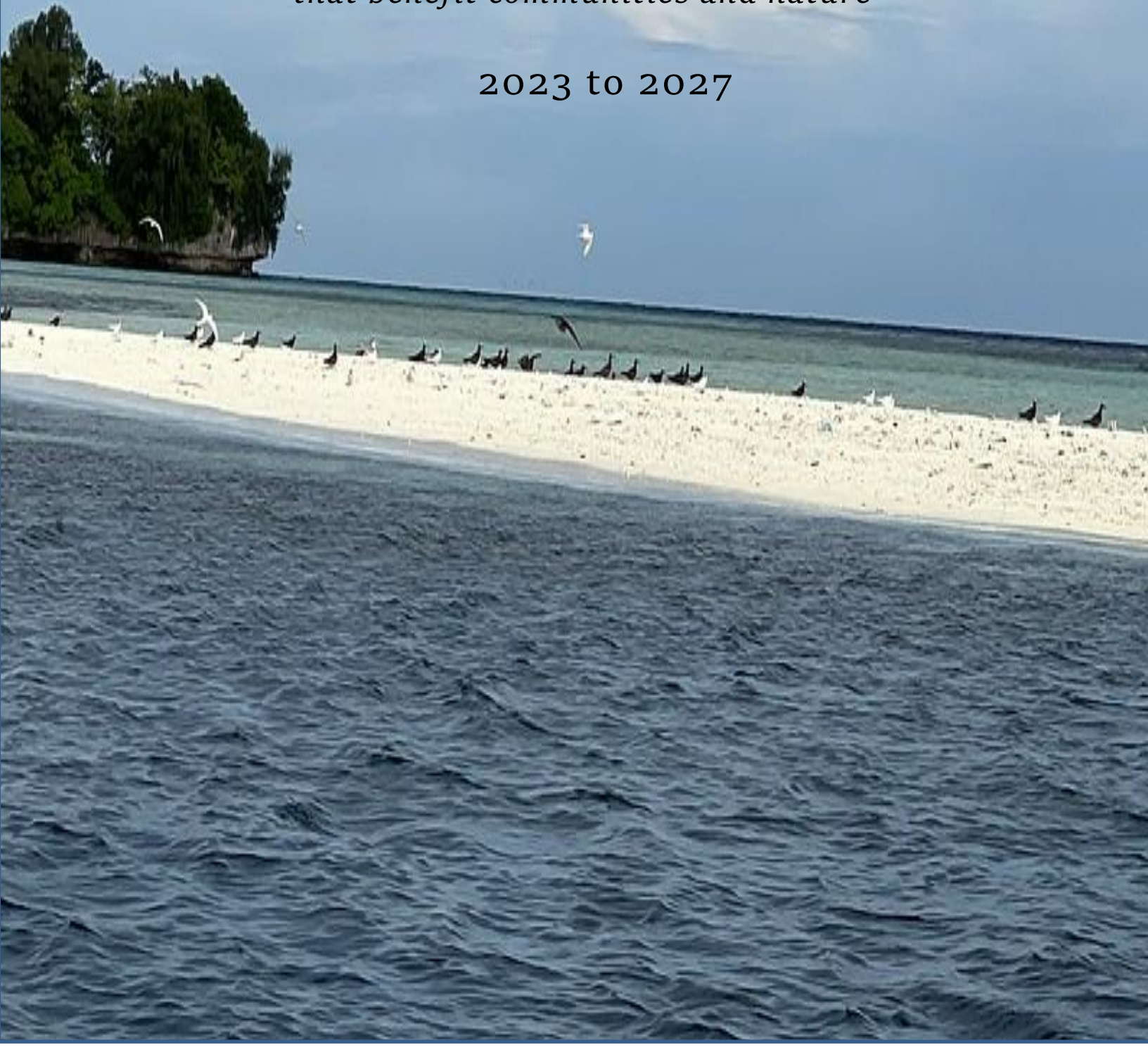


# Palau Protected Areas Network Strategic Plan

*“Strengthening the Network to achieve lasting impacts  
that benefit communities and nature”*

2023 to 2027





This strategic plan is a product of the Palau Protected Areas Network. The goals, strategies and objectives associated with this strategic plan were developed in consultations with local and national stakeholders.

The Palau PAN acknowledges the funding support of the United States Agency for International Development and the technical assistance of the Palau Conservation Society in the

**DISCLAIMER**

This plan is made possible through support by the United States Agency for International Development. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the United States Agency for International Development.



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## *Minister's Foreword*



On behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and the Environment, we are pleased to present this system wide strategic plan for the Palau protected Areas Network. This plan focuses on strengthening the enabling environment for effective governance, robust stakeholder engagement, and adaptive management competencies which are foundational to effective and impactful biodiversity conservation. As we all know, Palau's PAN is critical for conserving biodiversity and ecosystem services, preserving cultural heritage, and supporting sustainable development.

To that end, the strategies presented here are designed to address key challenges facing PAN management, including inadequate implementation of financing, weak governance and legal frameworks, limited stakeholder engagement, and insufficient technical and human capacities. It outlines a set of priority actions that aim to strengthen the enabling environment for protected areas management, foster effective stakeholder participation, and enhance the skills and knowledge of protected areas managers and staff. The successful implementation of this strategic plan will require the commitment and collaboration of all stakeholders, at all levels. It will also require sustained financial and technical support from our partners in country and internationally.

I believe that by working together, we can build a strong, resilient, and effective protected areas network that can deliver on its benefits to our communities while also contributing to global efforts to address the impacts of climate change. I encourage all stakeholders to use this strategic plan as a guide for their actions and investments in the Palau Protected Areas Network. Together, we can make a difference for people, nature and our shared prosperity.

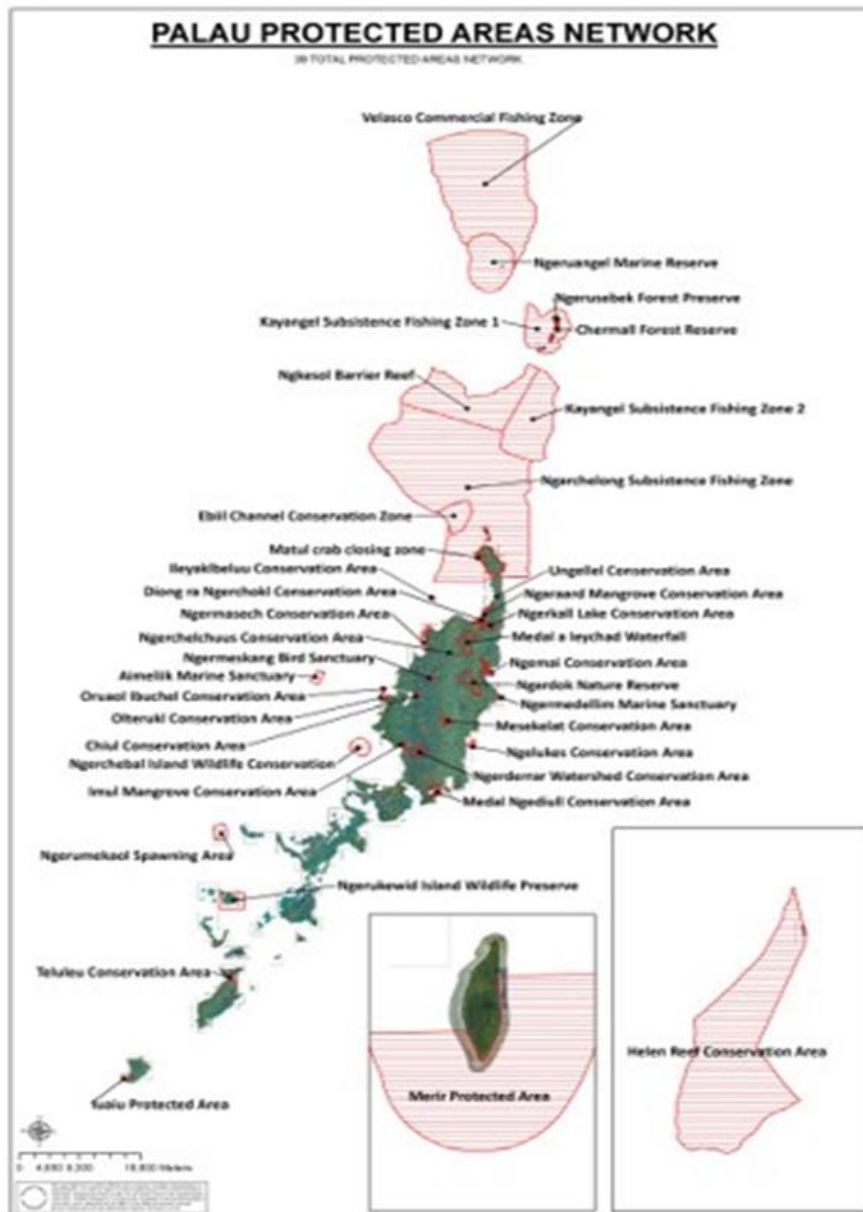
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Steven Victor', written in a cursive style.

Steven Victor  
Minister  
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Environment

# 1.0 Introduction

The link between Palau’s biodiversity and ecosystems and the wellbeing of the Palauan people is strong and multifaceted. Healthy biodiversity and functioning ecosystems provide a range of benefits that are essential for Palauans to thrive. To that end, Palau has identified, established and is managing a network of protected areas that conserves biodiversity and maintains functional ecosystems thereby ensuring the long-term sustainable use of the nation’s natural resources. The Palau Protected Areas Network (PAN) helps to protect the island’s natural environment, resources, cultural heritage, and tourism industry, which are all essential for Palau’s sustainable development.

## 1.1 Background



The Palau Protected Areas Network is a comprehensive and coherent network of protected areas that includes marine and terrestrial protected areas. The Palau PAN supports the sustainable development of Palau by balancing the conservation of biodiversity and cultural heritage with the needs of local communities. It is also a framework for cooperation, coordination and collaboration amongst state governments, national government agencies, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and local communities.



The Palau PAN has achieved a number of key milestones that reflect the strong policy and institutional enabling environment that is needed for it to succeed. In 2003 the Palau Protected Areas Network was established via RPPL 6-39. It was later amended in 2006 to include a funding mechanism, the Green Fee. The Green Fee is an innovative way of generating funds by charging visitors who visit Palau an impact fee as a means of financing the Palau PAN and supporting conservation and management activities within the protected areas.

The Palau PAN is coordinated by the PAN Office under the Bureau of Environment in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Environment (MAFE). Operations within the Network are allocated from monies that are managed by the PAN Fund Board, a non-government organization. The Palau Funds was created in 2008 and the implementation of the Green Fee revenues and the PAN Fund was incorporated and chartered in 2010. In 2011 the PAN Fund Board of Directors was formalized. The PAN

Funds began operations in 2012 with fiscal procedures that facilitated the delivery of funding resources to state protected area sites that were members of the Network.

## 1.2 Methodology for updating of PAN System-Wide Strategic Plan

This iteration of the Palau Protected Areas Network strategic plan was undertaken by a planning team comprised of members of key stakeholders to the Network. The planning team included subject matter experts, professionals and technicians representing the Palau PAN Office, The Palau PAN Fund Board, the Governors’ Association, the Palau PAN technical Committee, State Protected Areas and NGOs. As part of the plan review and updating process, the planning team revisited the findings of a report on the midterm review of the PAN 2016 to 2020 System-Wide Strategic Plan in 2018 to confirm the findings. The team also engaged in a situation analysis exercise where they accomplished the following:

- identified threats to biodiversity and ecosystem integrity of the Network
- identified the drivers of those threats,
- identified pressures on the Network associated with the threats,

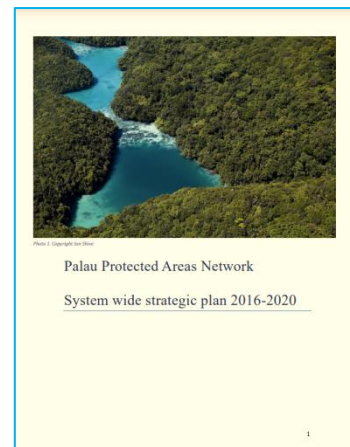


- confirmed the state of the biodiversity and ecosystems within the Network,
- confirmed the impact to the Network and communities because of the threats and
- identified potential policy, management and technical responses that could remedy those threats.

After the situation analysis the planning team developed a theory of change to identify the desired conditions or key milestones needed to transform the Palau PAN into an impactful network meeting both its biodiversity and sustainable development objectives. Those key milestones serve as goals and outcomes for the plan.

### 1.3 First iteration of the PAN System-Wide Strategic Plan Review, Findings and Recommendations for Updating

The PAN system wide strategic plan 2016- 2020 focused on building the institutional framework for the administration of the Network. Plan strategies focused on five focal areas, strengthening governance of the PAN, building capacity for implementation, growing community engagement for protected area sites, creating a communication system for PAN management stakeholders and developing a robust financing strategy for the Network so that it is sustainable. This approach enabled the Palau PAN to become operational so that it could support new sites as they came into being and meet their needs as these sites became a part of Palau’s emerging environment and conservation sector.



In 2018 a program evaluation of the Palau PAN since its implementation began in 2008 and the PAN strategic Plan was published. The assessment found that there were structural weaknesses such as a lack of processes, mechanisms etc. to efficiently facilitate management actions, insufficient management and technical skills to fully implement management plan strategies to reduce threats associated with the sites and effectively manage work force. It also found that weak law enforcement and insufficient stakeholder engagement along with a weak understanding of key management components such as resource inventory/monitoring and management of tourism services were factors contributing to ineffective management at the site. Whilst these challenges are symptomatic of new programs, they also contribute to low efficiency and effectiveness of programs is consistent with the “poor” biodiversity conservation scores that the majority of the individual PAN sites received in a 2015 PAN status assessment and report.

The two assessments mentioned above gave rise to several recommendations for improving efficiency and effectiveness of the Network. They are as follows:

- Provide support to states so that a policy, legal and institutional enabling environment is created to fully support the attainment of PAN site management objectives

- Strengthen Stewardship of the PAN through increased visibility of the PAN at the site and Network level
- Focus the efforts of the PAN office on supporting and facilitating effective management through the development and use of key performance indicators to track management



impact on biodiversity targets and ecosystem services

- Strengthen PAN law enforcement through capacity building and state and national collaborations for improved site enforcement, and
- Integration of the principles of transparency, simplicity, customer-focused service and open communication in the operations of the individual sites and the Network itself.

#### 1.4 Strategic Purpose and Focus

This five year plan provides a guiding framework for the programs and activities that are needed to ensure effective management of Palau’s terrestrial and marine protected areas. It is a tool for mobilizing support, driving progress, and assessing results of biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management. It is structured to act as both a roadmap for ensuring effective management as well as an aid for increasing knowledge of the Practice of Conservation and results-based management which are knowledge bases that are foundational to effective protected areas management.





The various assessment findings and a PAN Network Retreat in 2018 make it clear that the second iteration of the Network’s system wide strategic plan should focus on strategies and actions that result in PAN site management effectiveness. To that end this strategic plan aims to do the following:

- ✓ Strengthen management capacity of PAN sites so that threats to biodiversity targets are reduced or abated and ecosystem integrity is maintained;
- ✓ Strengthen state governance of protected areas by supporting the development of a policy, legal and institutional enabling environment at the state level to better catalyze and sustain conservation outcomes in PAN sites;
- ✓ foster a culture of evidence-based decision making through the development and implementation of a knowledge management framework that prioritizes the capture and use of data to guide management actions and to demonstrate progress of management;
- ✓ Nurture Palauan stewardship of the PAN by raising the visibility of the Network in government, communities, schools, and the visitors to Palau; and
- ✓ Strengthen financial sustainability of PAN funding support by identifying and accessing new and innovative funding mechanisms.

Accomplishing these actions will result in increased management effectiveness of the individual sites that make up the Palau Protected Areas Network. As such, this strategic plan is focused on building and strengthening the elements that are necessary for management effectiveness and the goals, strategies, outcomes and associated actions that are presented reflect this focus.

## 2.0 Our Strategic Framework

The strategic framework for this management plan includes the following:

- A vision statement that outlines the desired social, cultural, economic and ecological impact of the Network,
- A Mission statement that describes the purpose and rationale for how the Network will be managed to achieve the vision
- Goals, Objectives and Outcomes - specific, measurable and achievable targets that will be used to guide management actions and evaluate progress towards achieving the vision and mission of the Network,
- Strategies – a set of actions or approaches that are taken to achieve the goals, objectives and outcomes,
- Implementation arrangement- a detailed plan that outlines the specific actions, responsibilities, timelines and resources needed to implement the strategies, and
- Monitoring and Evaluation - for tracking and assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of management actions and making adjustments as needed to achieve the objectives and goals.

It also includes the need for the following processes and approaches to ensure that the enabling environment for effective management exists within the Network.

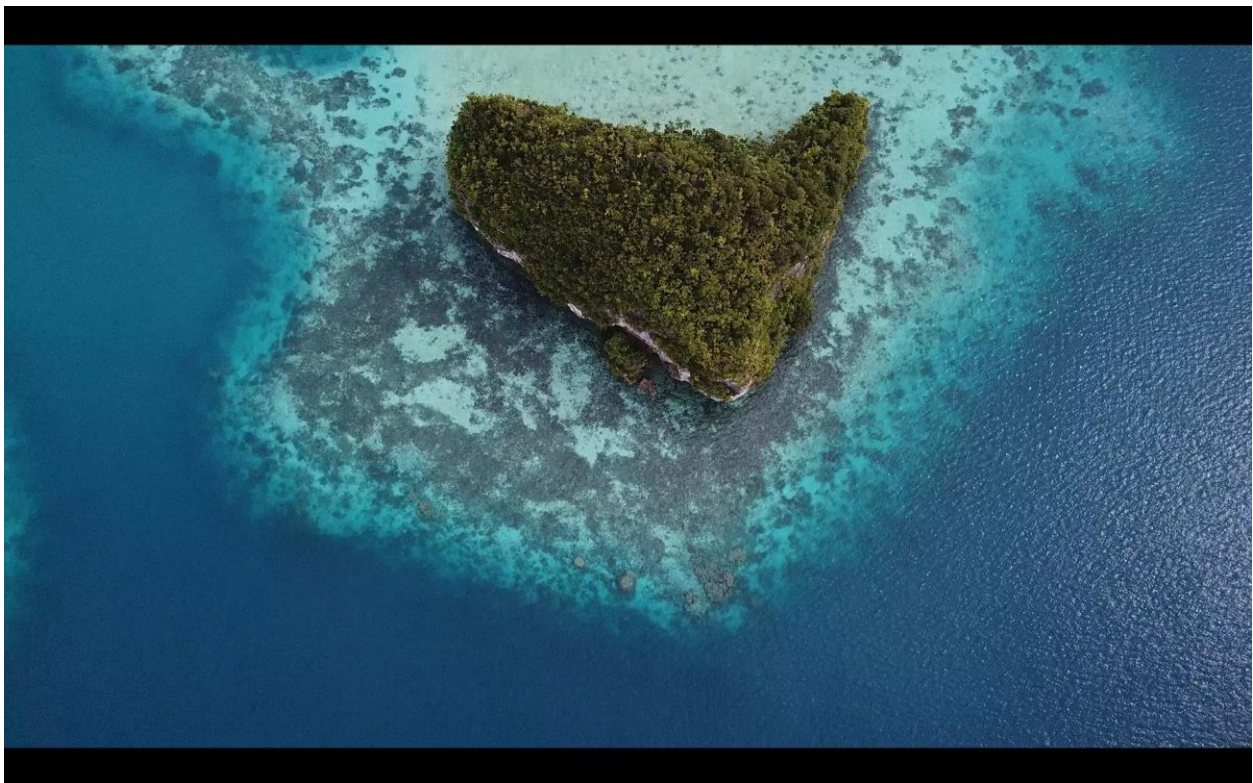
- Adaptive Management- a process for regularly reviewing and updating the management plan based on new information, changing circumstances and feedback from stakeholders,
- Legal and policy framework- identification and description of the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional environment to catalyze and sustain conservation impacts on the ground, and
- Stakeholder engagement plan- for engaging and consulting with stakeholders to ensure their participation and buy-in for the strategic plan.



## 2.1 Strategic Approach

Achieving meaningful long term conservation impact in Palau requires the concerted and coordinated effort of state governments, individual PAN sites, communities, national government, NGOs and other stakeholders. These stakeholders must work together to reduce and abate threats to biodiversity and ecosystem targets, as well as achieve the desired conditions in governance and socio-economic behaviors that are needed to transform declining biodiversity and degraded ecosystems into healthy ones. This core tenet is addressed in this strategic plan which focuses on strengthening the foundations for effective management of the individual sites within the Palau Protected Areas Network.

## 2.2 Our Vision & Mission



*Vision- A Resilient system of Protected Areas that safeguards biodiversity, promotes cultural values, and creates economic benefits for our people.*

*Mission: The Palau Protected Areas Network is a thriving coordinating platform for effective management of protected areas.*

## 2.3 Our Guiding Principles

The following principles provide a framework for decision making to ensure that the Palau Protected Areas Network is managed efficiently and effectively. The principles that underpin this strategic plan are divided into two main categories: ecological principles and social principles. Ecological principles focus on the conservation of biodiversity and the protection of ecosystems; while social principles focus on the needs of people and communities. As such, this plan fosters biodiversity conservation within the Network that utilizes the following:



- Ecosystem-based approaches: actions are undertaken with an understanding of the interactions and relationships within ecosystems, and should take into account the ecological, social, and economic factors that affect the functioning of these systems
  - Science-based- conservation decisions and actions should be based on the best available scientific evidence, which will provide a sound understanding of the ecological and social processes affecting biodiversity,
  - Sustainability- the use of natural resources should be managed in a way that meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
  - Adaptive management- management actions incorporate new information and changing conditions into management decisions. This helps to ensure that conservation efforts are flexible and responsive to changing conditions and that conservation objectives are achieved over the long term.
  - Participation and engagement- biodiversity conservation should involve the participation and engagement of local communities and other stakeholders. This ensures that different perspectives and expertise are incorporated into conservation decisions and builds support for conservation efforts.
  - Evidence-based- actions are based on sound scientific evidence, including monitoring, research and evaluation. This ensures that conservation efforts are based on the best available information.
  - Collaboration and partnership- conservation efforts should involve the active participation of different stakeholders, including government, industry, civil society, and local communities
    - Multi-scale approach- conservation actions should be coordinated across different levels of governance from state to national to regional and globally.
    - Long-term thinking- conservation actions should be designed to ensure that long term- persistence of biodiversity is achieved even in the face of uncertainty and change.

## 2.4 Our Goals and Outcomes

The goals of this strategic plan describe the desired conditions that are necessary for the Palau PAN to deliver ecological, economic and social benefits to Palauans. They provide a clear and measurable framework for conservation and management. They help to align the efforts of the Network stakeholders such as the PAN Office, PAN Fund, State Governments, Individual Protected Area sites and community groups towards a common vision for individual protected areas and for the Network itself. The goals articulate the priority ecological social and economic values that the Network should strive to maintain or achieve.



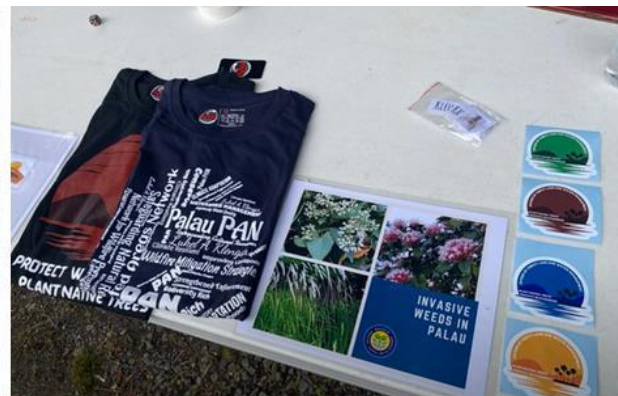
<b>Goal 1</b>	Strengthen Management of the Palau Protected Areas Network at the Site and Network Level
<b>Goal 2</b>	Strengthen the Enabling Environment of Protected Areas
<b>Goal 3</b>	Nurture and Sustain Local Stewardship of the Palau Protected Areas Network
<b>Goal 4</b>	Ensure the Financial sustainability of the Palau Protected Areas Network

## 2.5 Goals and Outcomes Hierarchy

The goals that are articulated in this strategic plan are rooted in a series of outcomes that when achieved results in the attainment of said goals. The following matrices depict the five goals that have been unpacked to reveal the outcomes upon which they are based.

<b>Goal 1: Strengthen Management of the Palau Protected Areas Network at the Site and Network Level</b>	
<b>Strategy: Building capacity to reduce and abate threats to biodiversity and strengthen ecosystem integrity.</b>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
1.1.	By the end of 2026 PA site managers/coordinators have increased their competency for PA management
1.2	By the end of 2026 Conservation law enforcement is a desired and competitive profession in Palau and PAN site attraction and retention of these professionals is high
1.3	By the end of 2026 Palau students and youth have increased their understanding of the environmental, social and cultural dimensions of the Palau PAN

Goal 1 and its associated outcomes aim to strengthen adaptive management capacity of managers and coordinators who lead the implementation of protected area management plans. Building adaptive management capacity enables protected area managers to effectively respond to changing conditions and address emerging challenges leading to more successful conservation outcomes and long-term sustainability. Goal 1 is also focused on strengthening law enforcement capacity at the site by attracting and retaining qualified conservation officers or rangers. Effective management occurs when Protected Area staff, have the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to discharge their duties. This goal is also focused on facilitating the acquisition of knowledge and skills of biodiversity conservation at the high school and community college level with the aim of fostering the creation of a capable work force of conservation practitioners within the Palau PAN.



<b>Goal 2: Strengthen the Enabling Environment of Protected Areas</b>	
<b>Strategy 2.1: Support the development of policy, legal and institutional mechanisms at the state to catalyze and sustain conservation impacts at PAN sites</b>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
2.1	By the end of 2024 PAN sites have adopted and institutionalized a policy, legal and institutional framework that facilitates natural resource management, biodiversity conservation and protected area management.
<b>Strategy 2.2 Foster a culture of evidence-based decision making (scientific and traditional ecological knowledge, best available science) to reduce and abate threats impacting sites.</b>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
2.2	By the end of 2024 marine, terrestrial and socio-economic performance indicators are confirmed for all Protected Areas in the Network and data sets indicating their baseline conditions have been collected, analyzed and communicated to stakeholders.
2.3	By 2027 PAN site annual work plans and budgets reflect threat reduction actions designed to improve the conservation status of biodiversity targets in the PAN.

Goal 2 and its outcomes focus on strengthening the enabling environment for effective management at the site. There are two focal areas under this goal. The first is the development of enabling policy, legal and institutional mechanisms for protected areas to ensure that conservation efforts are supported and sustained over time. These mechanisms include legislation that provide legal protection for Palau’s protected areas and ecosystems and clarify roles, responsibilities and mandates for state government programs, departments and other stakeholders involved in protected area management. The other focus is on the use of scientific and traditional ecological knowledge to support evidence-based decision making. Under this goal, regular monitoring and assessment of the status of ecosystems and biodiversity or wildlife populations will be undertaken. Managers can then respond to changes and make necessary adjustments to their strategies. As such, the identification and subsequent tracking of key performance indicators of biodiversity health and ecosystem functionality are essential activities and outputs associated with this goal. And finally, the use of scientifically supported data and methods will ensure that management decisions and actions are transparent and can be held accountable to stakeholders.



<b>Goal 3: Nurture and Sustain Local Stewardship of the Palau Protected Areas Network</b>	
<b>Strategy: Increase PAN visibility and relevance to Palauan communities, leadership, visitors and students.</b>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
3.1	By 2024 Palauans routinely access information about the Network through various social media platforms, print media, and radio and television programming.
3.2	By 2027 the status of the Palau PAN (individual sites and Network) is fully incorporated into annual state and national reporting instruments.

Goal 3 and its associated outcomes aim to build a strong public constituency for the Palau PAN. When the public is aware of and values the Network they become engaged in the work of the PAN. An engaged public can provide additional resources such as funding, volunteers and advocacy for conservation initiatives implemented by the protected area. Additionally, an engaged public can serve as sources of information and data on protected area ecosystems and wildlife populations. They can help raise awareness and understanding of the importance of Palau’s natural resources and contribute to conservation management decision making which fosters accountability and transparency in protected area management.



<b>Goal 4: Ensure the Financial sustainability of the Palau Protected Areas Network</b>	
<b>Strategy: Increase the number and type of funding sources for the PAN</b>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
4.1	By the end of 2025 PAN investment funds are equitably accessed, distributed and utilized for the benefit of the Network
4.2	By 2026 At least 3 funding mechanisms ( not including Green Fee) have been accessed and are supporting PAN operations



Protected Area financial sustainability is the ability to secure sufficient, stable and long-term financial resources, and to allocate them in a timely manner and in an appropriate form, to cover the full costs of PAs to ensure that PAs are managed effectively and efficiently with respect to conservation and other objectives. As such, Goal 4 and its associated outcomes focus on efficiently and equitably utilizing its investment portfolio to sustain operations. It is also focused on identifying additional funds and funding sources that will augment the Green Fees collected by the Republic of Palau and earmarked for the Network. The Covid19 Pandemic and the subsequent closure of our borders and corresponding decline in Green Fee revenues demonstrates that a diverse funding portfolio is essential if the Network is to thrive. To that end, this goal and its associated outcomes prioritize the diversification of funding sources for the Network.



to

### 3.0 Implementation Arrangements

The goal matrices below describe the actions and outputs associated with the implementation of the strategies articulated in this plan. Each matrix outlines the actions and outputs reflected in the



goals and outcomes hierarchy in the preceding section. The matrices are linked to the development of annual work plans. A work plan is a shorter-term, practical implementation plan that outlines the management activities, projects and objectives for the upcoming year. It also describes the allocation of resources (e.g. personnel, funds, equipment) for activities that are implemented, most of which result in

outputs that can be aggregated to produce the outcomes presented in this plan. Annual work plans reflect prioritization of activities, coordination of efforts and can be used to demonstrate progress towards achieving conservation objectives, outcomes and goals.



### 3.1 Taking Action to Increase Management Effectiveness in the Network

This section of the strategic plan is intended to be reviewed annually during annual work planning exercises. The indicative actions are intended to be unpacked into individual tasks that are then itemized, budgeted and then scheduled into a work plan timeline. The matrices provide a list of indicative actions - there are other actions that may be needed but are not necessarily reflected here. Those actions will arise during the work planning exercise.

#### Goal 1: Strengthen Management of the Palau Protected Areas Network at the Site and Network level.

Outcome 1.1 By the end of 2026 PA site managers/coordinators have increased their competency for PA management.		
Strategy: Building capacity to reduce and abate threats to biodiversity and strengthen ecosystem integrity.		
Indicative Actions	Outputs	Responsible Party/ies
Identify management competencies for PA management and develop modules to teach competencies	PA management competencies teaching modules (includes Adaptive Management, Results-based Management, etc.)	PAN Office/ /PCC
Work with the Palau Community College to create a course for PA management	Adaptive Management Course at PCC-CE	PAN Office/ /PCC
Secure course trainers	List of trainers	PAN Office
Develop and implement training of trainers modules to build in sustainability	Training of trainers modules and workshops	PAN Office/ PCC
Outcome 1.2 By the end of 2026 Conservation law enforcement is a desired and competitive profession in Palau and PAN site attraction and retention of these professionals is high		
Strategy: Building capacity to reduce and abate threats to biodiversity and strengthen ecosystem integrity.		
Indicative Actions	Outputs	Responsible Party/ies

Work with the Ministry of Justice to develop conservation law enforcement modules	Training modules	PAN Office/MOJ
Develop a training course for conservation officers that is incorporated into existing Ministry of Justice law enforcement training course	Conservation focused law enforcement training course	PAN Office /MOJ
Establish competitive pay and benefit structure for PAN site conservation officers	Competitive employment package for conservation law enforcement	PAN Office/ Governor's Association, MOJ
Outcome 1.3: By the end of 2026 Palau students and youth have increased their understanding of the environmental, social and cultural dimensions of the Palau PAN		
Strategy: Building capacity to reduce and abate threats to biodiversity and strengthen ecosystem integrity.		
<b>Indicative Actions</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Responsible Party/ies</b>
Work with partners and MOE to develop social studies and science learning modules of Palau PAN sites for high school students	PAN science and social science knowledge modules	PAN Office/ MOE
Work with high school and Palau community college guidance counselors to develop and implement PAN career guidance strategies	PAN Career guidance portfolio Student internship program at PAN sites Student job shadowing programs at PAN site and PAN office/ PAN Fund	PAN Office, MOE

## Goal 2: Strengthen the Enabling Environment of Protected Areas

Outcome 2.1: By the end of 2024 PAN sites have adopted and institutionalized a policy, legal and institutional framework that facilitates natural resource management, biodiversity conservation and protected area management.		
Strategy: Support the development of policy, legal and institutional mechanisms at the state to catalyze and sustain conservation impacts at PAN sites.		
<b>Indicative Actions</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Responsible Party/ies</b>
Conduct an environmental/biodiversity conservation policy, legal and institutional gaps analysis	Report	PAN, Office/Governors Association, PAN Coordinator
Work with Governors and Legislature to identify appropriate legislation, and institutional mechanisms to bridge gaps	Legislation, creation of office, positions, programs	PAN Office, Governors, Legislature, PAN Coordinator

identified in gaps analysis		
Work with legal counsel to harmonize PAN site rules with state master plan, land use and other resource use regulations and laws and report to key stakeholders when completed	Report, presentations to Legislature, Governors Association, Conservation Consortium etc.	PAN Office, PAN coordinators, Legal Counsel
Support PAN Coordinator and State government to socialize new mechanisms	Meetings, workshops, media informational bits etc.	PAN Coordinator, PAN Office/media , State
Support PAN site Coordinator with the development of onboarding processes for new offices, positions where relevant	Orientation modules for new positions, offices whose work support PAN threat reduction or PAN health boosting activities	PAN Office/PAN coordinator/State Government
Strengthen PAN conservation officers/rangers technical skills in biodiversity/ ecosystem monitoring, data collection and other relevant skill sets.	Trainings on bird monitoring protocol from Belau National Museum Trainings on marine and terrestrial ecosystem monitoring from Palau International Coral Reef Center/Division of Forestry/ Coral Reef Research Foundation	PAN Office/ BNM/PICRC/CRRF/ Division of Forestry

Outcome 2.2: By the end of 2024, marine, terrestrial and socio-economic performance indicators are confirmed for all Protected Areas in the Network and data sets indicating their baseline conditions have been collected, analyzed and communicated to stakeholders.		
Strategy: Foster a culture of evidence-based decision making (scientific and traditional ecological knowledge, best available science) to reduce threats impacting sites		
<b>Indicative Actions</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Responsible Party/ies</b>
Work with PICRC to finalize MPA baseline assessments, if they have not been finalized	Baseline assessment reports	PAN Office/PICRC
Work with Forestry to conduct baseline assessments of all Terrestrial Protected Areas	Baseline Assessment reports	PAN Office/Forestry, PICRC,
Convene socio-economic and Monitoring and Evaluation experts, revisit the socio-economic indicators previously identified and update and conduct baseline assessments	Socio-economic monitoring methodology updated Baseline assessment reports	PAN Office
Develop long-term monitoring program for marine, terrestrial and	MPA impact Monitoring Program	PAN Office, Forestry, PICRC

socio-economic impact to Protected Areas		
Conduct, analyze and report on impact monitoring findings for Protected Areas	Indices of Performance Indicators (terrestrial, marine and socio economic)	PAN Office, PAN Coordinator, Forestry, PICRC
Revisit the PAME, update it to reflect new learnings on monitoring and evaluation and conduct a 2 <sup>nd</sup> iteration of PAME for the entire Network	PAME assessments for all 16 Protected Area Sites in Palau	PAN Office, Partners

Outcome 2.3 By the end of 2026 PAN Site annual work plans and budgets reflect threat reduction actions designed to improve the conservation status of biodiversity targets in the PAN.		
Strategy: Foster a culture of evidence based decision making (scientific and traditional ecological knowledge, best available science) to reduce threats impacting sites		
<b>Indicative Actions</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Responsible Party/ies</b>
Conduct workshops on understanding the ecological footprint of key threats to Protected Areas (habitat degradation, invasive species, fires, etc.) and use process tools such as Drivers, Pressure, State, Impact and Response (DPSIR) modeling to identify threat reduction measures.	Threat reduction projects with action plans, timelines and budget	PAN Office/ PAN Coordinators
Conduct briefings before application of threat reduction measures and debriefs of same measures to document lessons	Report on lessons learned	PAN Office/PAN Coordinators
Incorporate lessons learned into adaptive management training modules	Updated Adaptive Management training modules	PAN Office/PAN Coordinators, training developers



**Goal 3: Nurture and Sustain Local Stewardship of the Palau Protected Areas Network**

Outcome 3.1: By 2024 Palauans routinely access information about the Network through various social media platforms, print media, and radio and television programming		
Strategy: Increase PAN visibility and relevance to Palauan communities, leadership, visitors and students.		
Indicative Actions	Outputs	Responsible Party/ies
Draft and implement Network Communication Plan	Communication Plan	PAN Office
Work with PAN sites and monitoring experts to develop Key Performance Indicator Indices for PAN sites and communicate status trends to stakeholders	Biodiversity Trend Indices, Media pieces	PAN Office/PAN Coordinators
Aggregate PAN information and develop informational pieces that can be disseminated to schools as a science and social science resource	PAN information as school resource	PAN Office/MOE

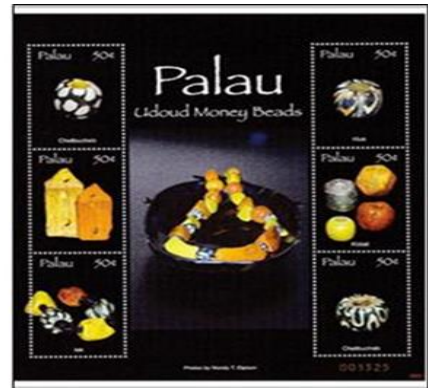
Outcome 3.2: By 2027 the status of the Palau PAN (Individual sites and Network) is fully incorporated into annual state and national reporting instruments.		
Strategy: Increase PAN visibility and relevance to Palauan communities, leadership, visitors and students.		
Indicative Actions	Outputs	Responsible Party/ies
Develop quarterly or annual snapshots that reflect condition of PAN (Individual site and Network) into communication pieces that can be used by Governor in State Addresses, the President in his State of the Republic Address, PVA to report for visitors who want to see	PAN status trends in State, National, Tourism and other reports.  Social media pieces on status of PAN	PAN Office/ States, Office of President, Bureau of Media and Information Services.

impact of their tourism dollars and other relevant state or national reports.		
Develop and present PAN status trend reports and presentations for national and international audiences	PAN status presentations	PAN Office, State Coordinators

**Goal 4: Ensure the Financial Sustainability of the Palau Protected Areas Network**

Outcome 4.1 By the end of 2024 the PAN is operating under an updated business plan that addresses Covid 19 impacts on financing resource availability and mobilization		
Strategy: Increase the number and type of funding sources for the PAN		
<b>Indicative Actions</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Responsible Party/ies</b>
Convene stakeholders to determine probable recovery scenarios for PAN and to develop protocols for scenario implementation	Updated PAN Financing Strategy	PAN Fund

Outcome 4.2 By 2026 At least 3 funding mechanisms (not including Green Fees) have been accessed and are supporting PAN operations		
Strategy: Increase the number and type of funding sources for the PAN		
<b>Indicative Actions</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Responsible Party/ies</b>
Build capacity to design and develop project designs and proposals	Proposal development workshops,	PAN Office and PAN Fund
Work with PAN site coordinators to develop projects and submit to funding mechanisms	proposals	PAN Office, PAN Fund and PAN Coordinators
Work with MAFE and PAN Fund to identify and access additional funding streams from the Micronesia Challenge investment funds beyond existing draw downs	Increased funds earmarked for Palau PAN from the Micronesia Challenge endowment	MAFE, PAN Fund, PAN O.



## 4.0 Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning

For the next 5 years, the PAN Office, PAN Fund and partners will be working closely with the PAN sites and their state governments to ensure that conservation efforts deliver the expected biodiversity and socio-economic results that benefit Palau's environments and communities. Given this, a monitoring and evaluation plan is needed to ensure that conservation actions are both efficient and effective. The M&E plan will be used to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of management activities and to determine if the outcomes and goals of the Palau PAN are being met. M&E helps to identify areas for improvement and accommodates the need for adjustments to work plan development. Additionally the M&E can provide information for reporting to Governors, Ministers, donors, community members and other stakeholders on the status of PAN implementation.

Two types of indicators will be tracked as part of plan implementation. The first are progress indicators and these are binary indicators that are associated with the achievement of outputs. The indicators relate to a specific output and are assessed on whether the output was accomplished or not. The second type of indicators is outcome indicators and they are associated with the outcomes. Outcome indicators are also referenced in this document. These indicators are separate from Key Performance Indicators that are associated with the impact of management on the site.





## 4.1 Progress Indicators

The progress indicators in the tables are derived from Indicative Action Matrices and are aligned with goals, outcomes and strategies. The progress indicators below assess progress in achieving key outputs of this plan. Assessing progress allows us to determine the efficiency of plan implementation. The progress indicators below are binary indicators. As such, it measures if the output was achieved in which case the indicator to track would be a “Yes”. If the output wasn’t achieved then the indicator would be “No”. The column for indicator is listed as “Yes” because the intent of the strategic plan is to achieve the output and therefore the indicator to track would be “Yes” for output achievement. The outputs that are being tracked below do not comprise the entire list of outputs associated with this plan. However, they are key outputs whose attainment is necessary to the achievement of the outcomes that underpin this strategy. The remaining outputs that are not tracked are equally important, however they are usually associated with tasks and their individual achievement is a precursor to the attainment of the outputs that are tracked via this plan.

Progress Indicators					
Goal 1: Strengthen Management of the Palau Protected Areas Network at the Site and Network Level					
Outcome 1.1 By the end of 2026 PA site managers/coordinators have increased their competency for PA management.					
Outputs	Indicator (Was it achieved) Yes/No	Sources of Verification	Baseline	Target	Reporting Frequency
Adaptive management training course	Y	PCC Course number and description in subject catalog	0	1	
Trainer of Trainers Workshop	Y	Program, photos, presentation, handouts	0	1	As appropriate
Goal 1: Strengthen Management of the Palau Protected Areas Network at the Site and Network Level					
Outcome 1.2 By the end of 2026 Conservation law enforcement is a desired and competitive profession in Palau and PAN site attraction and retention of these professionals is high					
Outputs	Indicator (Was it achieved) Yes/No	Sources of Verification	Baseline	Target	Reporting Frequency
Conservation focused law enforcement training modules	Y	Copy of training module syllabus w/learning objectives	0	1	As appropriate

Progress Indicators

Goal 2: Strengthen the Enabling Environment of Protected Areas					
Outcome 2.1: By the end of 2024 PAN sites have adopted and institutionalized a policy, legal and institutional framework that facilitates natural resource management, biodiversity conservation and protected area management.					
Outputs	Indicator (was it achieved) Yes/No	Sources of Verification	Baseline	Target	Reporting Frequency
Protected Area legislative framework gap analysis	Y	Report	0	1 covering all states	TBD
Protected Area Legal framework	Y	Legislation, insitution	0	16 all states	TBD
PAN site Rules are harmonized with state laws	Y	Legislation, report	0	16 all states	TBD
Legal framework socialization workshops	Y	Workshop agenda, participant list, photos workshop report(government officials, public, other stakeholders)	0	TBD	TBD
Goal 2: Strengthen the Enabling Environment of Protected Areas					
Outcome 2.2: By the end of 2024 marine, terrestrial and socio-economic performance indicators are confirmed for all Protected Areas in the Network and data sets indicating their baseline conditions have been collected, analyzed and communicated to stakeholders.					
Outputs	Indicator (was it achieved) Yes/No	Sources of Verification	Baseline	Target	Reporting Frequency
Terrestrial baseline data	Y	Baseline report w/findings and analysis	0	# of all terrestrial PAN sites	TBD
Marine baseline data	Y	Baseline report w/findings and analysis	TBD	# of all MPA	TBD
Socio-economic baseline data	Y	Baseline report w/findings and analysis	0	16 threat reduction action plans ( 1 for each PAN site)	TBD
Goal 2: Strengthen the Enabling Environment of Protected Areas					
Outcome 2.3 By the end of 2026 PAN Site annual work plans and budgets reflect threat reduction actions designed to improve the conservation status of biodiversity targets in the PAN.					
Outputs	Indicator (was it achieved) Yes/No	Sources of Verification	Baseline	Target	Reporting Frequency

Threat reduction projects with activities that address drivers, pressures or state of the threat in the design	Y	Project design Project budget Project activity and timeline	0	16	TBD
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Progress Indicators					
Goal 3: Nurture and Sustain Local Stewardship of the Palau Protected Areas Network					
Outcome 3.1: By 2024 Palauans routinely access information about the Network through various social media platforms, print media and radio and television programming					
Outputs	Indicator (was it achieved) Yes/No	Sources of Verification	Baseline	Target	Reporting Frequency
Communication plan	Y	Copy of plan	0	1 plan	TBD
Protected Area Key Performance Indices	Y	Copy of indices (Terrestrial and marine biodiversity trend data, socio-economic trend data (value statements attached to that trend data )	0	16 for each site 1 for the entire Network	TBD
PAN knowledge documents for schools	Y	Copy of school resources	0	TBD	TBD
Goal 3: Nurture and Sustain Local Stewardship of the Palau Protected Areas Network					
Outcome 3.2: By 2027 the status of the Palau PAN (Individual sites and Network) is fully incorporated into annual state and national reporting instruments.					
Outputs	Indicator (was it achieved) Yes/No	Sources of Verification	Baseline	Target	Reporting Frequency
PAN status is part of state, national and Palau Visitor reporting	Y	Copy of state, national and PVA reports	0	TBD	TBD
Palau traditional leaders advocate for PAN	Y	Number and instances of annual communications on	0	TB	TBD

		PAN from Council of Chiefs and klobak from PAN states			
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<b>Goal 4: Ensure the Financial Sustainability of the Palau Protected Areas Network</b>					
<b>Outcome 4.1 By the end of 2024 the PAN is operating under an updated business plan that addresses Covid 19 impacts on financing resource availability and mobilization</b>					
Outputs	Indicator (was it achieved) Yes/No	Sources of Verification	Baseline	Target	Reporting Frequency
Updated PAN sustainable financing strategy with Covid 19 recovery strategies	Y	Copy of updated plan	0	1	TBD
<b>Outcome 4.2 By 2026 At least 3 funding mechanisms (not including Green Fees) have been accessed and are supporting PAN operations</b>					
Outputs	Indicator (was it achieved) Yes/No	Sources of Verification	Baseline	Target	Reporting Frequency
Proposal development workshops	Y	Workshop agenda Participation list Photos, Workshop report	0	TBD	TBD

## 4.2 Outcome or Impact Indicators

Outcome or impact Indicators measure the effectiveness of conservation efforts. The impact indicators presented in the matrix below will measure the degree to which the outcomes were achieved. A number of the measurements to be tracked will need to be determined in the inception workshop to socialize this strategic plan to all the stakeholders who will be impacted or who will impact the activities associated with the strategic plan.

<b>Goal1: Strengthen management of the Palau Protected Areas Network at the site and Network level.</b>							
<b>Outcome 1.1</b>							
<b>By the end of 2026 PA site managers/coordinators have increased their competency for PA management.</b>							
Indicator	Definition (how is it calculated)	Baseline (current	Target (targeted	Data Source (how will it be	Frequency(how often it will be	Responsible (who will	Reporting (where will it

		value)	value)	measured)	measured)	measure it)	be reported)
# of coordinators completing with a passing grade the Adaptive management course	Head count of participants registered in the course	0	16	PCC certificate of completion	Once at the end of the course	PAN Office	TBD
Percentage of PAN site coordinators demonstrating skills of adaptive management	Number of coordinators whose work plans reflect adaptive management activities.	0	50% or 8	PAN Office conducts focus surveys	Annually	PAN Office	TBD
<b>Outcome 1.2</b>							
Indicator	Definition (how is it calculated)	Baseline (current value)	Target (targeted value)	Data Source (how will it be measured)	Frequency(how often it will be measured)	Responsible (who will measure it)	Reporting (where will it be reported)
Percentage of PAN conservation officer/rangers completing with a passing grade law enforcement training w/conservation focus	Head count of participants in the course who are conservation officers/rangers	TBD	100%	PCC & MOJ course attendance and completion records	Annually	PAN Office	TBD

<b>Goal 2: Strengthen the Enabling Environment of Protected Areas</b>							
<b>Outcome 2.1: By the end of 2024 PAN sites have adopted and institutionalized a policy, legal and institutional framework that facilitates natural resource management, biodiversity conservation and protected area management.</b>							
Indicator	Definition (how is it calculated)	Baseline (current value)	Target (targeted value)	Data Source (how will it be measured)	Frequency(how often it will be measured)	Responsible (who will measure it)	Reporting (where will it be reported)
Percentage of leaders (governors, legislatures) value a PAN legislative framework	Count of respondents who indicate in survey that they are aware	0	75%	PAN Office conduct survey	2x a pre and a post survey	PAN Office	TBD
<b>Outcome 2.2 : By the end of 2024 marine, terrestrial and socio-economic performance indicators are confirmed for all Protected Areas in the Network and data sets indicating their baseline conditions have been collected, analyzed and communicated to stakeholders</b>							
Indicator	Definition (how is it	Baseline	Target	Data Source	Frequency(how	Responsible	Reporting

	calculated)	(current value)	(targeted value)	(how will it be measured)	often it will be measured)	(who will measure it)	(where will it be reported)
# and types of stakeholders (government community etc.)	Count of stakeholder groups and count of participants who are the recipient of outreach/ access the information	0	TBD	PAN Office collect data via participation list, or media hits	TBD	PAN Office	TBD
Outcome 2.3 By the end of 2026 PAN Site annual work plans and budgets reflect threat reduction actions designed to improve the conservation status of biodiversity targets in the PAN.							
Indicator	Definition (how is it calculated)	Baseline (current value)	Target (targeted value)	Data Source (how will it be measured)	Frequency(how often it will be measured)	Responsible (who will measure it)	Reporting (where will it be reported)
Percentage of coordinators	Coordinators whose annual work plans reflect actions to remedy drivers of threats, pressures of threats or to remedy threat state or condition	0	16	Assessing annual work plans, looking at narratives of work plans	annually	PAN Office	TBD
Percentage of PAN conservation officers/rangers	Conservation officers/rangers work plans reflect actions that assess condition of biodiversity, ecosystems, etc.	0	32 (minimum of 2 per site)	Assessing annual work plans looking at narratives of work plans	annually	PAN Office	TBD

Goal 3: Nurture and Sustain Local Stewardship of the Palau Protected Areas Network							
Outcome 3.1: By 2024 Palauans routinely access information about the Network through various social media platforms, print media and radio and television programming							
Indicator	Definition (how is it calculated)	Baseline (current value)	Target (targeted value)	Data Source (how will it be measured)	Frequency(how often it will be measured)	Responsible (who will measure it)	Reporting (where will it be reported)
# of Palauan accessing information on Palau PAN this indicator can	Total number of Palauans accessing social media on PAN, participating in	0	TBD	Surveys, social media analytics	Media participation is monthly,	PAN Office	TBD

be disaggregated to reflect youth, and geographical location of Palau audience	event, survey				surveys for newspaper, videos- will be annually		
Outcome 3.2: By 2027 the status of the Palau PAN (Individual sites and Network) is fully incorporated into annual state and national reporting instruments.							
Indicator	Definition (how is it calculated)	Baseline (current value)	Target (targeted value)	Data Source (how will it be measured)	Frequency(how often it will be measured)	Responsible (who will measure it)	Reporting (where will it be reported)
# reporting mechanisms	State and national reporting mechanisms such as the state of the state report, the State of the Republic Address, PVA visitor profile reports etc.	0	TBD	Counting of the types of report and which entity reported it	annually	PAN Office	TBD

Goal 4: Ensure the Financial Sustainability of the Palau Protected Areas Network							
Outcome 4.2 By 2026 At least 3 funding mechanisms (not including Green Fees) have been accessed and are supporting PAN operations							
Indicator	Definition (how is it calculated)	Baseline (current value)	Target (targeted value)	Data Source (how will it be measured)	Frequency(how often it will be measured)	Responsible (who will measure it)	Reporting (where will it be reported)
# of PAN sites	Number of PAN sites whose annual funding portfolio include funding from other funding sources besides the PAN Fund	0	3	PAN Office will assess via annual reports/budget reports	annually	PAN Office	TBD

Although there are two outcomes associated with Goal 4, outcome 4.2 is the only outcome that is monitored because 4.1 is an outcome that has a binary definition. Outcome 4.1 states that by the end of 2024 the PAN will be operating under an updated business plan that addresses Covid 19 impacts on financing resource availability and mobilization. This requires a Yes or No answer and the output indicators in the progress indicator lists sufficiently address outcome 4.1





## **5.0 Strategic Plan Socialization and Operationalization**

Delivering the ecological, social and economic benefits derived from the Palau Protected Areas Network to the people of Palau is the primary aim of this strategic plan. The goals, outcomes and strategies that are articulated in this plan is the pathway in which the PAN will deliver these benefits. The actions and subsequent outputs arising from this Plan requires partnership and commitment from PAN stakeholders. To that end, the successful implementation of this plan is strongly correlated to the degree of its socialization. Community members, PAN site staff, governors, legislators, educators, the Minister of Justice- every single one of these individuals and the organization or sector they represent has a vested role in this plan. There needs to be a broad understanding of the intent of this strategic plan and the steps that will be taken to ensure achievement of that intent. The following actions are needed to increase socialization and to facilitate smooth operationalization of the activities in this plan.

### **5.1 Socializing the Palau PAN Strategic Plan to stakeholders**

In conventional project implementation there is a period called the inception period wherein all the project stakeholders are made aware of the project and its deliverables and the various roles and functions of stakeholders to the project. This 5-year strategic plan's implementation calls for multiple partners to deliver outputs that are necessary to the achievement of it's outcomes. It therefore requires an inception period or phase. The inception phase of this strategic plan will provide several benefits:

- clarification of the strategic plan's overall purpose and goals and outcomes of the plan;
- stakeholder engagement- the inception phase is an opportunity to engage with PAN beneficiaries (local communities), state government, government agencies and programs, NGOs and get their perspectives on the plan;
- Assessment of feasibility – this period allows for initial assessment of the feasibility of some of the strategies, actions and deliverables. Strategic plans are living documents and can be revised after the inception phase to accurately reflect conditions on the ground;
- Team building- it provides an opportunity to build a strong implementation team and establish clear roles and responsibilities to team members, and finally

Inception phase activities include stakeholder workshops and project working meetings. Overall, the inception phase is a valuable component of plan implementation because it establishes a strong foundation and sets the stage for successful plan implementation.