



Transnational Organized Crime in the Pacific:

A Threat Assessment

September 2016



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Abbreviations & Acronyms

AIC	Australian Institute of Criminology
AFMA	Australian Fisheries Management Authority
AFP	Australian Federal Police
AFZ	Australian Fishing Zone
ANCD	Australian National Council on Drugs
ARQ	Annual Reports Questionnaire
ATS	Amphetamine-type stimulant/s
BBVI	Blood-borne viral infection
BZP	Benzylpiperazine
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CITES	Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
CSA	Child sexual abuse
CSEC	Commercial sexual exploitation of children
DAINAP	Drug Abuse Information Network for Asia and the Pacific
ECPAT	End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (non-profit organisation/global network)
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EMCDDA	European Monitoring for Drugs and Drug Addiction
ESCAP	(United Nations) Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (of the United Nations)
FFA	Forum Fisheries Agency
FRSC	Forum Regional Security Committee
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
Ha	Hectare/s
HHS	Household survey
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
IUU	Illicit, unregulated and unreported (fishing activities/crimes)
Kg	Kilogram/s
NGO	Non-government organisation
NPS	New psychoactive substance/s
NTSA	Niue Treaty Subsidiary Agreement
NZPOL	New Zealand Police
OMCG	(Australian) Outlaw Motorcycle Gang
P2P	Phenyl-2-Propanone
PDARN	Pacific Drug and Alcohol Research Network
PICP	Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police
PICT	Pacific Islands Country/Territory
PIDC	Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PILON	Pacific Islands Law Officers' Network

PSAAG	Pacific Small Arms Action Group
PTCCC	Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre
PTCN	Pacific Transnational Crime Network
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands
RFMO	Regional Fishery Management Organisation
RSIPF	Royal Solomon Islands Police Force
SIFIU	Solomon Islands Financial Intelligence Unit
SMART	Synthetics Monitoring: Analyses, Reporting and Trends (Programme)
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
SS	School survey
STI	Sexually-transmitted infection
TCU	Transnational Crime Unit
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
TOCTA	Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSCAR	United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System
VRS-MSRC	Voluntary Reporting System on Migrant Smuggling and Related Conduct
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
WTTC	World Travel & Tourism Council
WWF	World Wide Fund For Nature (also known as World Wildlife Fund)

Executive Summary

This report presents major threats posed by transnational organized crime in the Pacific region, mainly focusing on the Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). Based on consultations with the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and information obtained from desk reviews conducted by UNODC, this report focuses on four major types of transnational organized crime affecting the Pacific region:

- Drug and precursor trafficking;
- Trafficking in persons & smuggling of migrants;
- Environmental crimes (fishery crime and other wildlife trafficking & illegal logging and timber trafficking); and
- Small arms trafficking.

In addition to the major four types of transnational crime, the report also includes some information on the trafficking of counterfeit goods, including fraudulent medicines, and cybercrime to shed light on emerging threats in the region.

The four major illicit flows discussed in the report are different sorts of illicit activities, yet they all pose immense challenges to the region. There are strong indications that the PICTs are increasingly targeted by transnational organized crime groups due to their susceptibility to illicit flows driven by several factors. These include (a) the geographical location of the PICTs situated between major sources and destinations of illicit commodities; (b) extensive and porous jurisdictional boundaries; and (c) differences in governance and heterogeneity in general law enforcement capacity across numerous PICTs and the region in general. These complexities also underscore the inherent difficulties in detecting, monitoring, preventing and responding to transnational organized crimes in the region. In this context, transnational criminal activities continue to increase throughout the Pacific and have detrimental impacts on communities, sustainable economic development and regional security.

At a regional level and across all transnational organized crime types discussed in this report, a fundamental problem is the significant gaps in data and information related to transnational crime among the PICTs. This is a major hindrance in developing effective and evidence-based responses to transnational organized crime.

Drug and precursor trafficking

The geography of PICTs is believed to facilitate the trafficking of illicit drugs and chemical precursors between key drug manufacturers/cultivators and markets. In the context of limited funding and resources, outdated legislation, increasing levels of tourism and a substantial geographical area to police, trafficking of such substances via sea, air and postal mechanisms presents significant law enforcement challenges for Pacific nations in general. These factors also impact abilities to detect and monitor trends related to illicit drugs in the Pacific; accordingly, available drug consumption data are dated, inconsistent and non-representative in many cases. Ongoing seizures of illicit drugs such as heroin, cocaine and methamphetamine underscore the risk of ‘spillover effects’ of trafficked substances into local markets. There is evidence that spillover effects from products trafficked through the Pacific have occurred in some local communities. By volume, locally-grown cannabis continues to dominate the illicit drug trade within and between PICTs. However, several Pacific nations have reported a recent increase in domestic consumption and/or availability of crystalline methamphetamine/‘ice’, albeit from a low base.

Trafficking in Persons & smuggling of migrants

Few resources are directed towards countering human trafficking in the Pacific due to a lack of awareness and knowledge about the extent of such activities. Accordingly, there is a considerable dearth of available data on such criminal activities in the region. In particular, labour trafficking remains a misunderstood and hidden phenomenon. Nevertheless, reports indicate that the region is a source, transit point and destination for human trafficking, although likely on a small scale.

Human trafficking in the Pacific is known to be undertaken for sexual exploitation purposes or to provide labour for local extractive industries, including fishing, logging and mining. For example, there have been reports of foreigners exploiting the cultural informal adoption system in Fiji (known as 'sinister adoption') to access children for sexual exploitation purposes or abuse. Recent cases of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Fiji suggest that the source countries for victims of such crimes are broadening. Additionally, in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, some Chinese women are reportedly recruited with promises of legitimate work and are forced into sex work subsequent to paying considerable recruitment fees.

In the logging and mining industries there are limited reports of similar abuse occurring, but considerable information gaps exist, partly as a result of the isolated environment where the exploitation allegedly occurs. In the Solomon Islands, reports of labour exploitation in foreign-owned logging camps and foreign commercial fishing vessels have increased in recent years. Regarding Papua New Guinea, there have been reports of Malaysian and Chinese logging companies and foreign businesspeople reportedly arrange for foreign women – from countries such as China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand – to voluntarily enter Papua New Guinea with fraudulent business or tourist visas. Following their arrival, many of these women are turned over to traffickers for transport to fisheries, entertainment sites and mining and logging camps, where they are exploited and forced into domestic servitude and sex work which, evidently, is associated with considerable health and safety concerns. In addition, Chinese, Malaysian, and local men are reportedly subjected to forced labour at logging camps and commercial mines, with some coerced into working for indefinite periods due to debt bondage schemes.

A different crime from human trafficking is the smuggling of migrants, here considered in the same section as the illicit trade in both cases refer to trade of 'people'. Migrant smuggling in the Pacific region is commonly facilitated by immigration fraud (e.g., false/altered immigration documents, most commonly passports, visas and work permits, genuine immigration documents obtained fraudulently, and false/altered supporting documents). PICTs are reportedly viewed as transit points for migrants attempting to enter Australia, New Zealand or the United States. Collecting reliable and representative data on the smuggling of migrants remains an ongoing challenge in the Pacific. However, reports suggest that Asian countries remain a primary source of smuggled migrants in the Pacific region. Fiji is reportedly a primary transit destination, with other nations such as the Federated States of Micronesia and Palau considered to be key transit points.

Environmental crimes

Environmental crimes are among the most serious transnational organized crime types impacting the Pacific. They also illustrate the threats to the region that arise from neighbouring regions. Most PICTs and adjacent high seas remain vulnerable to fisheries crimes, due to the size of Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) and limited capacity to patrol them. Given limited data, it is difficult to measure the full extent of the threat that fisheries crimes pose to Pacific and global fisheries. Importantly, factors such as the transnational mobility of fishing vessels and limited law enforcement capabilities means that fisheries crimes have been associated with additional transnational organized crimes, including drug trafficking, human trafficking, migrant smuggling.

One issue of concern is a growing number of Vietnamese 'Blue Boats' illegally fishing in Pacific EEZs; for example, during 2015, Palau reportedly seized around 15 such vessels. Blue Boats are small scale operations, do not pay fees nor transmit location information, and are more ruthless in fishing for sensitive marine life inshore. Micronesian countries anticipate that this threat will continue.

In consideration of the need for economic development and the social and environmental requirements of local populations, a significant challenge for PICTs is the sustainable management of forest and tree/timber resources. Illegal logging practices and trade threaten the sustainability of natural resources in the Pacific region and it continues to be a well-reported, significant issue for Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands in particular. Research in the Solomon Islands identified numerous factors that reportedly contribute to excessive (i.e., in terms of unsustainability, not simply illicit practices) logging in the region, including corruption. Findings indicated that fraudulent conduct in the logging industry included practices such as under-reporting of export volumes, tax evasion through illegal logging, bribery, altering species names (e.g., using the names of species with low market value), and informal agreements between buyers.

Small arms trafficking

Civil conflict involving firearms in PICTs such as Fiji and the Solomon Islands during the past two decades highlights the substantial and detrimental impacts that the availability and use of such weapons can have on Pacific societies. In addition, levels of armed violence in urban areas of Papua New Guinea are now some of the highest worldwide. Typically, claims of ‘widespread smuggling’ in the region have often lacked supporting evidence. Overall, available reports indicate that in many PICTs, firearms trafficking appears to be occurring only on a very small scale. Reported cases of weapons and ammunition trafficking in the Pacific over the last two decades have included illicit importation of ammunition into Niue and the Northern Mariana Islands, and to the discovery of various firearms ranging from shotguns to rifles and an AK-47 in American Samoa. However, Some PICTs (including Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Tonga) have expressed concern that firearms trafficking is increasing and possibly leading to instability and insecurity in their countries. Indeed, anecdotal reports point to increased use of guns in tribal confrontations in the highlands in Papua New Guinea, and there has been significant reporting of small arms trade between Bougainville and Solomon Islands.

While private firearm ownership across the Pacific is almost uniformly quite low (i.e., less than one firearm per 100 people), New Caledonia presents a contrast, with licit and illicit firearm ownership estimated to be around 48 per 100 people. Gun sales to New Caledonians have reportedly increased at a significant rate since 2011, with anecdotal information pointing to an increase in weapons purchasing due to the risk of civil conflict.¹

Recommendations

Recommendations for addressing transnational crimes in the Pacific were generated with respect to three core themes: 1) policy and legislation; 2) research and data; and 3) capacity building and cross-border cooperation. Given these, PICT governments and authorities are advised to:

Policy and legislation

- Ratification of key international legal instruments and alignment of national legislation
- Developing regional consensus on priorities
- Integrate security concerns into existing platforms

Research and data

- Strengthening national data collection capacity
- Further Research

Capacity building and cross-border cooperation

- Capacity building for trade security and border management
- Capacity building for cross-border criminal justice cooperation and anti-money laundering
- Capacity building for law enforcement forensics

¹ New Caledonia is currently undergoing a tense political transition that will endure until 2018, as citizens are called to vote on whether to become independent or to remain a French territory.

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

This report is one of a series of transnational organized crime threat assessments the UNODC has conducted² in the context of implementing and progressing regional and global programmes in addition to effectively and efficiently preventing, identifying, monitoring and responding to the wide-reaching adverse consequences of certain contraband markets.

Drawing on official statistics and relevant literature (where available), in addition to valuable input and anecdotal evidence from stakeholders and local, regional and global experts, the primary aims of this assessment were to:

- Outline the main transnational organized crimes and underlying mechanisms (i.e., who, how, what, where, when) impacting Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) and neighbouring regions;
- Identify key knowledge, data and resource gaps that preclude the detection and monitoring of contraband markets impacting the Pacific region; and
- Formulate recommendations to enhance the quality, accuracy, reliability, representativeness, timeliness and quantity of data collected to augment the capacity of PICTs to detect, monitor and prevent transnational organized crimes.

The specific crimes discussed in this report are not a comprehensive list of those impacting the Pacific and neighbouring regions. Further, it is impossible to precisely quantify the value of these markets. However, any available – and the most recent – estimates are included to inform and prompt public debate on areas of public policy significance.

Overall, the findings of this assessment can be used to enhance local and regional policy and practice to improve the prevention, detection and monitoring of transnational organized crimes, as well as timely and effective responses. At the very least, the findings can form the basis of a platform to begin identifying, developing and implementing multilateral programme options for assisting the region to appropriately address transnational crime threats and challenges. This could include the development and strengthening of information-sharing networks within PICTs and throughout the region.

The Pacific region overview

The PICTs vary considerably in population size (refer: *Appendix I*) and comprise a mixture of independent, associated and dependent states and integral parts of non-Pacific Island countries, such as the United States and France. The island nations are comprised of three subregions (Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia)^{3, 4} and are spread out over millions of square nautical miles. They are geographically located between the Americas (to the east), Australia and New Zealand (south/southwest) and Asia (west/northwest). Rich in natural resources such as marine products, timber, metals and minerals, the total land areas of the PICTs – excluding Australia and New Zealand – range from just 12 square kilometres (Tokelau) to over 450,000 (Papua New Guinea). In consideration of the substantial number of islands that comprise some Pacific nations (e.g., >100 in French Polynesia), many of which are uninhabited, PICT coastlines range from 101 kilometres (Tokelau) to 6,112 kilometres (the Federated States of Micronesia). Evidently, more available land mass can be associated with population size to a degree in the Pacific region, with smaller countries such as Niue and Tuvalu recording estimated populations of approximately 2,000 and 10,000 people, respectively, while larger nations such as Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands are home to populations of around 7,619,000 and 584,000 people, respectively.⁵

² UNODC, “Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessments”. Available at <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/TOC-threat-assessments.html>

³ **Melanesia** includes Fiji, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. **Micronesia** comprises thousands of islands in the Western Pacific Ocean. Of the PICTs, this includes the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Palau. **Polynesia** is generally defined as the group of islands within the Polynesia Triangle. Among the PICTs, this includes the Cook Islands, French Polynesia, Niue, Samoa, Tonga, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Wallis and Futuna (in addition to New Zealand).

⁴ Helen Ware, “Demography, Migration and Conflict in the Pacific”, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 42, No. 4 (2005), pp.435-454.

⁵ Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), “The World Factbook” and UNESCAP, “Subregional Office for the Pacific”. Respectively available at https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/wfbExt/region_aus.html and <http://www.unescap.org/subregional-office/pacific>

In general, the PICTs also differ significantly in many instances with regard to national identity, population socio-demographics, psychosocial characteristics, climate and culture, as well as government, legal and judicial systems and law enforcement capabilities (refer to *Appendices II and III* for broad statistics).⁶ Importantly, numerous religious denominations (e.g., Catholicism, Protestant, Hinduism) vary in prevalence throughout the PICTs.⁷

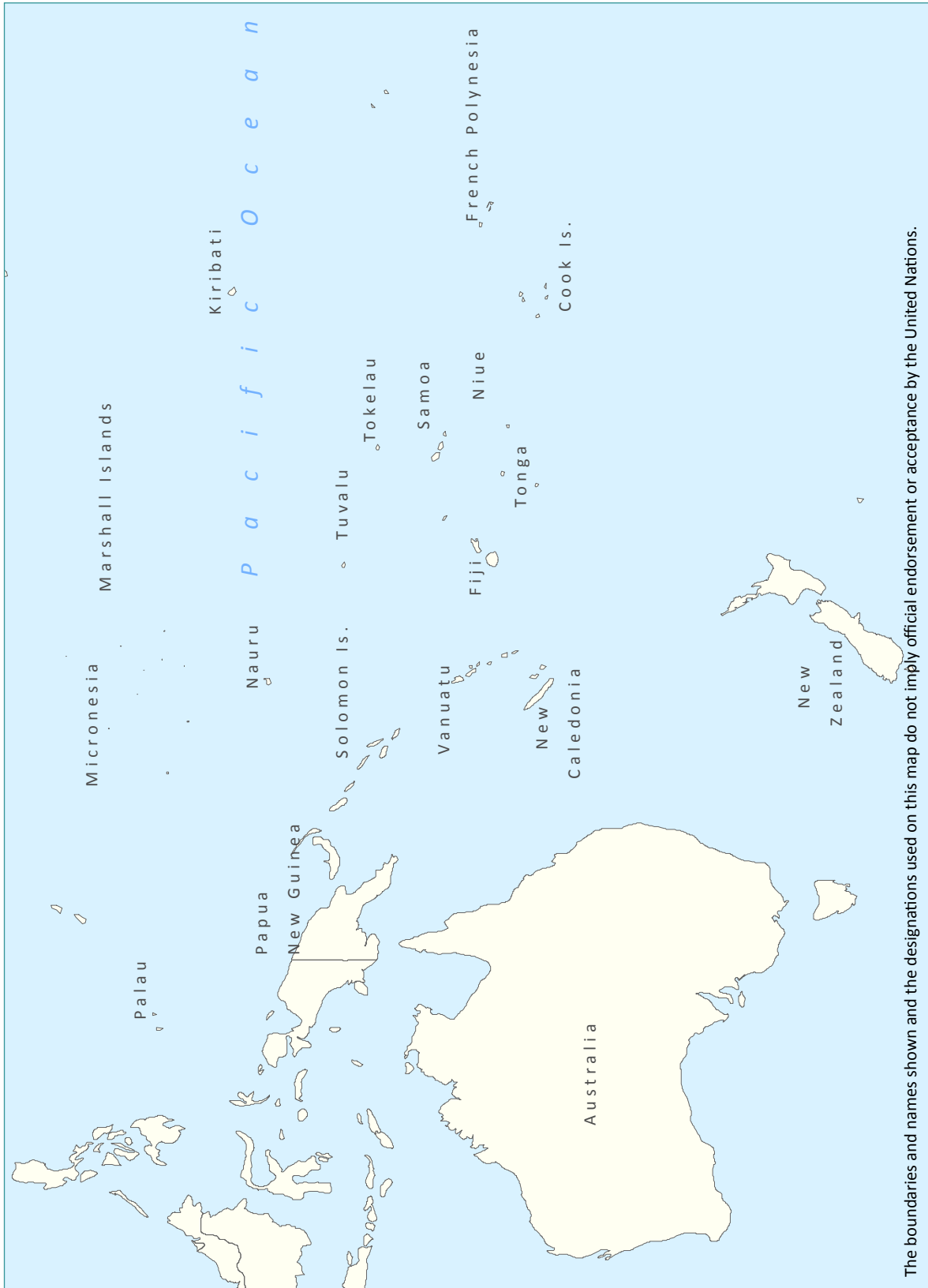
In recent years, improved aerial and maritime mobility (such as an increase in the number of direct flight links with Asia) and increasing tourist numbers,⁸ in addition to increased digital/internet connectivity, continue to provide significant economic opportunities for the region.

6 Joe McNulty, "Western and Central Pacific Ocean fisheries and the opportunities for transnational organised crime: Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Operation Kurukuru", *Australian Journal of Maritime and Ocean Affairs*, vol. 5, No. 4 (2013), pp. 145-152; Sandra Tarte, "Regionalism and Changing Regional Order in the Pacific Islands", *Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies*, vol. 1, No. 2 (2014), pp.312-321.

7 Jack Corbett, "A calling from God': politicians and religiosity in the Pacific Islands", *Global Change, Peace & Security*, vol. 25, No. 3 (2013), pp. 283-297.

8 Pacific Asia Travel Association, *Key Findings (preliminary): Asia Pacific Visitor Forecasts 2014-2018 Report*, (2014).

Figure 1: The PICTs, Australia and New Zealand (i.e., Oceania)

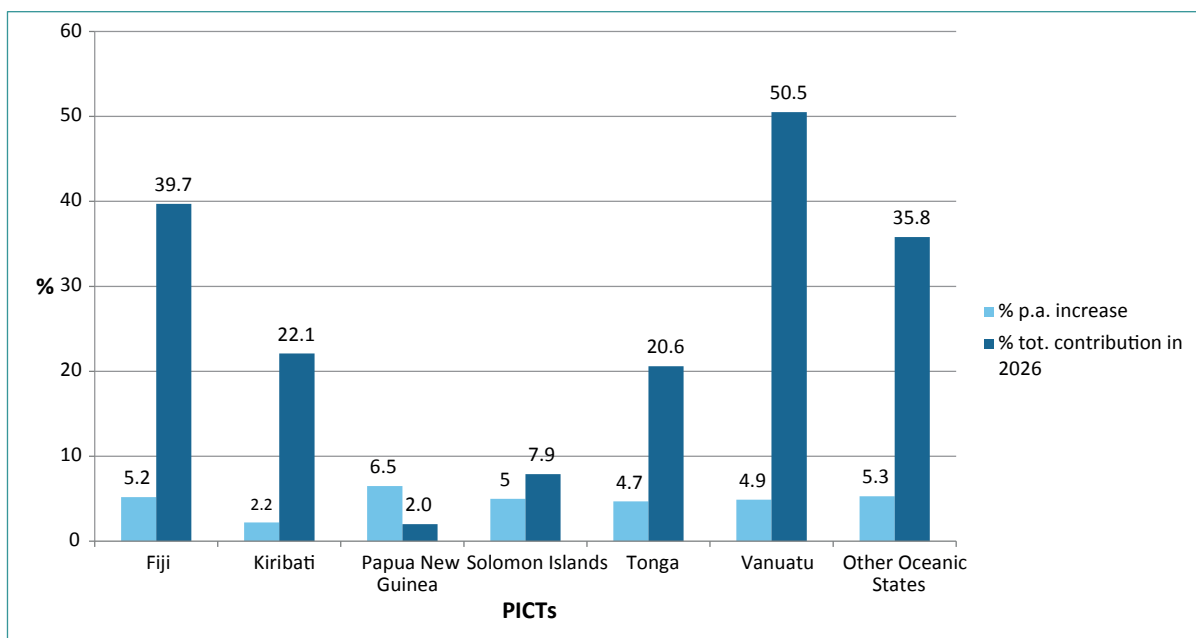


The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Increasing tourism in the Pacific

In addition to significant income generated by exporting marine and logging products (see further information in the relevant subsections elsewhere in this report), tourism is a key and expanding source of revenue for the Pacific region (see Figure 2). For example, in 2014, Fiji's annual 'Visitor Arrival' number reached a high of 692,630.⁹ In this context, to ensure continued – and optimal – growth and sustainability for local PICT tourism industries and for the region overall, the promotion of a safe and secure environment is of considerable importance, particularly in the context of increasing tourist levels across a number of PICTs in recent years. For example, according to recent World Bank figures,¹⁰ between 2011 and 2013, estimated tourist numbers rose from around 35,000 to 42,000 in the Federated States of Micronesia (i.e., an increase of 20%), 158,000 to 174,000 in Papua New Guinea (+10%), 22,900 to 24,400 in the Solomon Islands (+7%), 51,000 to 58,000 in Timor-Leste (+14%) and 94,000 to 110,000 in Vanuatu (+17%). Tourism levels also rose in nearby Australia and New Zealand during the same period by approximately 11% and 5%, respectively. For the entire Asia-Pacific region, visitor arrivals are forecast to grow at an annual rate of more than 6% during 2014-2018.¹¹

Figure 2: Forecast annual increase and total contribution of travel and tourism to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of PICTs until, and in, 2026*



Source: World Travel & Tourism Council, 2016¹²

*Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number

Such changes underscore the Pacific region's increasing global connectivity, and present further challenges for local and regional law enforcement agencies. They also highlight the vulnerability of PICTs to various transnational organized crimes. For example, as described in more detail on page 17, illicit drugs such as cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine are trafficked through tourist hubs in the region (e.g., Fiji, New Caledonia and Vanuatu) on recreational nautical vessels such as yachts.¹³ In the context of limited law enforcement resources and capacity to detect, investigate and respond to such crimes, the difficulties inherent in monitoring the movements of such vessels through many of the Pacific's remote outer islands, and across a vast area in general, reportedly facilitate such activities and make sea patrols especially challenging.

9 Tourism Fiji, *Record Year for Tourism* (February 2015).

10 The World Bank, "International Tourism, Number of Arrivals". Available at <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ST.INT.ARVL>

11 Pacific Asia Travel Association. *Asia Pacific Visitor Forecasts 2014-2018 Report: Key Findings (preliminary)* (2014).

12 World Travel and Tourism Council, "Country reports". Available at <http://www.wttc.org/research/economic-research/economic-im-pact-analysis/country-reports#undefined>

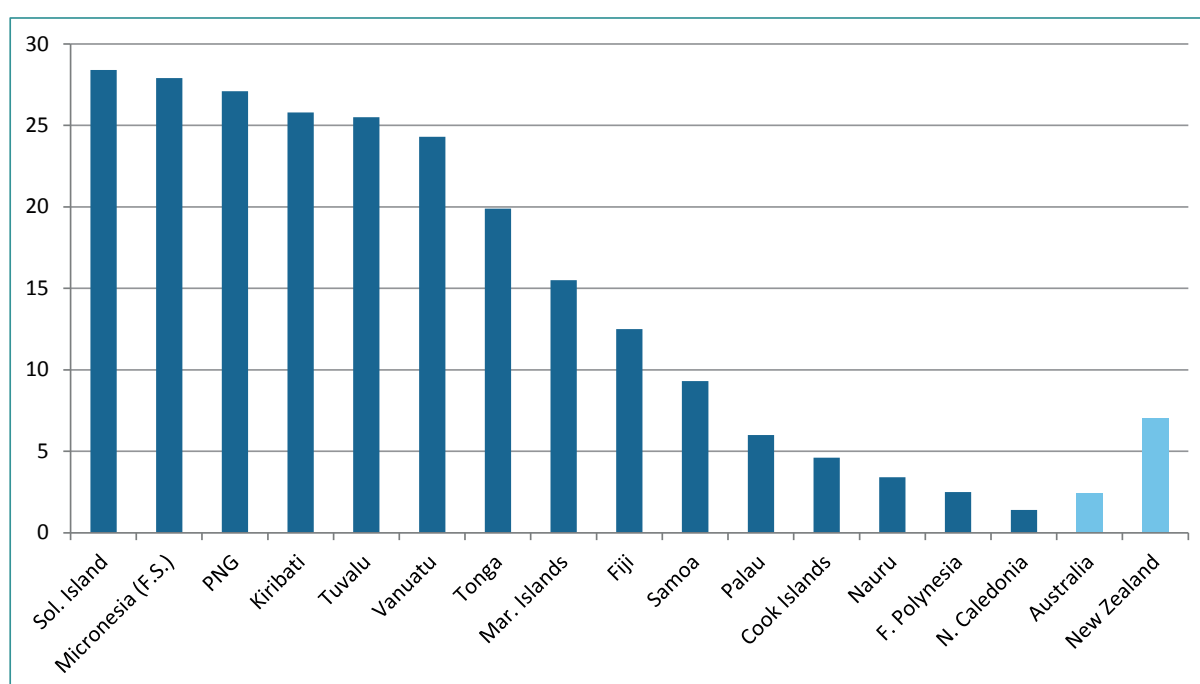
13 For example: Australian Federal Police. Newsroom, *Pacific dragnet intercepts \$370 million worth of cocaine bound for Australia* (August 2013); Customs Today, NZ, *Australia stops about \$80m worth of methamphetamine from reaching final destination* (August 2015); New Zealand Kaniva Pacific, *Operation Ghost drugs bust linked to Tonga* (December 2013).

Importance of addressing transnational organized crime in the Pacific region

Reflecting global trends, the PICTs – and the Pacific region in general – continue to experience diverse and dynamic social and economic issues and changes which can result in significant regulatory challenges.

In consideration of a substantial reliance on natural resources by local populations (see Figure 3, for example), environmental concerns can also impact considerably on communities, nations and the region in general. For example, given that the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of eight PICTs account for around one-third of global commercial tuna canning supplies, valued at approximately USD\$3,000 million per year,¹⁴ threats to the regional marine environment and resources, such as fisheries crimes, pollution and climate change, represent significant risks to the livelihoods of local populations. Likewise, the significant devastation caused by Cyclone Winston in Fiji in early 2016 and Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu in 2015¹⁵ are examples of the region's vulnerability to natural disasters.

Figure 3: Gross value (%) of GDP attributed to the agricultural sector in the PICTs, Australia and New Zealand ('agriculture' includes agriculture, fishing, forestry and hunting), 2013



Source: UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)¹⁶

The PICTs are situated along a maritime corridor utilised for legitimate trade between major economic markets located along the Pacific Rim.¹⁷ Applying regulation and enforcement strategies can therefore be difficult with respect to the countless fishing vessels owned by numerous foreign companies – and bearing flags from multiple nations – which transit through high seas areas of Pacific EEZs.¹⁸ In addition, factors including the substantial geographical area of the Pacific, extensive and porous jurisdictional boundaries, and differences in governance and heterogeneity in general law enforcement capacity across numerous PICTs and the region in general,¹⁹ highlight the susceptibility of Pacific nations to a variety of illicit threats, markets and activities. These complexities also underscore the inherent difficulties in detecting, monitoring, preventing and responding to transnational organized crimes in the region.

14 Tarte, S: *Regionalism and Changing Regional Order in the Pacific Islands*. Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies. 2014, 1:312-21.

15 Hazelgrove-Planel, L: *CYCLONE PAM FROM THE FIELD: Adapting to climate change?* Anthropology Today. 2015, 31:20-1; Swami, N. *Winston leaves trail of destruction*, The Fiji Times ONLINE. 2016.

16 UNESCAP, available at <http://www.unescap.org/subregional-office/pacific>

17 Joe McNulty, "Western and Central Pacific Ocean fisheries and the opportunities for transnational organised crime: Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Operation Kurukuru", *Australian Journal of Maritime and Ocean Affairs*, vol. 5, No. 4 (2013), pp. 145-152.

18 Ibid.

19 Rob McCusker, *Transnational crime in the Pacific Islands: real or apparent danger?*, Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice, No. 308 (Canberra, Australian Institute of Criminology, 2006).

In recent years the Pacific region has benefitted from economic opportunities arising from improved aerial and maritime mobility, rising tourist numbers and enhanced digital connectivity. This increased connectivity has also exacerbated the Pacific's vulnerabilities. Illicit trafficking – particularly of illicit drugs and precursors, marine and timber products and, to a lesser extent, people²⁰ – as well as financial and technology-enabled crime, including money laundering activities, have arisen as a result of increased connectivity. For example, in recent media reports, Papua New Guinean ministers and authorities have commented on the high incidence of criminal activities occurring across the land border between Papua New Guinea and Indonesia.²¹ The Solomon Islands' unmonitored border with Bougainville also enables relatively free movement of goods and people by small vessels, making it susceptible to trafficking of illegal commodities and facilitating the development and maintenance of illicit markets. Fiji, as a key regional transit hub, also remains particularly vulnerable to cross-border criminal activities.²² Additional transnational crime types that feature in the region include migrant smuggling, environmental crimes (for example, some wildlife trafficking),²³ and firearms trafficking.²⁴ This report will highlight the increased challenges arising from increased connectivity.

The region represents not only a transit point in the conduct of transnational organized crime activities but also experiences the spillover effects, in particular from drug trafficking. A third element to transnational organized crime that is facing the region is the threat presented by intra-Pacific activities; this includes criminal activities perpetrated within a country's borders. For example, this report will discuss a case study in the Solomon Islands in which local children are trafficked within their own country and at risk of experiencing sexual exploitation via the logging industry. While the activity occurs within the one country, the victims appear to be acquired for foreign workers. It is not easy to delineate between these different elements of transnational organized crime, and the distinctions are often imprecise.

Key challenges to combating transnational crime threats

In addition to political, geographical and natural barriers, in general, statistical under-reporting and unreliability means it can be extremely difficult to determine true levels of transnational criminal threats and activities in the Pacific region. Other important impediments to effectively addressing transnational crime in the region include: limited human and technical resources; a lack of, or inconsistent, training and law enforcement capacity; poor inter-agency cooperation and intelligence sharing at local/national and regional levels; and, corruption. In some instances, a lack of clear responsibility within any one agency for enforcing, prosecuting, maintaining and disseminating records on transnational crimes also impedes effective and efficient law enforcement processes, and impacts on the quality and quantity of relevant, available and timely data.

Neighbouring regions

The PICTs are surrounded by major markets for illicit activities and commodities. For example, Australia consistently records some of the highest rates of methamphetamine, cocaine and ecstasy use among the country's general population worldwide,²⁵ and East and South-East has one of the largest synthetic drug markets, in particular methamphetamine, in the world in recent years.²⁶ Further, Australia, New Zealand and the United States remain primary destination countries for illicit goods and smuggled migrants transiting through the Pacific region.²⁷ In particular, limitations associated with policing, a geographically large maritime region, mean that the PICTs continue to provide attractive transit points for the illicit trafficking of goods

20 U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in persons report* (2015); UNODC, *Transnational Organized Crime in East Asia and the Pacific: A Threat Assessment* (2013); UNODC, *Transnational Organized Crime in the Fishing Industry: Focus on: Trafficking in Persons, Smuggling of Migrants, Illicit Drugs Trafficking* (2011); UNODC, *World Drug Report 2015*.

21 For example: ANTARA News, *Security at Indonesia-PNG border must be tightened* (May 2015). Available at <http://www.antaranews.com/en/news/99002/ssecurity-at-indonesia-png-border-must-be-tightened>.

22 For example: The Fiji Times ONLINE, *The billion dollar drug bust* (June 2014); The Fiji Times ONLINE, *Customs officers intercept drug parcel* (December 2015).

23 Lorraine Elliott, *Transnational environmental crime in the Asia-Pacific: A workshop report*, Report of the Public Forum on Transnational Environmental Crime in the Asia Pacific (Camberra, Australian National University, 2007).

24 Hannah Lewis, *Arms and Ammunition in Oceania: A guide for Pacific Governments* (Pacific Small Action Group, 2015).

25 UNODC: *World Drug Report 2015*.

26 UNODC: *The Challenge of Synthetic Drugs in East and South-East Asia and Oceania: Trends and Patterns of Amphetamine-type Stimulants and New Psychoactive Substances*. A report from the Global SMART Programme, (2015).

27 U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in persons report* (2015); UNODC, *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2014*; UNODC, *Transnational Organized Crime in East Asia and the Pacific: A Threat Assessment* (2013).

between: a) Asia and Australia/New Zealand and North America; and, b) South America and Australia/New Zealand.

Law enforcement reports indicate that organized crime networks, primarily from Asian countries, are perceived to be one of the most active groups in the Pacific region. In addition, Australian law enforcement representatives have reported that West African organized crime groups and Australian Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs (OMCGs) are also making their presence felt.²⁸ OMCGs from Australia have been known to recruit in the Pacific and to travel to the region (particularly Fiji) to establish 'chapters.' Some PICTs are allegedly being used by Australian organized crime groups to facilitate their business in Australia. Many such groups operating in the Pacific region have sophisticated abilities in relation to concealing their illicit activities, often under cover of legitimate investments across diverse industries.

The structure of this threat assessment

This report profiles transnational organized crime in the Pacific region, covering the following specific contraband flows and associated issues:

Drug and precursor

- Trafficking of illicit drugs from Asia and South America into and through the region, with a primary focus on meth/amphetamine and precursor substances, heroin and cocaine (including reports of recorded seizures);
- The potential for spillover effects impacting local markets (i.e., the emergence of the use of drugs including methamphetamine, cocaine, heroin and new psychoactive substances (NPS) within local populations due to trafficking efforts to and through the region); and
- The manufacture/production and cultivation of illicit substances within PICTs.

People

- Human trafficking for sexual exploitation;
- Additional links to extractive industries and forced labour in the Pacific region; and
- Smuggling of migrants.

Environment

- Fisheries crimes and related concerns within the region;
- Issues related to 'other' wildlife; and
- The illicit trade in timber from the region to the world.

Trafficking of small arms

- Summary of trends related to firearms, armed violence and related crimes in PICTs; and
- Trends in the trafficking of small arms within and through the Pacific.

Other transnational crimes

- Brief discussion of trends related to cybercrime and counterfeit goods (including fraudulent pharmaceuticals) in the Pacific region.

Note that the estimated value or quantity of the flows should not be the primary basis for prioritization in combating transnational organized crime. For example, in terms of the dollar value, human trafficking and migrant smuggling are comparatively small, but the adverse consequences experienced by victims can be immense.

²⁸ Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission, *Outlaw Motor Cycle Gangs*, available at <https://www.acic.gov.au/about-crime/organised-crime-groups/outlaw-motor-cycle-gangs>

METHODOLOGY

Methodology

Process to obtain and consult on data and information used in the report

The assessment process commenced in April 2015 when six questionnaires²⁹ were distributed to PICTs through the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) to collect data on transnational organized crimes (i.e., drug trafficking, trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, environmental crimes, counterfeit goods and trafficking of small arms) relevant to the Pacific region. This occurred prior to the 2015 Forum Regional Security Committee (FRSC) meeting of the PIFS (held in Suva, Fiji, in June, 2015). The questionnaires were designed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from national authorities, agencies, ministries and/or professionals (e.g., local law enforcement, Attorney-General's Office) relevant to the specified transnational organized crime types. Completed questionnaires were shared by PICT delegates with UNODC at the FRSC meeting, where UNODC representatives provided rationales for the TOCTA and requested any details on current or emerging transnational crime trends impacting PICTs specifically, or the region in general. In addition, UNODC representatives described the methodology of the TOTCA in detail, and provided PICT delegates with a two-page form designed to collect the contact details of national representatives for the purpose of obtaining further details on transnational organized crimes.

The PICT delegates were advised that data collection and analysis would occur during the following four months (i.e., until about September/October 2015). Data collection primarily entailed requests and reminders – generally by email – for details regarding the specified transnational organized crimes from nominated representatives (including some PICT delegates in attendance at the FRSC meeting) and key experts and stakeholders. A draft report was subsequently compiled by UNODC and circulated to PIFS members for feedback before TOCTA findings were presented to key stakeholders and partners at the FRSC meeting in June 2016.

Assessment methods and types of sources

Assessments of transnational organized crime threats in the region were made mainly by three methods: i) assessing the possible extent of 'illegality' embedded in increasing legal movements of peoples and trades in commodities within, to and from the region; ii) assessing recent developments of illicit trafficking and associated illicit commodity markets in neighbouring countries and regions that might bring spillover effects to the region; and iii) assessing gaps in existing national and regional frameworks established to address transnational organized crimes in the region.

The data and information gathered for the following assessment methods were primarily official data produced by national and regional authorities as well as UNODC and other international organizations to ensure the validity of the report. However, academic journals and reports from credible media outlets were also partially used to supplement the lack of official data and information related to transnational organized crimes in the region.

Major types of sources used in the report include:

- Periodical reports produced by national authorities in the region such as the Australian Crime Commission and the New Zealand Customs Service;
- Periodical reports produced by regional organizations such as the Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre (PTCCC) and the Pacific Immigration Directors Conference (PIDC);
- Individual seizures/trafficking cases collected in the form of 'press releases' produced by national law enforcement authorities such as police and customs in the region;
- Additional individual seizures/trafficking cases shared by national authorities through the six questionnaires and official communications;
- The most recent household and youth surveys on drug prevalence conducted by national authorities;
- UNODC data sets and research products such as Annual Report Questionnaires (ARQ) and World Drug Reports;

²⁹ A total of six questionnaires, one for each of illicit drugs and precursors, trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants, fisheries crimes, timber trafficking, small arms trafficking and counterfeit goods, were prepared and distributed.

- Data sets and research products from other international organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Customs Organizations (WCO), and the UN Economic and Social Commissions for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP);
- Academic literatures and publications related to recent trends, patterns and impacts of transnational organized crimes in the region; and
- Reports from credible media outlets and civil society organizations related to recent trends, patterns and impacts of transnational organized crimes in the region.

In consideration of existing data and anecdotal information, PICT delegates delivered presentations at the FRSC meeting on any patterns relating to the prevalence and incidence of transnational organized crimes impacting their respective PICTs or the broader Pacific region, in addition to any specific or notable cases. This information was also fed into this assessment.

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat³⁰

The Pacific Islands Forum, founded in 1971 as the South Pacific Forum, is a political network comprising 16 independent and self-governing states: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshal Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. The primary goals of the Forum are to:

- Strengthen regional cooperation and integration through implementing, coordinating, monitoring and evaluating the Forum Leaders' decisions; and
- Facilitate economic growth and enhance political governance and security for the Pacific region through the provision of policy advice.

In accordance with these goals, the PIFS, based in Suva, Fiji, provides:

- Policy advice, guidance, coordination and assistance in implementing the Forum Leaders' decisions; and
- Support to ministerial meetings and Forum Leaders' meetings, in addition to associated committees and working groups.

The PIFS is mandated to implement the Pacific Plan,³¹ a strategy designed to strengthen regional cooperation and integration in the Pacific. The Plan's framework guides the work of PICT governments, regional bodies and development partners in supporting the aspirations of Member Countries and local communities.

Descriptions of key regional law enforcement agencies are included in *Appendix III*.

³⁰ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. Available at <http://www.forumsec.org/index.cfm>

³¹ For more information, see <http://www.forumsec.org/pages.cfm/strategic-partnerships-coordination/framework-for-pacific-regional-ism/>

THE FLOWS

**DRUG AND PRECURSOR
TRAFFICKING**

The flows

Drug and precursor trafficking

Given the geographical location of PICTs in relation to key drug manufacturers and markets, the region is recognized as a key area through which trafficking of drugs and chemical precursors occurs. Main origin points include Asia and South America, with common destinations being Australia and New Zealand³² (Figures 4 and 6). Trafficking of such substances via sea, air and postal mechanisms represents a significant law enforcement challenge for Pacific nations in general. Given ongoing seizures in numerous PICTs of controlled drugs such as heroin, cocaine and methamphetamine,³³ the risk of spillover effects of illegally manufactured and trafficked substances into local markets remains a real threat and, in consideration of the numerous social and health consequences associated with drug consumption,³⁴ a considerable public health and law enforcement concern.³⁵

Despite this, only four PICTs – Fiji, Tonga, the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia – are party to all three United Nations Drug Control Conventions in the region: the *1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs*, the *1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances* and the *1988 United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances* (see Appendix VI for a list of PICTs' ratification status relating to these Conventions). As a result, drug-related legislation across some PICTs is outdated and ill-equipped to address emerging and pertinent drug issues; for example, the possession and supply of some synthetic drugs and their precursors is not criminalized in a number of PICTs, including Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. Specifically, in Papua New Guinea, although a Controlled Substance Bill was drafted in 1998 with the assistance of a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) advisor but it was not adopted it.³⁶ Financial, administrative and staff challenges are also factors that have reportedly prevented the development of national drug control measures in Papua New Guinea.³⁷

The region's only transnational, drug-focused research association, the Pacific Drug and Alcohol Research Network (PDARN), has been inactive since 2011 due to financial constraints.³⁸ Many law enforcement agencies operating in the Pacific do so in relative isolation; this contrasts with transnational organized crime units which can be well-resourced and have complex global networks.³⁹ In addition, there is a lack of formal drug surveillance systems operating throughout the Pacific. For example, the submission of the UNODC's Annual Reports Questionnaire (ARQ)⁴⁰ has generally been inconsistent, and the data that do exist can vary considerably with regard to availability, collection frequency, quantity, quality and representativeness. A general lack of funding, resources and staff trained in drug-related issues also limits drug-related data collection and monitoring.

32 Australian Crime Commission, *Illicit Drug Data Report 2013-14* (2015); UNODC, *World Drug Report 2015*.

33 For example: Newsroom, *Pacific dragnet intercepts \$370 million worth of cocaine bound for Australia*, (August 2013); Newsroom, *Papua New Guinean woman charged for importing methamphetamine into Cairns Airport* (October 2013); The Fiji Times ONLINE, *\$30m drug haul* (December 2014).

34 For example: Louisa Degenhardt, Amanda Roxburgh, and Rebecca McKetin, "Hospital separations for cannabis- and methamphetamine-related psychotic episodes in Australia", *The Medical Journal of Australia*, vol. 186, No. 7 (2007), pp. 342-345; Matthew Warner-Smith, Shane Darke, Michael Lynskey, and Wayne Hall, "Heroin overdose: causes and consequences", *Addiction*, vol. 96, No. 8 (2001), pp. 1113-1125.

35 UNODC, *Patterns and Trends of Amphetamine-Type Stimulants and Other Drugs: Asia and the Pacific*, Global SMART Programme (2012).

36 David McDonald, "A rapid situation assessment of drug use in Papua New Guinea", *Drug Alcohol Review*, vol. 24, No. 1 (2005), pp. 79-82.

37 Ibid.

38 Pacific Drug and Alcohol Research Network: *Meeting Report 9th-11th August 2011*. 2011, Fiji: PDARN.

39 UNODC. *Transnational organized crime: the globalized illegal economy*. Available from: <https://www.unodc.org/toc/en/crimes/organized-crime.html>

40 The ARQ entails four sections: 1) Legislative and institutional framework; 2) Comprehensive approach to drug demand reduction and supply; 3) Extent and patterns of drug use; and, 4) Extent and patterns of and trends in drug crop cultivation and drug manufacture and trafficking. Member states are expected to regularly complete the ARQ to provide the UNODC with data on drug use, manufacture and trafficking trends locally and worldwide: https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/Sessions-Roundtables-ARQ/Sessions-Roundtables-Arq_ARQ.html

Overall, this means that trends relating to drug use, production/manufacture/cultivation and trafficking in the PICTs can be difficult to detect and monitor, and available data must be interpreted with caution. This can significantly hinder the capacity of local, regional and international health and law enforcement agencies to respond to associated problems in a timely/efficient and appropriate manner. Such a gap is problematic with regard to determining the existence and extent of drug-related challenges in the PICTs, especially in consideration of rapidly evolving illicit drug markets at the global level, such as the rise of online drug purchasing and subsequent trafficking activities and the emergence of new psychoactive substances (NPS).^{41,42} The PICTs are not immune to these global drug-related challenges. For instance, Pacific law enforcement representatives have emphasized the difficulties associated with policing the importation/trafficking of NPS and other drugs, partly because, in addition to identifying/detecting and monitoring trends, the cost of identifying substances can be excessive (e.g., many PICTs need to send seized substances to either New Zealand or Australian laboratories for forensic analysis due to a lack of such facilities locally, which complicates the investigation and prosecution of associated criminal activities).⁴³

Importantly, an inability to identify and monitor drug prevalence and trends in the Pacific could also result in missed opportunities to inhibit preventable epidemics, including the spread of blood-borne viral infections (BBVIs) and sexually-transmitted infections (STIs; e.g., hepatitis C and HIV) associated with risky drug-related behaviours (e.g., injecting drug use).⁴⁴

Recent observations and anecdotal evidence also suggest the following key trends and common trafficking routes:

Primary drugs used, manufactured & trafficked

The UNODC's 'best' annual prevalence estimates for key drug types in the region of Oceania⁴⁵ are listed in Table 1 below. Note that these figures should be interpreted with caution given the issues outlined above (e.g., inconsistencies in the availability, collection frequency, quantity and quality of data collected relating to illicit drug use), especially in relation to extrapolating substance use trends from the region's overall (estimated) prevalence figures to specific PICTs. Along these lines, the regional estimates for Oceania are primarily driven by data from the most developed countries in the region, Australia and New Zealand, and are therefore unlikely to be representative of drug consumption trends in the PICTs. For example, refer to Table 2 and 3 on pg. 20-21 [*Annual prevalence of amphetamines and cocaine use among nations in Oceania as a percentage of the population aged 15-64 (unless otherwise indicated)*], which highlights the dearth of data regarding amphetamine use in the PICTs compared to Australia and New Zealand.

Table 1: UNODC's best annual prevalence estimates for key drug types in Oceania in comparison to global figures

Substance/drug class	Oceania		Global	
	Number ('000s)	Prevalence (%)	Number ('000s)	Prevalence (%)
Amphetamines (amphetamine and methamphetamine)	480	1.9	35,650	0.8
Cannabis	2,550	10.2	182,500	3.8
Cocaine	390	1.5	18,260	0.4
Ecstasy	610	2.4	19,400	0.4
Opiates	50	0.2	17,440	0.4
Opioids (opiates & prescription opioids)	740	3.0	33,120	0.7

Source: World Drug Report (UNODC, 2016)

41 NPS exist in either a pure form or a preparation and are not controlled by the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs or the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, in addition to possibly posing a public health threat.

42 UNODC: World Drug Report 2016.

43 PTCN. *Transnational Crime Assessment for 2014* (2015).

44 Degenhardt, L, Mathers, B, Guarinieri, M, Panda, S, Phillips, B, Strathdee, SA, Tyndall, M, Wiessing, L, and Wodak, A: *The global epidemiology of methamphetamine injection: A review of the evidence on use and associations with HIV and other harm*. 2007, Sydney: NDARC, UNSW; Howard, J, Ali, H, and Robins, L: *Alcohol, cannabis and amphetamine-type stimulants use among young Pacific Islanders*. Drug Alcohol Rev. 2011, **30**:104-10.

45 Oceania comprises the PICTs and Australia and New Zealand.

There is little consistent evidence of use, manufacture/production and trafficking of illicit drugs (e.g., methamphetamine, cocaine and heroin) other than cannabis among local PICT populations, partly as a result of a lack of epidemiological research focusing on the use of licit and illicit substances other than alcohol, tobacco and cannabis. For example, see Tables 2 and 3 below, modifications of data tables from the UNODC's *World Drug Report* in 2016,⁴⁶ which detail the lack of prevalence data relating to amphetamines (both amphetamine and methamphetamine) and cocaine use among general populations in the PICTs.⁴⁷

Despite the above, there are some – mostly anecdotal – indications of the use of illicit substances, such as cocaine and ATS, in Pacific nations.⁴⁸ For example, a rapid situation assessment of drug use in Papua New Guinea, conducted during 1998-1999 and involving structured interviews with 426 current and former drug users, indicated a small number of instances of cocaine use.⁴⁹ Other research has pointed to use of ATS among young people in numerous PICTs, including American Samoa, the Cook Islands, Guam, New Caledonia, Palau and Tonga⁵⁰. Although a study of alcohol and other substance use involving 400 young people across four provinces in the Solomon Islands in late 2015 uncovered a lack of illicit substance use (other than cannabis) among this group in general,⁵¹ law enforcement representatives from several other PICTs (including American Samoa, Fiji, Palau, Samoa and Tonga) have reported a recent increase in domestic consumption and/or availability of crystalline methamphetamine/ice in recent years, albeit generally only in relatively small quantities (i.e., less than trafficable quantities for personal use). Anecdotal evidence of such use mainly points to expats, tourists and nationals who have spent time in countries such as Australia and New Zealand.

Locally-grown cannabis continues to dominate the illicit drug trade within and between PICTs.⁵² For example, anecdotal evidence from law enforcement representatives suggests that 'favourable' climate conditions have facilitated a rapid increase in the cultivation of cannabis in Papua New Guinea over the last three decades. Identification of trends of this nature is critical in understanding the overall threat facing the region.

Importantly, the production and harmful consumption of both licit and illicit types of alcohol across the PICTs (e.g., 'homebrew' and 'kwaso' in the Solomon Islands)⁵³ remains a substantial public health concern and continues to impact local law enforcement and health sectors.⁵⁴ This issue requires further research and monitoring to develop evidence-based and geographically-relevant initiatives to address related concerns (e.g., gender-based violence).⁵⁵

46 UNODC: *World Drug Report 2011* and *World Drug Report 2016*.

47 Since methamphetamine and cocaine are the two substances mainly trafficked to PICTs and discussed in the report for that reason, the prevalence data for the two were presented to highlight the lack of data in the region.

48 For example: Council on Substance Abuse Prevention, *Substance Abuse Prevention Strategic Plan: 2007-2011* (Republic of Palau, 2006); John Howard, Hammad Ali, and Lisa Robins, "Alcohol, cannabis and amphetamine-type stimulants use among young Pacific Islanders", *Drug Alcohol Review*, vol. 30, No. 1 (2011), pp. 104-110; Jaclinn Lippe, Nancy Brener, Laura Kann, Steve Kinchen, William A. Harris, Tim McManus, Nancy Speicher, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: *Youth risk behavior surveillance-Pacific Island United States Territories, 2007*. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, vol. 57, No. 12 (2208), pp. 28-56; David McDonald, "A rapid situation assessment of drug use in Papua New Guinea", *Drug Alcohol Review*, vol. 24, No. 1 (2005), pp. 79-82; Secretariat of the Pacific Community, *Second Generation Surveillance Surveys in the Federated States of Micronesia, 2006 to 2008* (2009).

49 David McDonald, "A rapid situation assessment of drug use in Papua New Guinea", *Drug Alcohol Review*, vol. 24, No. 1 (2005), pp. 79-82.

50 John Howard, Hammad Ali, and Lisa Robins, "Alcohol, cannabis and amphetamine-type stimulants use among young Pacific Islanders", *Drug Alcohol Review*, vol. 30, No. 1 (2011), pp. 104-110.

51 Brendan Quinn: *Alcohol, other substance use and related harms among young people in the Solomon Islands*. 2016, West Honiara, Solomon Islands: Save the Children Australia.

52 Matthew Allen, Sinclair Dinnen, Daniel Evans, and Rebecca Monson, *Justice Delivered Locally: Systems, Challenges and Innovations in Solomon Islands*, The World Bank (Washington, DC, 2013); The Fiji Times ONLINE, *The billion dollar drug bust* (June 2014); David McDonald, "A rapid situation assessment of drug use in Papua New Guinea", *Drug Alcohol Review*, vol. 24, No. 1 (2005), pp. 79-82.; Robert Power, Lucina Schmich, and Vili Nosa, "A response for substance and harm reduction in Pacific Island countries and territories", *Harm Reduction Journal*, vol. 12, No. 48 (2015); PTCN, 2016; Lucina Schmich, and Robert Power, *Situational analysis of drug and alcohol issues and responses in the Pacific 2008-09*, Australian National Council on Drugs, vol 21 (Canberra, 2010).

53 Rolf Kuschel, 'Angikiwi F. T. Takiika, and Kiu 'Angiki, Alcohol and Drug Use in Honiara, Solomon Islands: A Cause for Concern, in Anthony J. Marsella, Ayda A. Austin, and Bruce Grant, *Social Change and Psychosocial Adaptation in the Pacific Islands: Cultures in Transition*, (New York, Springer, 2005), pp. 211-254.

54 Tara Kessaram, Jeanie McKenzie, Natalie Girin, Adam Roth, Paula Vivili, Gail Williams, and Damian Hoy, "Alcohol use in the Pacific region: Results from the STEPwise approach to surveillance, Global School-Based Student Health Survey and Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System", *Drug Alcohol Review*, vol. 34, No. 4 (2015), pp. 412-423; Robert Power, Lucina Schmich, and Vili Nosa, "A response for substance and harm reduction in Pacific Island countries and territories", *Harm Reduction Journal*, vol. 12, No. 48 (2015); Lucina Schmich, and Robert Power, *Situational analysis of drug and alcohol issues and responses in the Pacific 2008-09*, Australian National Council on Drugs, vol 21 (Canberra, 2010)

55 Secretariat of the Pacific Community, *Solomon Islands Family Health and Safety Study: A study on violence against women and children* (2009).

Table 2: Annual prevalence of amphetamines (includes both amphetamine and methamphetamine) use among nations in Oceania as a percentage of the population aged 15-64 (unless otherwise indicated)

Region: Oceania	UNODC Best Estimate (%)	Uncertainty Range	Year	Source (original)	Method	UNODC Adjusted
American Samoa				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Australia*	2.1		2013	Annual Report Questionnaire	HHS	
Christmas Islands				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Cocos (Keeling) Islands				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Cook Islands				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Fiji				No recent, reliable estimate located		
French Polynesia				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Kiribati				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Marshall Islands				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Micronesia (Federated States of)				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Nauru				No recent, reliable estimate located		
New Caledonia				No recent, reliable estimate located		
New Zealand**	0.9	0.7-1.1	2015	Government source	HHS	
Northern Mariana Islands				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Palau				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Papua New Guinea				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Pitcairn				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Samoa				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Solomon Islands				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Tonga				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Tuvalu				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Vanuatu				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Wallis and Futuna Islands				No recent, reliable estimate located		

*Age range: 14 years and older, **Age range: 16-64 years. HHS = Household survey.

Source: UNODC, "World Drug Report 2016."

Table 3: Annual prevalence of cocaine use among nations in Oceania as a percentage of the population aged 15-64 (unless otherwise indicated)

Region: Oceania	UNODC Best Estimate (%)	Uncertainty Range	Year	Source (original)	Method	UNODC Adjusted
American Samoa				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Australia*	2.10		2013	Annual Report Questionnaire	HHS	
Christmas Islands				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Cocos (Keeling) Islands				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Cook Islands				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Fiji				No recent, reliable estimate located		
French Polynesia				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Kiribati				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Marshall Islands				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Micronesia (Federated States of)				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Nauru				No recent, reliable estimate located		
New Caledonia				No recent, reliable estimate located		
New Zealand**	0.60	0.3-0.8	2008	Government source	HHS	
Northern Mariana Islands				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Palau				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Papua New Guinea				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Pitcairn				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Samoa				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Solomon Islands				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Tonga				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Tuvalu				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Vanuatu				No recent, reliable estimate located		
Wallis and Futuna Islands				No recent, reliable estimate located		

*Age range: 14 years and older, **Age range: 16-64 years. HHS = Household survey.
Source: UNODC, "World Drug Report 2016."

Increased levels of trafficking of methamphetamine and its precursor chemicals have been observed in the Pacific and adjacent regions in recent years (refer: *Case Study* on page 25). However, given that the supply or possession of synthetic drugs and their precursors is not criminalized in a number of PICTs, the ability of local and regional customs officials and law enforcement agencies to combat this trend is limited. North Pacific countries such as Palau have observed an increase in the illegal importation of drugs by citizens of Asian countries over the past few years, including crystalline methamphetamine/ice. Some of the methamphetamine being consumed in Palau has allegedly been sourced from the Philippines, and media reports indicate that at least four Philippine nationals were charged with possession and for trafficking methamphetamine into Palau at the end of 2015 (the individuals were allegedly working for a local fishing company).⁵⁶ For this reason, PICTs should consider aligning the regulatory framework across the region and developing technical capacities to enable law enforcement agencies to respond to the threat.

Over most of the last decade, the heroin typically used in nearby Australia has originated in South-East Asia (the 'Golden Triangle'; i.e., Myanmar and Lao People's Democratic Republic) and South-West Asia (the 'Golden Crescent'; i.e., Afghanistan and Pakistan) (Table 4).⁵⁷ Note that Australia does not consider any PICT to be in the top three transit countries for heroin or any other drug.⁵⁸

Between 2011-12 and 2012-13, the weight of heroin detections at the Australian border increased from 256.1 kilograms to 513.8 kilograms (the highest on record; however this was primarily due to a single sea cargo detection of 252 kilograms). The number of detections also rose over the same period from 179 to 237.⁵⁹ Of note, in 2013, profiling data of analysed seizures at the Australian border identified an outlier in the form of heroin originating in South America for the first time. This heroin accounted for 4.3% of the total weight of the 55 seizures (191.8 kilograms) analysed that year.⁶⁰ This case could have been a rare, singular occurrence, or it could point to the emergence of a new trafficking route through the Pacific region. In addition to continued trafficking of heroin from the Golden Triangle, this highlights the vulnerability of PICTs being used as transit points by criminal groups, in addition to the threat of spillover effects into local communities, given the geographical location of the PICTs to heroin origin points and destinations.

56 Inquirer.net. 4 Filipinos nabbed in Palau for drug trafficking, possession. 1 January, 2016: <http://globalnation.inquirer.net/134399/4-filipinos-nabbed-in-palau-for-drug-trafficking-possession>

57 ACC: *Illicit Drug Data Report 2013-14* (2015).

58 UNODC, Annual Report Questionnaire (ARQ) for Australia in 2014.

59 ACC: *Illicit Drug Data Report 2012-13* (2014).

60 ACC: *Illicit Drug Data Report 2013-14* (2015).

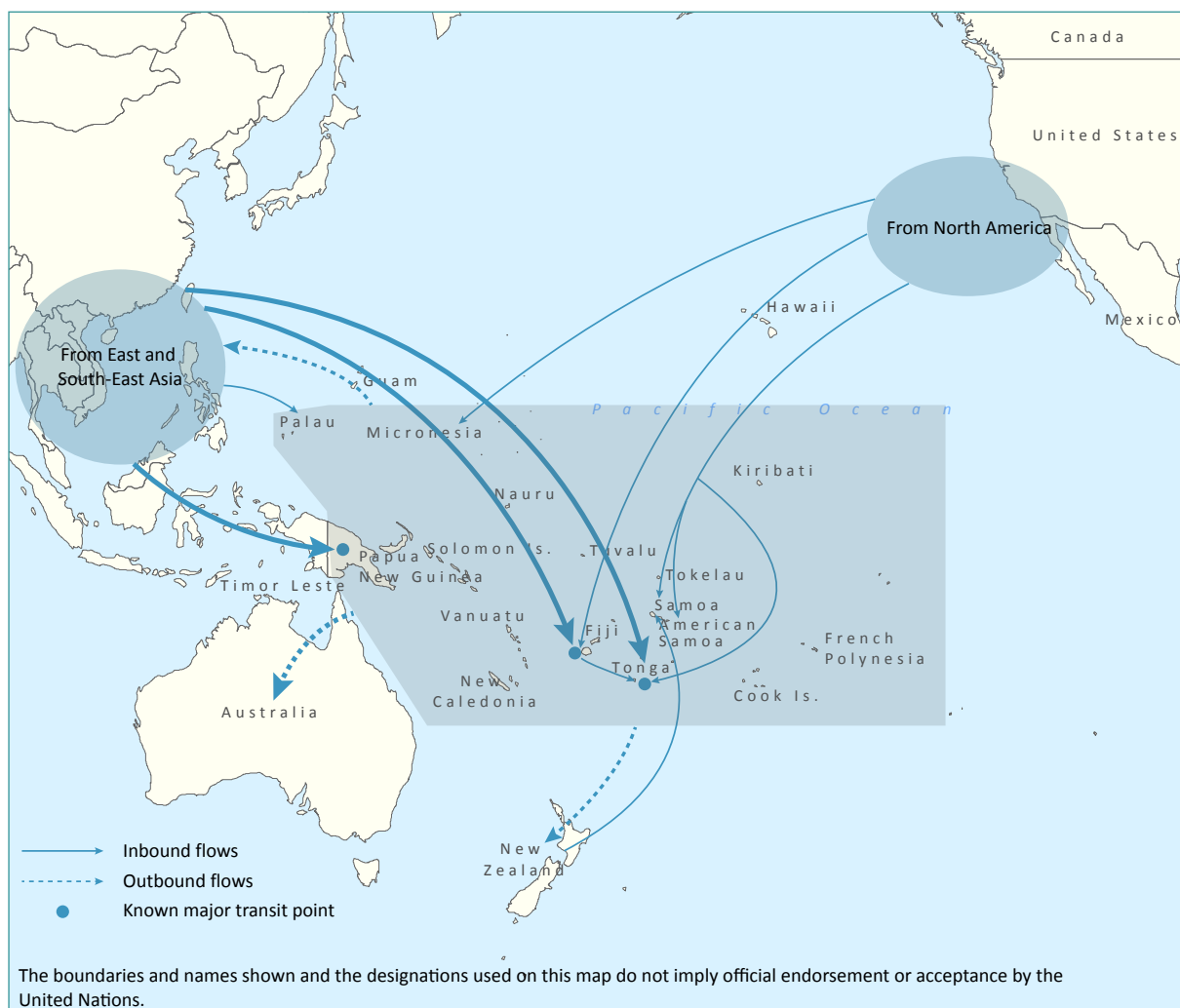
Table 4: Analysed heroin seizures at the Australian border according to geographical origin, by proportion (%) of total number and total bulk weight of heroin seizures each year, 2008–June 2014*

Year	SE Asia		SW Asia		South America		Unclassified		SE Asia & Unclassified		SW Asia & Unclassified	
	Prop. of total num. of seizures	Prop. of total bulk weight	Prop. of total num. of seizures	Prop. of total bulk weight	Prop. of total num. of seizures	Prop. of total bulk weight	Prop. of total num. of seizures	Prop. of total bulk weight	Prop. of total num. of seizures	Prop. of total bulk weight	Prop. of total num. of seizures	Prop. of total bulk weight
Jan-Jun 2015	71.4	98.1	28.6	1.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2014	52.2	89.9	37.0	7.8	-	-	2.2	<0.01	4.3	0.2	-	-
2013	74.6	84.3	18.2	8.9	5.5	4.3	-	-	1.8	2.5	-	-
2012	70.7	98.4	25.9	1.3	-	-	3.4	0.3	-	-	-	-
2011	49.0	39.4	51.0	60.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2010	63.8	93.3	27.5	5.8	-	-	5.8	0.9	-	-	2.9	-
2009	53.9	48.2	42.6	40.9	-	-	3.4	10.9	-	-	-	-
2008	44.1	26.0	44.1	66.3	-	-	11.8	7.7	-	-	-	-

*The data listed here may also include seizures destined for Australia which occurred offshore.

Source: Australian Federal Police, Forensic Drug Intelligence via Australian Crime Commission, *Illicit Drug Data Report 2014-15 (2016)*.

Figure 4: Methamphetamine trafficking routes transiting in or destined to the PICTs as perceived by the PIFS Member States, 2012 – 2015*



**Not actual trafficking routes. Perceived origin may not be region of manufacture.*

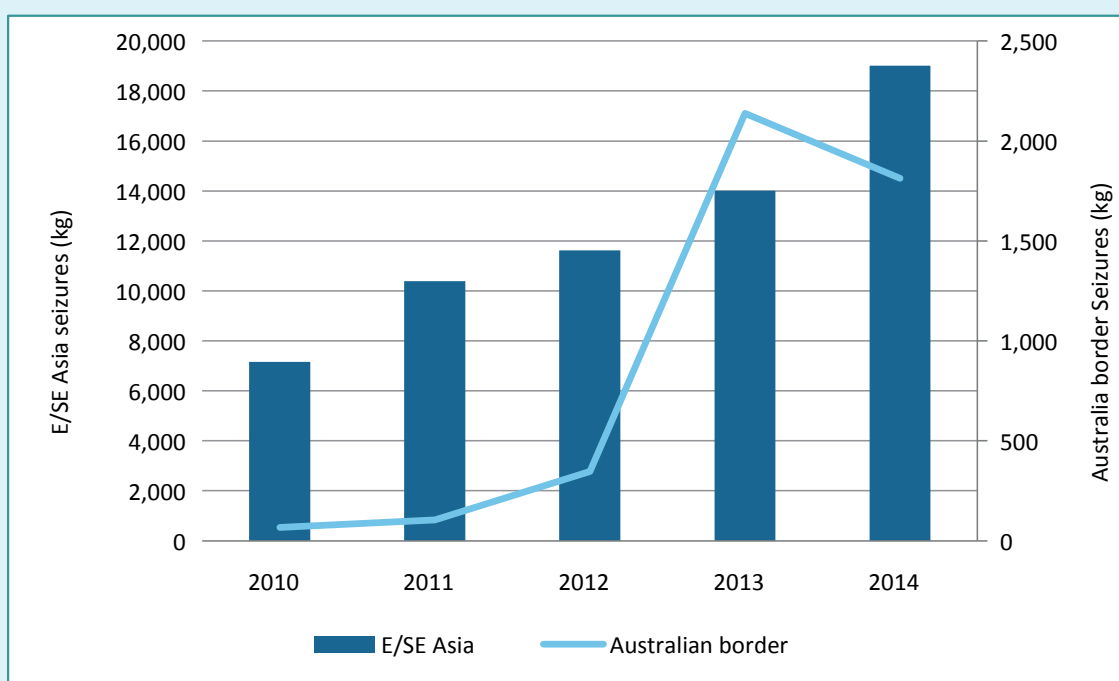
Source(s): UNODC elaboration based on information from 2015 Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) Forum Regional Security Meeting (FRSC), Suva, Fiji, June 2015; 2015 Pacific Transnational Crime Threat Assessments, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS); 2012 Transnational Crime Assessment, Pacific Transnational Crime Network (PTCN); 2013-2014 Transnational Crime Assessment, PTCN; 2014 Transnational Crime Assessment, PTCN; Official communication with the Australian Federal Police, February 2016.

Case Study: Methamphetamine use, trafficking and manufacture in Australia, New Zealand and the wider Pacific region⁶¹

Although a large number of methamphetamine manufacture facilities have been continuously dismantled in Australia and New Zealand in recent years, substantial quantities of methamphetamine found in the two countries have been sourced from East and South-East Asia (Figure 5). For example, the main embarkation points for ATS (excluding MDMA) detected at the Australian border during 2013-14 were Hong Kong (331 detections weighing 456 kilograms) and China (277 seizures weighing 778 kilograms).⁶² This is problematic for PICTs given their geographical proximity to major ATS markets and known trafficking routes (see Figure 4 above), in addition to the potential risk for spillover effects and the involvement of Pacific Islanders in such activities. For example, a seizure of around 250 kilograms of pseudoephedrine and 16 kilograms of ephedrine arriving to New Zealand on a containership in 2013 resulted in the prosecution of Tongan nationals.⁶³

Increasing numbers⁶⁴ of methamphetamine seizures at the Australian and New Zealand borders⁶⁵ highlight the continued and significant demand for psychostimulant substances in the two countries; indeed, Australia and New Zealand consistently record some of the highest rates of methamphetamine, cocaine and ecstasy use among their respective populations worldwide.⁶⁶ In consideration of this, the Australian government recently established a *National Ice Taskforce* as a step towards countering methamphetamine-related harms on a federal level.⁶⁷

Figure 5: Crystalline methamphetamine seizures in East and South-East Asia and seizures of ATS (excluding MDMA) at the Australian border* (2010 – 2014)



Source: Drug Abuse Information Network for Asia and the Pacific (DAINAP) and Australia “2013-2014 Illicit Drug Data Report”, Australian Crime Commission (ACC), 2015.

61 Commonwealth of Australia: *Final Report of the National Ice Taskforce* (2015).

62 ACC: *Illicit Drug Data Report 2013-14* (2015).

63 New Zealand Kaniva Pacific, *Operation Ghost drugs bust linked to Tonga* (December 2013).

64 Note that such data should be interpreted with caution given that an enhanced focus on specific crimes by law enforcement agencies can influence seizure numbers.

65 Australian Crime Commission, *Illicit Drug Data Report 2013-14* (2015); New Zealand Customs Service, *Annual report 2012/13* (2013).

66 UNODC: *World Drug Report 2015*.

67 Commonwealth of Australia: *Final Report of the National Ice Taskforce* (2015).

**The data reporting period in Australia spans its financial year (beginning on 1st July and ending on 30th June of the following year). For the purpose of this graph, Australian data for each year represents the financial year ending in that year. In addition, the data sets (Australia: ATS (excluding MDMA) and East and South-East Asia: crystalline methamphetamine) used in the graph are not directly comparable. However, the graph is prepared considering most of the ATS (excluding MDMA) seized in Australia is methamphetamine in its crystalline form.*

East and South-East Asia and Oceania has the largest and growing ATS market in the world in recent years⁶⁸, primarily attributable to methamphetamine. For instance, between 2009 and 2014, seizures of methamphetamine in East and South-East Asia almost quadrupled, and the region together with North America accounted for most of the methamphetamine seized worldwide during the period.⁶⁹ In Oceania, since 2012 both Australia and New Zealand have recorded sharp increases in methamphetamine seizures.⁷⁰ The several multi-hundred kilogram seizures of methamphetamine reported in 2016 in both countries indicate that the trend will continue. For instance, in June 2016, a single case resulted in the seizure of 448 kilograms of methamphetamine in New Zealand, the largest amount ever reported in the country and outweighing the total combined amount (334kg) of methamphetamine seizures in 2015.⁷¹ Furthermore, between 2009 and 2013, an increasing number of countries worldwide have identified countries in East and South-East Asia and Oceania as destinations for seized ATS.⁷² In parallel to these trends, there are emerging indications of PICTs being both transit and destination points for methamphetamine being trafficked within and through the Pacific region. For example, in 2015 there were four major methamphetamine seizures associating Fiji as a transit country totalling approximately 121 kilograms. Of these, three occurred in Fiji (totalling approximately 41 kilograms), and one in New Zealand en route to Fiji.⁷³ The latter case was the result of a collaboration between the Australian Border Force, AFP, Fiji Police Force, Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority and New Zealand Customs, with approximately 80 kilograms (valued at around NZD \$80 million) discovered hidden inside car parts in a seat container sent from South America (the container was intercepted at the Ports of Auckland.⁷⁴ Additionally, in 2013 a woman was intercepted while transporting more than four kilograms of methamphetamine into northern Australia from Papua New Guinea.⁷⁵

Methamphetamine production was first detected in the PICTs in 2004, when a sizeable 'clan lab' was discovered in Fiji.⁷⁶ According to media reports, smaller-scale operations have also been seized in Guam and French Polynesia.⁷⁷ Additionally, in recent years, Pacific media have reported either seizures of precursors, attempted diversion or thefts of pharmaceuticals that could be used for methamphetamine production in American Samoa, Fiji, French Polynesia, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu.⁷⁸ Some quantities of pseudoephedrine originating from Cook Islands have also been seized in New Zealand in recent years.⁷⁹

68 UNODC: *The Challenge of Synthetic Drugs in East and South-East Asia and Oceania: Trends and Patterns of Amphetamine-type Stimulants and New Psychoactive Substances*. 2015.

69 UNODC: *World Drug Report 2016*.

70 Ibid.

71 New Zealand Police, press release, "Northland Police make record seizure of methamphetamine with approx NZ street value of \$448 million, 2016.

72 UNODC: *The Challenge of Synthetic Drugs in East and South-East Asia and Oceania: Trends and Patterns of Amphetamine-type Stimulants and New Psychoactive Substances*. 2015.

73 New Zealand Customs Service, Joint forces stop \$80 million methamphetamine (August 2015).

74 Ibid.

75 AFP. *Media Release: Papua New Guinean woman charged for importing methamphetamine into Cairns Airport*. 2013.

76 UNODC. *2008 Global ATS Assessment: Amphetamines and Ecstasy*

77 Gopal, A. *The billion dollar drug bust*, The Fiji Times ONLINE (2014).

78 Ibid

79 UNODC, Individual Drug Seizure Report 2009 – 2014.

In late 2014, 10 litres of Phenyl-2-Propanone (P2P) were seized in Australia imported from Papua New Guinea by an organized crime syndicate, possibly indicating PICTs as transit and source points for precursors.⁸⁰ P-2-P is a precursor substance used to manufacture ATS such as methamphetamine, and such an amount was reportedly capable of producing close to 10 kilograms of methamphetamine (estimated to have a street value of approximately AUD\$2.5 million).⁸¹ Highlighting links between drug trafficking and other transnational crimes, the group was also attempting to export firearms into Papua New Guinea.

Given the numerous deleterious outcomes of methamphetamine consumption, including considerable physical and psychological harms,⁸² the spread of STIs and BBVIs,⁸³ and involvement in violence and other criminal behaviours,⁸⁴ the potential for spillover effects into domestic PICT markets is therefore a public health and law enforcement concern. The infiltration of methamphetamine into local PICT markets could result in unique challenges for these sectors in the future; consequently, the issue necessitates further monitoring.

80 AFP. *Media Release: Police seize 'Ice' precursor, firearms and cannabis crops, eight people charged* (2014).

81 Ibid.

82 Shane Darke, Sharlene Kaye, Rebecca McKetin, and Johan Duflou, "Major physical and psychological harms of methamphetamine use", *Drug Alcohol Review*, vol. 27, No. 3 (2008), pp. 253-62.

83 Louisa Degenhardt, Amanda Roxburgh, and Rebecca McKetin, *Hospital separations for cannabis- and methamphetamine-related psychotic episodes in Australia*. *Medical Journal of Australia*, vol. 186. No. 7 (2007), pp. 342-345.

84 Drug Enforcement Administration, *Drug Intelligence Brief: The Pacific Islands Region* (2004); Rebecca McKetin, Dan I. Lubman, Jake M. Najman, Sharon Dawe, Peter Butterworth, and Amanda L. Baker, "Does methamphetamine use increase violent behaviour? Evidence from a prospective longitudinal study", *Addiction*, vol. 109, No. 5 (2014), pp. 798-806; Thomas K. Pinhey, and N. Ree Wells, "Asian-Pacific Islander adolescent methamphetamine use: does ice increase aggression and sexual risks?" *Substance Use & Misuse*, vol. 42, No. 11 (2007), pp. 1801-1909.

Trafficking mechanisms: sea, air & post

Drugs continue to be trafficked through the Pacific region via commercial cruise ships and recreational vessels such as yachts (particularly through tourist hubs such as Fiji, New Caledonia and Vanuatu).⁸⁵ Increased tourism levels and direct flight links with Asia,⁸⁶ as well as private planes flying direct to some PICTs, has reportedly enabled continued drug trafficking by air within and through the region. Additionally, the difficulties inherent in monitoring the movements of yachts through remote outer islands reportedly facilitate such activities; for example, the sheer number of islands in French Polynesia (117, of which only 70 are inhabited) make sea patrols especially challenging.

The postal system provides a separate, low risk mechanism, to import controlled goods and substances. The ability to effectively screen incoming and outgoing packages is limited. Even when breaches are identified, tracking offending parties has proven to be challenging. Examples of such cases in recent years have included packages sent from the United States (including Hawaii) to Micronesia, American Samoa and Samoa, and some larger concealments of methamphetamine from Papua New Guinea into Australia.⁸⁷ Law enforcement agencies have reported an increase in drug trafficking activities via post in the region, including chemical precursors utilized in illicit drug production. Accordingly, as media reports show, Fiji intercepts postal consignments containing illicit drugs, such as a recent case of methamphetamine concealed in a shampoo bottle sent from the United States in late 2015⁸⁸ (three additional methamphetamine seizures relevant to Fiji are described in the *Case Study* on page 25). In addition, Australian law enforcement agencies have noted a rise in levels of licitly traded chemical precursors being sent via post from China in particular.

85 For example: Newsroom, *Pacific dragnet intercepts \$370 million worth of cocaine bound for Australia* (August 2013); Customs Today, NZ, *Australia stops about \$80m worth of methamphetamine from reaching final destination* (August 2015); New Zealand Kaniva Pacific, *Operation Ghost drugs bust linked to Tonga* (December 2013).

86 Pacific Asia Travel Association, *Key Findings (preliminary): Asia Pacific Visitor Forecasts 2014-2018 Report*, (2014).

87 PTCN. *Transnational Crime Assessment for 2014* (2015).

88 The Fiji Times ONLINE, *Customs officers intercept drug parcel* (December 2015).

Case Study: Recent significant cocaine seizures in the Pacific

Similar to methamphetamine, ongoing demand for cocaine in New Zealand and Australia results in the drug being trafficked through the Pacific Ocean. This is because cocaine is not produced in either country; therefore, it needs to be imported.⁸⁹ During 2013–14, by number, Canada was the most common embarkation point for cocaine detected at the Australian border, with 273 detections.⁹⁰ Highlighting the primary global region of cocaine production (i.e., South America), Chile was the prominent embarkation point by weight, accounting for 129 kilograms cocaine seized in Australia, followed by Brazil with approximately 25 kilograms. The combined weight of these two embarkation points accounted for around 63% of the total weight of cocaine detected at the Australian border during 2013–14.⁹¹

In consideration of the distance required to travel, the estimated prevalence of cocaine use is not particularly low in Australia and New Zealand (Australia, especially) in contrast to consumption levels in other parts of the world that are geographically closer to typical areas of cocaine production. This may be due to the fact that the two countries are high-income countries and have above-average cocaine prices, which is likely attractive to international drug traffickers.⁹² According to the most recent household survey data, around 8% of Australians aged 14 years or over are estimated to have used cocaine during their lifetimes and 2% in the past year,⁹³ with approximately 4% and <1% of New Zealanders aged 16-64 years reporting lifetime and past-year use of cocaine,⁹⁴ respectively. In comparison, the UNODC's most recent (2015) 'best estimate' of past-year prevalence among the North American population was around 1.7%.⁹⁵

Numerous large seizures of cocaine in the Pacific region in recent years have indicated ongoing demand for the drug in at least the developed countries of Oceania; i.e., Australia and New Zealand. The largest occurred in mid-2013 as the result of ongoing collaborations between the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service, the AFP, the United States Drug Enforcement Administration and South Pacific nations (i.e., the Cook Islands, New Caledonia, Tonga and Vanuatu) to investigate organized crime syndicates using nautical vessels travelling through the region with cocaine shipments bound for Australia.⁹⁶ In this instance, 750 kilograms of cocaine was discovered hidden around the keel area of the hull and in the lower engine compartments of a luxury yacht docked in Port Vila, Vanuatu. The haul was estimated to be worth approximately AU\$370 million.⁹⁷

Since 2010, such collaborations between these agencies and nations had reportedly resulted in seizures of almost two tonnes of cocaine destined for Australia.⁹⁸ Other seizures of note in the Pacific region during this time period included:

- Over 200 kilograms hidden in a yacht which ran aground in the northern Vava'u province of Tonga in late 2012. The body of a deceased male was also found aboard the yacht.⁹⁹
- Also in 2012, a small yacht was intercepted near New Caledonia while transporting approximately 200 kilograms of cocaine from South America to Australia.¹⁰⁰

89 ACC. *Cocaine Market in Australia* (2012).

90 ACC. *Illicit Drug Data Report 2013-14* (2015).

91 Ibid.

92 UNODC. *World Drug Report 2016*.

93 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare: *National Drug Strategy Household Survey detailed report 2013*.

94 Ministry of Health: *Drug Use in New Zealand: Key results of the 2007/08 New Zealand Alcohol and Drug Use Survey* (2010).

95 UNODC. *World Drug Report 2015*.

96 AFP. *Media Release: Pacific dragnet intercepts \$370 million worth of cocaine bound for Australia*. 2013.

97 Ibid.

98 Ibid.

99 AFP. *Media Release: Joint South Pacific law enforcement operation results in huge cocaine haul*. 2012.

100 AFP. *Media Release: 200kgs of cocaine seized in Pacific waters*. 2012.

- Four Spanish nationals were arrested following the seizure of 300 kilograms in a yacht in Queensland, Australia in late 2011.¹⁰¹ The yacht had departed from Vanuatu the previous month.
- In 2010, 464 kilograms of cocaine was seized from a yacht docked on Queensland's southern coast.¹⁰² At the time, it was the third-largest seizure of the drug in Australian history.

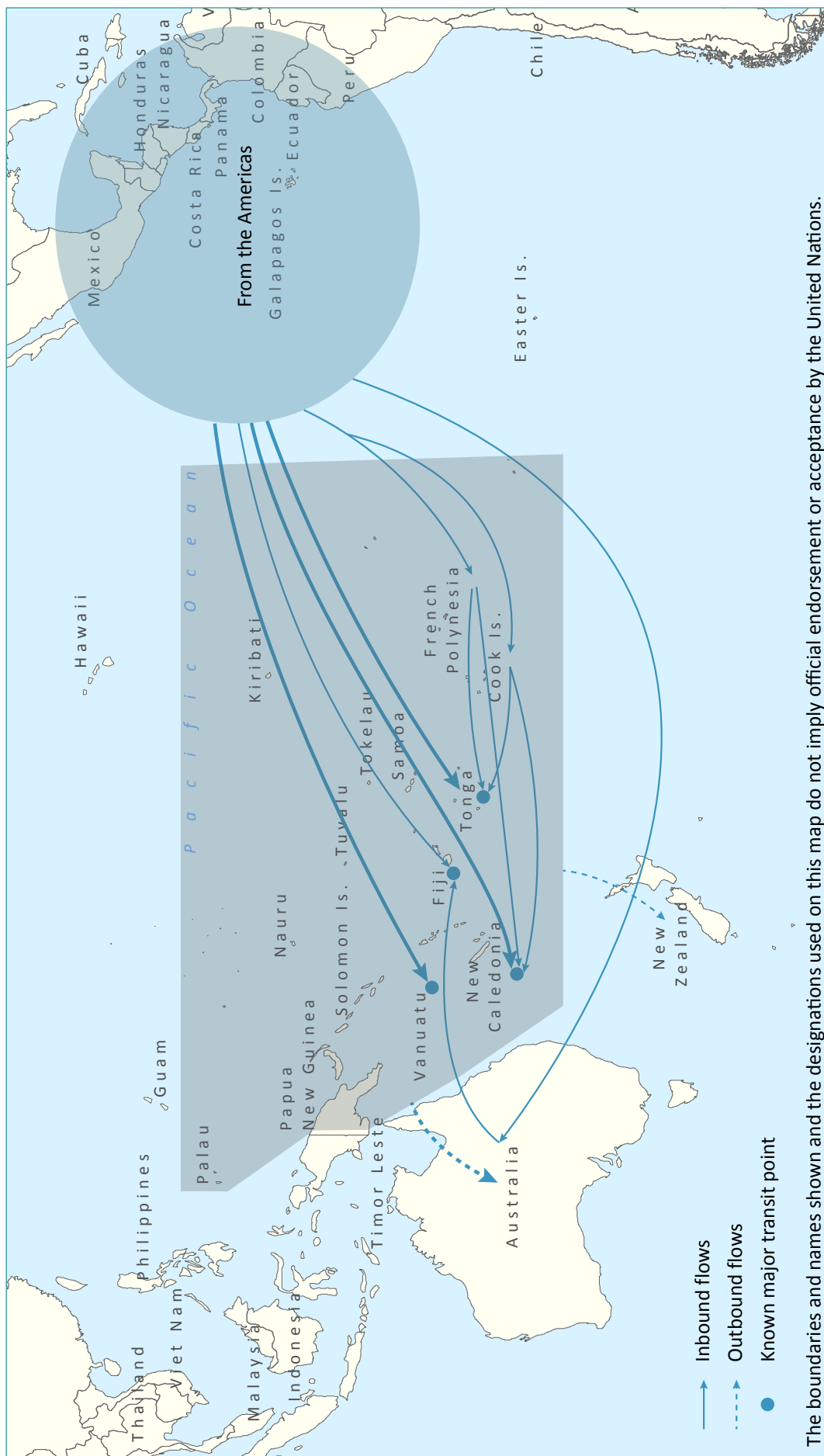
In consideration of a dynamic global cocaine market (e.g., global cultivation of coca bush and coca leaf, and production of cocaine, has generally decreased over the past decade; accordingly, the prevalence of cocaine use in North America and Europe has overall decreased in recent years),¹⁰³ supply reduction measures in North America might increase the threat of cocaine trafficking in the Oceania/Pacific region as destinations such as Australia possibly become more attractive markets to international drug cartels. The issue warrants further monitoring.

101 AFP. *Media Release: Four Spanish nationals arrested for record 300kg cocaine bust.* 2011.

102 AFP. *Media Release: Drug syndicate smashed, 464kg of cocaine seized.* 2010.

103 UNODC: *World Drug Report (2016)*.

Figure 6: Cocaine trafficking routes transiting in or destined to the PICTs as perceived by the PIFS Member States, 2012 – 2014*



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

*Not actual trafficking routes. Perceived origin may not be region of manufacture.

Source(s): UNODC elaboration based on information from 2015 Pacific Transnational Crime Threat Assessments, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS); 2012 Transnational Crime Assessment, Pacific Transnational Crime Network (PTCN); 2013-2014 Transnational Crime Assessment, PTCN; 2014 Transnational Crime Assessment, PTCN.

THE FLOWS

**TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS &
SMUGGLING OF MIGRANTS**

Trafficking in persons & smuggling of migrants¹⁰⁴

In general, human trafficking and migrant smuggling remain high profit/low risk crimes where conviction rates are especially low. The significantly clandestine nature of these activities, particularly given complications in identifying such crimes due to lack of understanding and resources to address these crimes, means it is extremely difficult to generate estimates of the true extent of its occurrence in – and through – specific nations and regions and on a global scale.¹⁰⁵

Historically, Pacific Islanders have moved around the region for purposes relating to exploration, trade, and social reasons.¹⁰⁶ However, reflecting issues relating to the other transnational crimes outlined in this assessment, numerous factors add further complications to preventing, detecting, monitoring and combating human trafficking and migrant smuggling in the Pacific region (e.g., the region's substantial geographic area and nations with porous boundaries). For example, estimates in 2007 suggested that, for the PICTs, there was approximately one immigration employee for every 5,000 visitors, compared to one employee for every 1,000 arrivals in New Zealand and Australia combined.¹⁰⁷ In addition, very few PICTs are signatories to the United Nations *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*, and the *Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Appendices VII and VIII)*.

As far as smuggling of migrants is concerned, an increasing number of PICT border refusals highlights the vulnerability of the Pacific region to irregular people movement¹⁰⁸ (Figure 7). A border refusal – i.e., when a person 'attempting to cross a border is not apprehended, but entrance is simply rejected for the person into the respective country' – occurs when officials reject a traveller's permission to enter a country at the border. These rejections are normally based on an investigative assessment that the subject is a 'non-genuine traveller'.¹⁰⁹ Such refusals would not necessarily indicate there is an increasing number of migrants smuggled or attempted smuggling in the islands, as it is unclear whether migrants would cross the border with the support of a smugglers or individually. Nevertheless, these indicate a demand for an irregular migration that could be captured by professional smugglers.¹¹⁰

104 The United Nations *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons* [Article 3, paragraph (a)] defines 'Trafficking in Persons' (i.e., 'human trafficking') as: "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs" (<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/what-is-human-trafficking.html>). Conversely, the *Smuggling of Migrants Protocol* (Article 3) defines the crime as: "procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident" (https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/smuggling-of-migrants.html#What_is_Migrant_Smuggling)

105 UNODC. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons* (p.68). 2012.

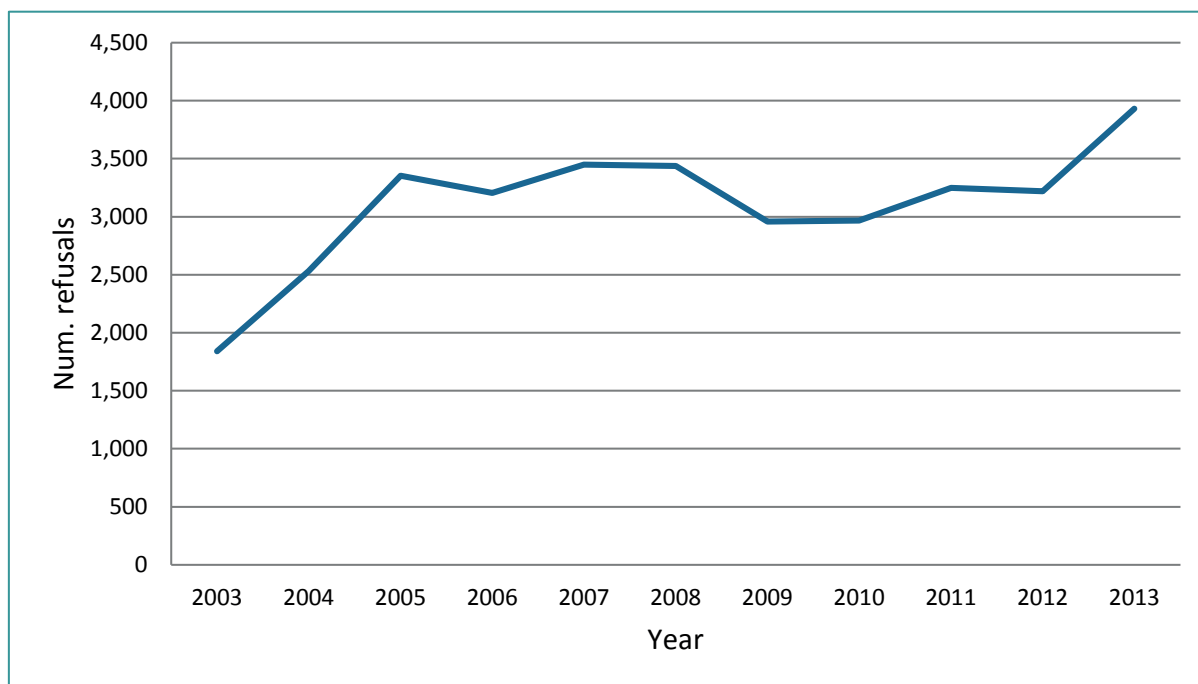
106 PIDC Secretariat in partnership with ACP Migration, *People Smuggling, Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration in the Pacific*, (Kokopo, Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference, 2014).

107 Jacqueline Joudo Larsen, Jade Lindley, and Judy Putt, *Trafficking in persons monitoring report July 2007 – December 2008*, AIC Reports: Monitoring Reports no. 6 (Camberra, Australian Institute of Criminology, 2009).

108 PIDC, *People Smuggling, Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration in the Pacific* (2014).

109 Ibid.

110 Ibid.

Figure 7: Total border refusals (Oceania region), 2003-2013

Source: PIDC

Human trafficking trends

The UNODC's most recent *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons (2014)*¹¹¹ highlights the considerable dearth of available data on such crimes in the region, with only Samoa representing the PICTs within that publication (in addition to Australia and New Zealand for Oceania overall). Further, the Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference (PIDC) acknowledges that few resources are directed towards human trafficking in the Pacific due to a lack of awareness and knowledge about the extent of such activities; labour trafficking (see below) especially remains a misunderstood and hidden phenomenon.¹¹²

Nevertheless, reports indicate that the region is a source, transit point and destination for human trafficking, although possibly on a small scale. In particular, human trafficking in the Pacific is often undertaken for sexual exploitation purposes or to provide labour for local extractive industries,¹¹³ including fishing, logging and mining.¹¹⁴

Recent observations and anecdotal evidence suggest the following key trends:

Potential human trafficking activities associated with sexual exploitation

There are indications that trafficking in persons (TIP) for sexual exploitation possibly occurs in parts of the Pacific region, including in Australia, Fiji, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Tonga, Palau and the Solomon Islands.¹¹⁵ Such activities reportedly have close links to local and regional commercial and extractive industries, including fishing, logging and mining. For example, according to recent US State Department TIP reports,¹¹⁶ trafficking for sexual exploitation is prevalent in PICTs with key port cities such as Kiribati, where crews from foreign fishing vessels allegedly exploit young Kiribati girls and women who engage in sex work on board vessels or in local hotels and bars (see below for additional

111 UNODC. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons (2014)*.

112 PIDC. *People Smuggling, Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration in the Pacific (2014)*.

113 Extractive industries entail the removal of non-renewable natural materials from the earth, such as metals, gas, oil and minerals (U.S. Department of State, 2015).

114 International Labour Office: *Caught at Sea: Forced Labour and Trafficking in Fisheries*. 2013; U.S. Department of State. *Trafficking in persons report*. 2015; UNODC. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2014*; UNODC. *Transnational Organized Crime in the Fishing Industry: Focus on: Trafficking in Persons, Smuggling of Migrants, Illicit Drugs Trafficking*. 2011.

115 PTCN, *Transnational Crime Assessment for 2014 (2015)*.

116 U.S. Department of State. *Trafficking in persons report*. 2015.

information on links between human trafficking and extractive industries such as fishing and logging). It should be noted that such exploitation – and other forms of sex work or transactional sex – is not a definitive indicator of human trafficking (and other transnational organized crimes) per se; rather, these activities might be reflective of certain vulnerabilities experienced by specific subgroups and wider populations in PICTs.

Issues underpinning the vulnerability of children, young people and females in the Pacific region in general include the low availability and high cost of education, widespread financial hardship, limited employment opportunities and limited legislation relating to domestic and child trafficking (PICTs have relied on other legislation which may not be aligned to the specific circumstances).¹¹⁷ In this context, cultural practices can be considered opportunities to source additional income.¹¹⁸ For example, there have been reports of foreigners exploiting the cultural informal adoption system in Fiji (known as ‘sinister adoption’) to access children for sexual exploitation purposes or abuse.¹¹⁹ Accordingly, some women’s groups have expressed concern about the commercial sexual exploitation of children in the Pacific region, with particular concern around sex tourists potentially targeting PICTs due to more robust measures being implemented in ‘sex tourism’ destinations in Asia.¹²⁰

The Republic of the Marshall Islands is reportedly a destination country for young girls and women from East Asia subjected to human trafficking for sexual exploitation.¹²¹ For example, some Chinese women are reportedly recruited with promises of legitimate work and are forced into sex work subsequent to paying considerable recruitment fees.¹²²

The PIDC has observed that recent cases of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Fiji suggest that the source countries for victims of such crimes are broadening.¹²³ Previously, China and the Philippines were typical source countries for people destined for sexual exploitation in the PICTs. However, the emergence of Thailand as a source country for victims is a concern; Thailand has long been a source and destination country for victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, but this had not previously included known movements to the Pacific Islands.¹²⁴

In addition, a situational analysis by Save the Children in 2011¹²⁵ also pointed to a degree of commercial sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of local Fijian children as a result of international visitors. In addition to tourists, businessmen, family members, taxi drivers and crew on foreign fishing vessels have allegedly engaged in the sexual exploitation of Fijian children.¹²⁶ The number of commercial sexual exploitation of children cases reportedly increased in the three years prior to Save the Children’s situational analysis, with limited – or no – options for treatment and rehabilitation for victims. The report noted that Fijian children may also be subjected to forced labour in agriculture, begging, and industrial sectors.¹²⁷

Papua New Guinea is also one Pacific Island nation where local and foreign women and children are subjected to trafficking for sexual exploitation. In the context of indications of child sex work increasing substantially in Papua New Guinea, the U.S. Department of State recently reported that around 19% of the country’s labour market is comprised of child workers, including some whom are subjected to child sex work and forced labour.¹²⁸

117 PIDC: *People Smuggling, Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration in the Pacific*. 2014.

118 Copland, and Kathryn Roberts, *Children Living Away From Parents in the Pacific*, The Columbia Group for Children in Adversity for UNICEF (2010); Jacqueline Joudo Larsen, *The trafficking of children in the Asia-Pacific*, Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice No. 415, (Canberra, Australian Institute of Criminology, 2011); Jacqueline Joudo Larsen, Jade Lindley, and Judy Putt, *Trafficking in persons monitoring report July 2007 – December 2008*, AIC Reports: Monitoring Reports no. 6 (Canberra, Australian Institute of Criminology, 2009).; Save the Children: *Dynamics of Child Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Solomon Islands: Cross Provincial Study*. 2015; UNICEF, UNESCAP and ECPAT. *Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) and Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in the Pacific: A Regional Report*. 2006.

119 Save the Children Fiji. *The Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse of Children in Fiji: A Situational Analysis*. 2005.

120 Ibid.

121 U.S. Department of State. *Trafficking in persons report*. 2015.

122 Ibid.

123 PIDC: *People Smuggling, Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration in the Pacific*. 2014, PIDC Secretariat in partnership with ACP Migration.

124 Ibid.

125 Save the Children Fiji. *The Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse of Children in Fiji: A Situational Analysis*. 2005.

126 U.S. Department of State. *Trafficking in persons report*. 2015.

127 Save the Children Fiji. *The Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse of Children in Fiji: A Situational Analysis*. 2005.

128 U.S. Department of State. *Trafficking in persons report*. 2015.

The Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre (PTCCC; see *Appendix X* for details) has also reported an emerging trend of foreign sex offenders travelling by sea to remote islands across the Pacific region to engage in child sex exploitation.

Figure 8: Common source and destination countries relating to trafficking in persons within, to and from the Pacific region



Source(s): UNODC elaboration based on information from the 2014 Transnational Crime Threat Assessments, PIFS, and the 2015 Trafficking in persons report, U.S. Department of State.

Further links to extractive industries & labours

There have been reports of widespread labour exploitation of individuals from the Pacific region by distant water operators licensed to fish within the waters of PICTs. Such activities possibly have links to human trafficking in and through the Pacific. The PTCCC has advised of a number of incidences where fishermen from Asian countries including China, Indonesia, the Philippines and Viet Nam, in addition to workers from PICTs, have been exploited in the Pacific region on fishing vessels originating from East Asia through deceptive recruitment processes; for example, ‘manning agents’ reportedly recruit poorly educated individuals who are given inaccurate details regarding pay and conditions and provided a contract without proper explanation.¹²⁹ These individuals are further exploited by extremely poor contracts, psychological and physical abuse, withholding of wages and holding of passports, and poor living conditions.¹³⁰

As noted above, such exploitation might be reflective of issues underpinning the socio-economic vulnerability of individuals and families in the Asia-Pacific region, including financial hardship and poverty and limited

129 PIDC: *People Smuggling, Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration in the Pacific*. 2014.

130 Ibid.

employment opportunities. Working in remote locations in the Pacific highlights the vulnerability of foreign nationals in such situations to exploitation, given little opportunity for escape or to alert authorities; for example, fishing vessels may stay at sea for up to two years, transferring their catch to a 'mother ship' during this period.¹³¹

Fiji allows nationals of 132 countries to enter without acquiring a visa; combined with Fiji's role as a regional transportation hub, this possibly contributes to reports of Fiji being a key Pacific transit point for human trafficking, particularly in Asian trafficking routes.¹³² Workers from several countries in East and South-East Asia have – reportedly – been deceptively recruited in their home countries and transited through Fiji or boarded vessels via Fijian waters and ports. Such individuals endure poor living conditions, work for limited or no compensation on foreign fishing vessels in Pacific waters, and accrue debt.¹³³ In the Pacific logging and mining industries there are limited reports of similar abuse occurring, although considerable information gaps exist, partly as a result of the isolated environment where the exploitation allegedly occurs.

Papua New Guinea is also one Pacific Island nation that is a key source and destination country for both local and foreign men, women, and children subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking.¹³⁴ For example, the U.S. Department of State reported that Malaysian and Chinese logging companies and foreign businesspeople reportedly arrange for foreign women – from countries such as China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand – to voluntarily enter Papua New Guinea with fraudulent business or tourist visas.¹³⁵ Following their arrival, many of these women are turned over to traffickers for transport to fisheries, entertainment sites and mining and logging camps, where they are exploited and forced into domestic servitude and sex work which, evidently, is associated with considerable health and safety concerns.¹³⁶ In addition, Chinese, Malaysian, and local men are reportedly subjected to forced labour at logging camps and commercial mines, with some coerced into working for indefinite periods due to debt bondage schemes. Workers' indebtedness is allegedly exacerbated by employers through the payment of extremely low wages, which results in employees purchasing food and other necessities from the employers at exorbitant interest rates.¹³⁷

131 Ibid.

132 U.S. Department of State. *Trafficking in persons report*. 2015.

133 Ibid.

134 Ibid.

135 Ibid.

136 Danielle Lynas, *Health and safety issues faced by women engaged in small scale mining in PNG - could a flexible and informal training program improve their quality of life?*, Proceedings 19th Triennial Congress of the IEA (Melbourne, 2015).

137 U.S. Department of State. *Trafficking in persons report*. 2015.

Migrant smuggling trends

Migrant smuggling in the Pacific region is often facilitated by immigration fraud,¹³⁸ with PICTs viewed as transit points for migrants attempting to enter Australia, New Zealand or the United States.¹³⁹ Although collecting reliable and representative data on the smuggling of migrants continues to be an ongoing challenge in the Pacific, reports of migrant smuggling detections from PIDC members other than Australia and New Zealand have generally been minimal and such activities have therefore not been a significant concern for PICTs at this point in time. For example, the number of migrant smuggling convictions during 2005-2013, as reported by PIDC members, only totalled 22. Further, PIDC member reports of migrant smuggling detections varied between only 30 and 220 detections per year during 2003-2011. However, this figure increased exponentially in 2012 with a record high of 18,000 detections, largely as a result of Australian migrant smuggling data (Australia is reportedly the sole country in the Oceania/Pacific region that is targeted by people smugglers using nautical vessels to transport migrants in large numbers). The gender breakdown of data from 2013 relating to migrant smuggling in the region indicates a high proportion of male adults (over 18 years old), accounting for approximately 70% (15,077 individuals) of the all smuggled people reported by the PIDC members.¹⁴⁰

Most recorded cases of migrant smuggling in the Pacific have been large numbers of people travelling via boat as opposed to the few seeking to enter countries via air.¹⁴¹ For example, in November 2014, the Federated States of Micronesia detected a vessel near Yap carrying 53 individuals, primarily from India and Nepal, who had paid for transit to the United States.¹⁴²

Migrant smuggling routes in the region

Although most travellers to, within and through the Pacific region are genuine visitors, a small percentage seek to exploit legal avenues. Reports suggest that Asian countries remain a primary source of smuggled migrants in the Pacific region.¹⁴³ Fiji is indicated to be a primary transit destination, with other nations such as the Federated States of Micronesia and Palau considered to be key transit points. For example, the northern Pacific's close geographical proximity to Asia and the United States allegedly attracts irregular Asia travellers attempting to enter America.¹⁴⁴

138 Types of immigration fraud reported by PIDC members include false/altered immigration documents (most commonly passports, visas and work permits), genuine immigration documents obtained fraudulently, and false/altered supporting documents and imposters. Falsification/alteration of immigration documents is reportedly the most common type of immigration fraud (PIDC, 2014).

139 PIDC: *People Smuggling, Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration in the Pacific*. 2014.

140 Ibid.

141 Ibid.

142 Government of the Republic of Palau & The PEW Charitable Trusts, *The Republic of Palau Exclusive Economic Zone Strategic Plan: The Next Five Year Plan 2016-2021* (2015).

143 PIDC: *People Smuggling, Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration in the Pacific*. 2014.

144 Ibid.

Figure 9: Common source and destination countries relating to migrant smuggling within, to and from the Pacific region



Source(s): UNODC elaboration based on information from 2014 *People Smuggling, Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration in the Pacific*, PIDC.

Case Study: The commercial sexual exploitation of children in the Solomon Islands

Reflecting similar research conducted elsewhere in the Pacific,¹⁴⁵ during late 2014/early 2015, Save the Children undertook a research study to investigate the contexts of child trafficking¹⁴⁶ and the extent of commercial sexual exploitation of children in the Solomon Islands.¹⁴⁷ Utilising a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods, one key component was the conduct of a household survey with participants from 500 households across three provinces. The household survey data were supplemented by semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, key informant interviews and field observations.

In accordance with the results of previous research which focused on one remote region of the country (i.e., the Arosi Region of Makira Province),¹⁴⁸ this study's findings highlighted potentially strong links between the logging industry and commercial sexual exploitation of children in the Solomon Islands. Specifically, findings from an advocacy training workshop on child trafficking, labour and hazardous work indicated an estimate of six to 12 children and young people aged nine to 16 years (mainly females but some males) who were engaging in sexual activities at most of the logging camps in the Solomon Islands.¹⁴⁹ Teenage girls – particularly those from residences with no other employed household members – reportedly frequented logging camps to work as cooks for the logging company and 'house girls' at loggers' residences. Demonstrating how these roles resulted in sexual exploitation, one focus group participant noted that:

"House girls were the most vulnerable. They worked at the Asians' homes; whenever they came home for lunch or whenever they wanted to have sex, they went home and had sex with the house girls" (p. 54).

One particular issue facilitating such exploitation was the existence of 'solair,' i.e., intermediaries – most commonly young males, but also men and women, from communities neighbouring fishing or logging sites – who 'arrange' local girls for foreign workers in exchange for alcohol, money or other commodities.¹⁵⁰ Such arrangements were reportedly carried out due to requests from foreign workers or local supervisors or managers at fishing and logging companies.

It was observed that corruption across government and private/business domains possibly contributed to exploitation and trafficking practices, with a lack of 'rigorous monitoring' of trade, misconduct and the ethical treatment of affected communities also resulting in few sanctions for offenders. This highlights the need for the strengthening of enforcement capacities at the local and regional level.

Although there have allegedly been reductions of reports related to human trafficking following implementation of the country's *Anti-Trafficking Action Plan (2010 – 2015)*,¹⁵¹ it is unclear whether this is due to a decrease in trafficking activities or under-reporting.¹⁵² Further, suggested amendments

145 Save the Children Fiji. *The Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse of Children in Fiji: A Situational Analysis*. 2005; UNICEF, UNESCAP and ECPAT. *Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) and Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in the Pacific: A Regional Report*. 2006.

146 As noted above, it should be noted that such exploitation is not a definitive indicator of human trafficking (and other transnational organized crimes) per se; instead, these activities might be reflective of certain vulnerabilities experienced by specific subgroups – including children and young people – and wider populations in PICTs. Nevertheless, such reports highlight the need for quality research and preventative measures to appropriately define and counter issues associated with the sexual exploitation of susceptible individuals and groups, including potential links to TIP activities.

147 Save the Children: *Dynamics of Child Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Solomon Islands: Cross Provincial Study*. 2015.

148 Tania Herbert, *Commercial sexual exploitation of children in the Solomon Islands: A report focussing on the presence of the logging industry in a remote region (Solomon Islands, Church of Melanesia, 2007)*.

149 Save the Children: *Dynamics of Child Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Solomon Islands: Cross Provincial Study*. 2015.

150 Ibid.

151 Refer to the report for comprehensive details of the actions comprising the plan.

152 Save the Children: *Dynamics of Child Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Solomon Islands: Cross Provincial Study*. 2015.

to the Plan include an enhanced focus on domestic trafficking and exploitation practices, in addition to increasing prioritisation of protection of trafficking victims (e.g., the requirements for the provision of medical, social and legal assistance and the establishment of 'safe-house' facilities).¹⁵³ Accordingly, the PIDC notes that limited legislation relating to domestic and child trafficking has made it difficult for some PICTs to pursue and prosecute offenders.¹⁵⁴

Environmental crimes

In the context of the region's substantial reliance on natural resources, environmental crimes are among the most serious transnational organized crime types impacting the Pacific. Importantly, law enforcement representatives have indicated that, to combat increasing levels of environmental

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ PIDC: *People Smuggling, Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration in the Pacific*. 2014.

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crimes in the region, PICTs need to enhance regulatory and licensing processes in high-risk sectors (e.g., fisheries, mining, logging/timber, import/export) and strengthen the abilities of local agencies by improving capacity and facilitating information-sharing.¹⁵⁵

Many PICTs are richer in natural marine and terrestrial resources than they are in their capacity to protect them. Rising local demand, the impacts of climate change and growing export markets¹⁵⁶ have placed considerable strain on natural resources that are unique to, or common across, the PICTs; the Western Central Pacific region, for example, accounts for around 15% of the total amount of legal marine capture globally.¹⁵⁷ Importantly (and relevant to the Pacific region), in developing countries, fish consumption tends to be based on locally-sourced and seasonally-available products, with supply steering the fish chain.¹⁵⁸ Indeed, by 2030, the projected per capita fish consumption in East Asia and the Pacific is estimated to be 23.8 kilograms per person per year (compared to the projected global average of 18.2 kilograms per person per year); however, this figure is actually expected to be a decrease from the 2010 amount of 27.1 kilograms per person per year for the region.¹⁵⁹

Table 5: Legal marine capture amounts (tonnes) in the Pacific region and globally during 2012-13*

Region	2012	2013	Variation 2012-13
Western Central Pacific	12,153,101	12,403,755	2.1
Southwest Pacific	600,991	582,393	-3.1
Southeast Pacific	8,298,849	8,550,507	3.0
Global total	79,688,623	80,885,079	1.5

Source: Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (2015)

*Refer to Figure 10 on page 51 for a map depicting the Pacific regions listed in this Table

The situation is further complicated by criminal opportunists, including transnational organized crime groups, who continue to place the global environmental heritage in jeopardy. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)¹⁶⁰ is a key international instrument used to regulate and control trade in species of flora and fauna.¹⁶¹ It has been recognised as one of the more effective regulatory frameworks given that it provides sanctions for non-compliance.¹⁶² Nevertheless, many of the PICTs are yet to become signatories to, or ratify, the Convention (see *Appendix IV*). This may hinder their abilities to counter environmental crimes impacting the region.

The current assessment focuses predominantly on fisheries crimes and timber trafficking in the Pacific region.

Illegal, unreported & unregulated fishing activities

Broadly, fisheries crimes are those conducted by national or foreign vessels which fail to comply with

155 PTCN, Pacific Transnational Crime Assessment 2014 (2015).

156 World Bank. *Fish to 2030: Prospects for Fisheries and Aquaculture*. 2013.

157 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. *FAO Global Capture Production database updated to 2013 - Summary information*(2015).

158 Ibid.

159 World Bank. *Fish to 2030: Prospects for Fisheries and Aquaculture*. 2013.

160 For further information, see <https://cites.org/eng>

161 World Bank. *Fish to 2030: Prospects for Fisheries and Aquaculture*. 2013.

162 Aikman, P: *Using a 30 year old treaty to combat the illegal timber trade*. International forestry review. 2003, 5:307–13; Birnie, P and Boyle, A, *International law and the environment*. 2nd ed. 2002, New York: Oxford University Press.

national and/or international law.¹⁶³ It reportedly results in severe environmental effects via unsustainable fishing practices,¹⁶⁴ in addition to considerable losses for individuals, families and communities and local and regional economies, as well as broader consequences for global food supply and security.¹⁶⁵ In the context of a high dependence upon the fishing sector in the Pacific region (e.g., the overall increase in marine capture in the Western Central Pacific during 2003-2012 was 11.5%),¹⁶⁶ in addition to rising local and international demand and increasingly competitive prices,^{167,168} successfully combating fisheries crimes in the Pacific – and worldwide – is one crucial step in preventing the continued depletion of fish stocks, such as the Pacific Bluefin Tuna, which is currently overfished with a lack of management plans (e.g., modifying catch limits) currently in place to address the issue.¹⁶⁹ Illegal fishing in the Pacific region is not only focussed on the catching of tuna, however, but also on other activities such as shark-finning and corruption in the inshore beche-de-mer (sea cucumber) industry,¹⁷⁰ in addition to non-compliance regarding permits, overfishing and quotas.

Importantly, factors such as the transnational mobility of fishing vessels and limited law enforcement capabilities means that fisheries crimes have been associated with additional transnational organized crimes, including drug trafficking, human trafficking, migrant smuggling (see *Trafficking in persons & smuggling of migrants* for additional details), and forms of corruption.¹⁷¹ For example, the Solomon Islands Financial Intelligence Unit's 2009 *Financial Crime & Money Laundering Risk Assessment* noted that environmental crimes – including fisheries crimes – were the third most common predicate offences of money laundering in the Pacific region.^{172,173}

Using data from specific EEZs, Regional Fishery Management Organisations [RFMOs; including the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)], and key composite studies and country-specific studies, in 2009 Agnew and colleagues¹⁷⁴ were the first to attempt estimating levels of illegal and unreported fishing on a global scale (specifically, 54 EEZs and 15 high sea regions were analysed). The authors generated

regional estimates of illegal and unreported fishing during 2000-2003, in addition to regional trends from 1980 to 2003 (Tables 6 and 7 list estimates and trends for specific Pacific regions, in addition to global

163 For example: Phelps Bondaroff, TN, Reitano, T, and van der Werf, W: *The Illegal Fishing and Organized Crime Nexus: Illegal Fishing as Transnational Organized Crime*. 2015; Wilson, R and Tomkins, K, The Australian approach to combating illegal foreign fishing, in *Transnational environmental crime in the Asia-Pacific: A workshop report (Report of the Public Forum on Transnational Environmental Crime in the Asia Pacific, held at the Australian National University, Canberra, 22 March)*, L. Elliott, Editor. 2007. p. 76-82.

164 Other adverse fisheries crimes-related environmental impacts include abandonment of fishing gear and high seabird mortality (Australian Government Department of Agriculture & Water Resources, 2015).

165 Agnew, DJ, Pearce, J, Pramod, G, Peatman, T, Watson, R, Beddington, JR, and Pitcher, TJ: *Estimating the Worldwide Extent of Illegal Fishing*. PLoS ONE. 2009, 4:e4570; Buchanan, A. *Marau calls for tuna protection*, Solomon Star. 2015: 10 December; MRAG Asia Pacific: *Towards the Quantification of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing in the Pacific Islands Region*. 2016; UNODC: *Transnational Organized Crime in the Fishing Industry: Focus on: Trafficking in Persons, Smuggling of Migrants, Illicit Drugs Trafficking*. 2011.

166 FAO: *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture*. 2014: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3720e/i3720e01.pdf>

167 Australian Government Department of Agriculture & Water Resources, Overview: illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing (2015); Quentin Hanich, "Regional fisheries management in ocean areas surrounding Pacific Islands States", in *Proceedings of the International Seminar on Islands and Oceans*, H. Terashima, Editor. (Tokyo, Ocean Policy Research Foundation, 2010) p. 195-212; Voice of America, Tuna Treaty in Tatters as Falling Prices Squeeze Boat Owners (January 2016).

168 For example, according to the FAO, reflecting extensive fishing by Asian countries, the Northwest and Western Central Pacific (see Figure 10) are the areas with the highest and still-growing catches on a global scale: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3720e/i3720e01.pdf>

169 World Wide Fund For Nature. *Fisheries committee proposals "too little, too late" for Pacific Bluefin tuna*. 2015.

170 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Sea cucumbers: A global review of fisheries and trade*. 2008; National Marine Fisheries Service. *Shark Finning Report to Congress*. 2012; The PEW Charitable Trusts. *Protecting Sharks, Enforcing CITES: A Global Effort* (2015); Urbina, I. *Palau vs. the Poachers*, The New York Times Magazine. 2016; World Wide Fund For Nature. *Tuna fishing countries fail again to ensure that shark finning does not occur in the Western and Central Pacific* (2015).

171 Joe McNulty, "Western and Central Pacific Ocean fisheries and the opportunities for transnational organised crime: Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Operation Kurukuru", *Australian Journal of Maritime and Ocean Affairs*, vol.5, No. 4 (2013), pp. 145-152; UNODC, *Transnational Organized Crime in the Fishing Industry: Focus on: Trafficking in Persons, Smuggling of Migrants, Illicit Drugs Trafficking* (2011).: *Transnational Organized Crime in the Fishing Industry: Focus on: Trafficking in Persons, Smuggling of Migrants, Illicit Drugs Trafficking* (2011).

172 Phelps Bondaroff, TN, Reitano, T, and van der Werf, W: *The Illegal Fishing and Organized Crime Nexus: Illegal Fishing as Transnational Organized Crime* (2015); Solomon Islands Financial Intelligence Unit. *Financial Crime & Money Laundering Risk Assessment* (2009).

173 A predicate offence is an illicit activity that is a component of a more serious crime; i.e., the crime which generates the primary revenue being laundered (Phelps Bondaroff et al., 2015).

174 Agnew, DJ, Pearce, J, Pramod, G, Peatman, T, Watson, R, Beddington, JR, and Pitcher, TJ: *Estimating the Worldwide Extent of Illegal Fishing*. PLoS ONE. 2009, 4:e4570.

figures). The estimated losses of illegal and unreported fishing worldwide in 2003 were between around USD\$4.6 billion and USD\$10.8 billion; however, in consideration of the total estimated value of illegal catch losses and increasing it by the proportion of the total world catch analysed in their research, the authors' lower and upper estimates of the total value of illegal and unreported fishing losses globally rose to between USD\$10 billion and \$23.5 billion annually until 2009, representing between 11 and 26 million tonnes of product¹⁷⁵ (by way of comparison, refer to Table 5 on page 47 for the FAO's statistics regarding legal/recorded marine capture amounts during 2012-13).¹⁷⁶

The considerable impact of fisheries crimes in the Pacific is highlighted by some of the trends outlined in Table 7. For example, the mid-point estimates of illegal and unreported catch in the case study species (as a percentage of reported catch of case study species) remained at or above the average global estimates for the Western Central and Southeast Pacific regions during all of 1980-2003.¹⁷⁷

175 Ibid.

176 FAO, *Global Capture Production database updated to 2013 - Summary information* (2015).

177 Ibid.

Table 6: Summary of regional estimates of illegal fishing averaged over 2000-2003

Region	Reported catch of case study species	Catch of case study species as a percentage of total regional catch	Lower estimate of illegal catch (t)	Upper estimate of illegal catch (t)	Lower estimate of value (US\$m)	Upper estimate of value (US\$m)
Western Central Pacific	3,740,192	36%	785,897	1,729,588	707	1,557
Southwest Pacific	451,677	61%	5,227	32,848	5	30
Global total	39,021,155	46%	5,140,928	12,040,052	4,627	10,836

Source: Agnew et al. (2009)

Table 7: Five-year trends in regional estimates of illegal fishing during 1980-2003; the figures listed are the mid-points between the lower and upper estimates of illegal and unreported catch in the case study species, expressed as a percentage (%) of reported catch of case study species

Region	1980-1984	1985-1989	1990-1994	1995-1999	2000-2003
Western Central Pacific	38	37	37	36	34
Southwest Pacific	10	9	7	7	4
Global total	21	21	21	20	18

Source: Agnew et al. (2009)

Figure 10: Six regions of the Pacific Ocean



Crucially (and more recently), MRAG Asia Pacific¹⁷⁸ attempted the first quantification of the volume, species composition and value of illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing in Pacific tuna fisheries specifically.¹⁷⁹ A ‘bottom up’ approach estimated levels of IUU fishing associated with 11 main risks across four risk categories: i) unlicensed/unauthorised fishing; ii) misreporting; iii) non-compliance with other license conditions; and, iv) post-harvest risks. Estimates of IUU value and volume were developed for the three main fishing sectors, purse seine,¹⁸⁰ tropical longline and southern longline, and then aggregated to produce an overall estimate for tuna fisheries in the Pacific region. Note that quantitative data were lacking for most of the specified outcomes.

For the period 2010 – 2015, the research estimated that the total volume of product either harvested or transhipped involving IUU activity in Pacific tuna fisheries was 306,440 tonnes (with 90% confidence that the actual figure was within a range of 276,546 tonnes to 338,475 tonnes).¹⁸¹ Based on the expected species composition and markets, the ex-vessel value of the best estimate figure was over \$616 million (with a 90% confidence range of between around \$518 million and \$740 million).¹⁸²

Of the four main IUU risk categories listed above, reporting violations and noncompliance with other license conditions (e.g., use of non-prescribed gear) accounted for approximately 54% and 29% of the total estimated IUU volume, respectively. Post-harvest risks (primarily illegal transshipping) accounted for 13% of the estimated volume, but 27% of the estimated value (these findings were driven by higher estimates of illegal transshipping in the longline sectors, which receive proportionally higher prices for product). Unlicensed fishing practices accounted for only four percent of the estimated overall volume.

Further observations and anecdotal evidence also suggest the following key and recent trends:

Ongoing law enforcement concerns

Most PICTs and adjacent high seas pockets remain vulnerable to fisheries crimes (due to the geographical extent of their EEZs, and limited capability to effectively patrol such vast areas). Enforcing agreements on high seas areas requires international cooperation which is often lacking. Recent European Commission action in administering ‘yellow cards’¹⁸³ to the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu has helped to galvanise these countries into taking more effective and immediate domestic actions to better enforce their own laws and uphold the international agreements they have entered into (the Commission withdrew the yellow card against Papua New Guinea in late 2015 due to significant reforms to its fisheries governance system, including “*robust legal and policy frameworks...to fight IUU fishing activities*”).¹⁸⁴

The Republic of the Marshall Islands hosts the world’s third-largest ship registry for ‘flags of convenience.’¹⁸⁵ There are ongoing concerns about the link between flags of convenience and the facilitation of transnational maritime crime, including fisheries crimes. Vanuatu and other PICTs have similar concerns. Vanuatu’s poor management of its vessel register was the primary focus of the European Union’s (EU’s) recent IUU yellow card.

178 MRAG Asia Pacific is an independent fisheries and aquatic resource consulting company dedicated to the sustainable use of natural resources through sound, integrated management practices and policies: <http://www.mragasiapacific.com.au/>

179 MRAG Asia Pacific: *Towards the Quantification of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing in the Pacific Islands Region* (2016).

180 Deploying a large wall of netting around an area or school of fish: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/interactions/gear/purseseine.htm>

181 MRAG Asia Pacific: *Towards the Quantification of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing in the Pacific Islands Region* (2016).

182 Ibid.

183 As the world’s biggest fish importer, the European Union (EU) only allows fisheries products into its market that have been certified as legal by the flag State concerned. When flag States cannot certify their products, the Commission commences a process of assistance and cooperation to improve their legal frameworks. The milestones of this process are initial warnings (yellow cards), green cards if the issues are solved and red cards if they are not (leading to a trade ban): http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-4806_en.htm#_ftn1

184 European Commission. *Fighting illegal fishing: Commission warns Taiwan and Comoros with yellow cards and welcomes reforms in Ghana and Papua New Guinea* (2015).

185 A ‘Flag of convenience’ or ‘open registry’ merchant ship is one that is registered in a country other than the one of ownership (e.g., to avoid regulations of the owner’s country and/or reduce operating costs). In the absence of an internationally-agreed understanding of what the ‘genuine link’ between a Flag State and vessels flying its flag should consist of, there are only limited means to remedy the illegal harvesting activities of such vessels: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/maritimeaffairs_fisheries/consultations/iuu/consultation150107_en.pdf and <http://www.fao.org/3/a-bb094e.pdf>

It is difficult to measure the full extent of the threat that fisheries crimes – in the Pacific and worldwide – pose to global fisheries. The Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)¹⁸⁶ is currently undertaking a detailed analysis of the economic impact of fisheries crimes in the Pacific region. Maritime surveillance agencies across the Pacific note that illegal and unregistered fishing activities are less of a concern compared to underreporting of catches, which is unlikely to be organized crime.

Vietnamese ‘Blue Boats’

Micronesian countries are currently seeing an increase in the number of Vietnamese ‘Blue Boats’ illegally fishing in their respective EEZs; for example, in the first half of 2015, Palau, a PICT renowned for determinedly combating fisheries crimes, seized 15 such boats carrying over 25 metric tonnes of poached marine life, including lobsters, sharks and fins, sea cucumbers and reef fish.¹⁸⁷ Similar vessels have also reportedly been found in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM).¹⁸⁸ According to a media reports, Blue Boats are a significantly different threat from the vessels traditionally used by operators engaging in fisheries crimes, which are typically large multinational companies, who pay fees, transmit location information, and, if caught transgressing, pay fines. Blue Boats are small scale operations, do not pay fees nor transmit location information, and are more ruthless in fishing for sensitive marine life inshore. Micronesian countries anticipate that this threat will continue.¹⁸⁹

Addressing fisheries crimes in the Pacific

In general, addressing the numerous difficulties posed by fisheries crimes is a complex, expensive, resource-intensive and challenging undertaking.¹⁹⁰ Many such difficulties in combating fisheries crimes in the Pacific relate to the vast nautical expanse of the region, the larger size of fishing vessels in the Pacific compared to other parts of the world,¹⁹¹ and local communities relying on illicit fishing for income.¹⁹² The most problematic fishing to police is that which occurs on the high seas, although efforts by the broad-based membership of the WCPFC have made some headway in addressing this problem.¹⁹³ Nevertheless, prosecution of fisheries crimes remains challenging, particularly given that primary jurisdiction is generally with flag-states. Therefore, if foreign vessels are fishing in the waters of Pacific Islands, the primary responsibility to investigate is with foreign authorities. Consequently, collecting evidence for Pacific authorities is difficult. In addition, prosecutors often have no technical capacity in fisheries work and are faced with competing human resource demands. However, through sustained regional programs coordinated by the FFA’s Regional Surveillance Centre in Honiara, PICTs have made significant advances in monitoring fishing activity, including through: a mandatory Vessel Monitoring System (VMS), which has reportedly shown to be a deterrent against fisheries crimes in New Zealand’s EEZ and provide reliable evidence of such activities (in addition to having utility in the broader transnational crime domain);¹⁹⁴ compulsory observer programs with comprehensive (i.e., 100%) coverage of purse seine activity;¹⁹⁵ recent (2015) upgrades to the FFA’s Regional Surveillance Centre;¹⁹⁶ implementation of the Niue Treaty Subsidiary Agreement (NTSA),¹⁹⁷ providing advanced information sharing and interoperability of legal regions and surveillance assets; and, an evolving

186 Based in Honiara at its Regional Surveillance Centre, the FFA strengthens national capacity and regional solidarity so its 17 members (Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu) can achieve optimal social and economic benefits through sustainable use of offshore fisheries resources: <https://www.ffa.int/>

187 Government of the Republic of Palau & The PEW Charitable Trusts, *The Republic of Palau Exclusive Economic Zone Strategic Plan: The Next Five Year Plan 2016-2021*(2015).

188 Ibid.

189 Official communication with delegates from Micronesian countries at 2015 FRSC meeting (June 2015).

190 Miller, DGM, Slicer, N, and Sabourenkov, E: *An action framework to address Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing*. Australian Journal of Maritime and Ocean Affairs(2014), 6:70-88; MRAG Asia Pacific: *Towards the Quantification of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing in the Pacific Islands Region* (2016).

191 UNODC: *Transnational Organized Crime in the Fishing Industry: Focus on: Trafficking in Persons, Smuggling of Migrants, Illicit Drugs Trafficking*.

192 Secretariat of the Pacific Community. *Communities in the Solomon Islands want effective enforcement of sea cucumber ban*.

193 For further information, see <https://www.wcpfc.int/high-seas-boarding-inspection>

194 PILON Secretariat. *Pacific Islands Law Officers’ Network Annual Meeting Outcomes Report*. 11-12 November 2014, Kiribati.

195 Urbina, I. *Palau vs. the Poachers*, The New York Times Magazine (2016).

196 Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA). *Pacific nations benefit from FFA’s new-look Fisheries surveillance centre* (2015).

197 The NTSA ‘provides a robust, legal framework for countries to share resources and exchange fisheries data and intelligence to step up efficiency and save costs when it comes to monitoring fishing vessels in Pacific waters.’ The NTSA has ‘binding legal force’ in countries which have ratified the Agreement: <https://www.ffa.int/node/851>

Monitoring and Compliance Scheme. These efforts are supported by international action including the EU ‘yellow card’ system (see above) and the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing.¹⁹⁸

One example of initiatives designed to detect and respond to fisheries crimes in the Pacific is the United Kingdom government’s *Project Eyes on the Seas*. This project aims to address monitoring gaps by consolidating numerous data layers – including vessels’ electronic transponders, space-based radar and photographic imagery, and databases of oceanographic and environmental data and authorized and blacklisted vessels – to improve the detection of questionable fishing operations in marine reserves around the Pitcairn and Ascension islands in the southern Pacific.¹⁹⁹ The combination of multiple data sources ensures that vessels can be seen regardless of whether their positions are being properly transmitted. Such information is particularly beneficial to resource-poor countries without the capacity to generate and maintain sophisticated monitoring systems. In this context, PICTs that have signed on to the Project include the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa and Tonga to supplement continuing surveillance processes in their waters.

Other wildlife trafficking trends

The UNODC recently estimated the illegal wildlife trade in the East Asia and Pacific region to be worth around \$2.5 billion;²⁰⁰ however, this excluded illegal timber and off-shore fishing activities and was primarily driven by the illicit trade in East Asia (therefore, the actual figure is likely to be larger). Reflecting the issues associated with illicit wildlife trafficking elsewhere in the world, the potential adverse consequences of such a trade in the Pacific are numerous and significant and include: extinction of species (e.g., due to disruption of ecological processes and severe depletion of the marine environment); socioeconomic impoverishment (e.g., due to a reduction in livelihood options for communities and associated impacts on public health); and, corruption (e.g., illicit wildlife trade undermines the rule of law and accountability).^{201,202}

Previous research has reported an extensive illicit trade in endangered species from the PICTs, with Pacific nations allegedly being both source and transit points for such markets.²⁰³ Furthermore, the demand for coral and aquarium fish in countries and regions including China, Europe and the United States has also reportedly been supplied by source countries in the Pacific.²⁰⁴ The high profits from the illegal trade in coral and fish has previously resulted in increasing involvement of large trading companies, particularly Asian-based businesses.²⁰⁵ Collecting marine products for international aquarium industries yields comparatively high profits compared to other types of near-shore wildlife harvesting.²⁰⁶

In general, recent anecdotal evidence indicates that black coral, butterflies, birds, exotic fish and diverse genetic materials are reportedly target species in the Pacific region, with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP)²⁰⁷ attempting to address the issue through enhanced support for the CITES (see above). Limited capacity and prioritisation in PICTs – given the range of other pressing development challenges – regarding wildlife trafficking makes enforcement in this sector difficult and PICTs therefore rely on interception at other jurisdictional borders in many instances. For example, European-based wildlife smugglers were recently apprehended in New Zealand after reportedly investigating measures to smuggling Fiji’s endangered crested iguana to Europe.²⁰⁸

198 The FAO Agreement on Port State Measures was adopted by the FAO Conference in 2009. The Agreement’s primary purpose is to combat IUU fishing activities through the implementation of ‘robust port State measures;’ i.e., port States will effectively apply the Agreement to foreign vessels when seeking entry to, or when in, port: <http://www.fao.org/fishery/psm/agreement/en>

199 Long, T. *Ending Illegal Fishing 2016 Efforts Build on Earlier Gains*, The PEW Charitable Trusts (2016).

200 UNODC: *Transnational Organized Crime in East Asia and the Pacific: A Threat Assessment* (2013).

201 Ibid.

202 Alternatively, corruption as an enabler to environmental crimes, specifically illicit logging and timber trafficking, is discussed on pg. 59.

203 McCusker, R: *Transnational crime in the Pacific Islands: real or apparent danger?* Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice, No. 308 (2006).

204 Olivier, K, World trade in ornamental species, in *Marine Ornamental Species: Collection, Culture and Conservation*, J. Cato and C. Brown, Editors. 2003, Iowa State Press: USA.

205 Green, E and Shirley, F, *The Global Trade in Coral*. 1999, Cambridge, UK: UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre.

206 Balboa, C, The consumption of marine ornamental fish in the United States: a description from US import data, in *Marine Ornamental Species: Collection, Culture and Conservation*, J. Cato and C. Brown, Editors. 2003, Iowa State Press: USA.

207 For further information, see <https://www.sprep.org/>

208 PTCN. *Transnational Crime Assessment for 2014* (2015).

Case Study: Operation Kurukuru: Monitoring, Control & Surveillance of international fisheries in the Pacific Ocean

Fisheries crimes are highly organized, complex, mobile and elusive transnational crimes which undermine the efforts of local, regional and global agencies to sustainably manage fish resources; international cooperation is crucial to effectively combat this problem.²⁰⁹

In this context, Operation Kurukuru is an annual, multi-agency and multi-national operation with the primary goal of detecting fisheries crimes and other transnational crimes in the Pacific Ocean. In addition, it aims to enhance economic, environmental and food security throughout the Pacific region via the sustainable management and harvest of fish stocks.²¹⁰ Operation Kurukuru also provides a unique regional capacity-building opportunity via staff training, development and performance monitoring in areas such as interpreting, analysing and reporting on VMS data and enforcement options.²¹¹

Operation Kurukuru was first undertaken in 2003 involving only four PICTs: Fiji, Tuvalu, Tonga and Vanuatu.²¹² Other countries that have subsequently participated in the annual Operation include various PICTs, such as the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tokelau, along with other nations with specific ties to the region, including Australia, France, New Zealand and the United States. The Area of Operation incorporates millions of square kilometres across many nations' EEZs and adjacent high seas and high sea pockets.

McNulty's published observations relating to Operation Kurukuru in late 2012²¹³ succeeded the adoption of the *Agreement on Strengthening Implementation of the Niue Treaty on Cooperation in Fisheries Surveillance and Law Enforcement in the South Pacific Region* (the 'Niue Treaty')²¹⁴ by the 17 PICT parties to the Treaty on November 2 that year.²¹⁵ This particular operation notably included the well-publicised seizure of more than 200 kilograms of South American cocaine (bound for Australia) on a yacht on an isolated reef off Tonga's coast.²¹⁶ Operations in other years have resulted in fines and the apprehension of vessels as a result of breach of licence conditions and fishing regulations, in addition to the identification of vessels marked for ongoing investigation.²¹⁷ McNulty's research also highlighted issues associated with identifying, monitoring and disrupting these types of fisheries crimes and associated transnational crimes in the Pacific, including vast and complex criminal networks resulting from multinational crews, the geographical isolation of PICTs in general, along with obsolete legislation and procedures and limited resources and capacity to combat and regulate domestic and regional criminal activity. McNulty noted that this contrasts with organized international criminal groups which benefit from wide-reaching networks and ample resources.²¹⁸

209 Australian Government Department of Agriculture & Water Resources. *Overview: illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing* (2015); McNulty, J: *Western and Central Pacific Ocean fisheries and the opportunities for transnational organised crime: Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Operation Kurukuru*. Australian Journal of Maritime and Ocean Affairs (2013).

210 Australian Fisheries Management Authority. *Operation Kuru Kuru tackles illegal fishing in the Pacific*. 2014. Australian Government.

211 McNulty, J: *Western and Central Pacific Ocean fisheries and the opportunities for transnational organised crime: Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Operation Kurukuru*. Australian Journal of Maritime and Ocean Affairs. 2013, 5:145-52.

212 Loanakadavu, N. *Operation Kurukuru ends*. 2014. The Fiji Times ONLINE.

213 McNulty, J: *Western and Central Pacific Ocean fisheries and the opportunities for transnational organised crime: Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Operation Kurukuru*. Australian Journal of Maritime and Ocean Affairs. 2013.

214 Niue Treaty on Cooperation in Fisheries Surveillance and Law Enforcement in the South Pacific Region: http://www.ffa.int/system/files/Niue%20Treaty_0.pdf

215 Australian Government Department of Defence Ministers. *Parliamentary Secretary for Defence – Regional cooperation works to stop transnational crime* (2012).

216 AFP, Joint South Pacific Law Enforcement operation results in huge cocaine haul (November 2012): <http://newsroom.border.gov.au/releases/Joint-South-Pacific-law-enforcement-operation-results-in-huge-cocaine-haul-16-November>

217 Australian Fisheries Management Authority. *Operation Kuru Kuru tackles illegal fishing in the Pacific*. 2014. Australian Government; Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency. *Operation Kurukuru*; Radio New Zealand International. *Pacific maritime operation nabs 12 vessels* (2014).

218 McNulty, J: *Western and Central Pacific Ocean fisheries and the opportunities for transnational organised crime: Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Operation Kurukuru*. Australian Journal of Maritime and Ocean Affairs (2013).

Illicit logging & timber trafficking

Determining accurate levels of the importation, exportation and consumption of illicit timber products is inherently difficult; many countries do not collect data or information or report on seizures of such products, and there are extensive inconsistencies in the ways countries control and regulate the trade, ranging from a lack of monitoring and enforcement measures in some countries, to bans on the importation and/or use of tropical and unsustainably produced timber in others.^{219,220}

Nevertheless, recent estimates suggest that the trade in illicit timber is estimated to cost the world economy between USD 30 and USD 100 billion per year.²²¹ Regarding the PICTs, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community's (SPC's) Land Resources Division²²² acknowledge that forests, trees and timber products in general occupy significant roles in the lives of residents across social, economic, cultural and environmental domains (for example, see Table 8 below for details regarding forest resources/coverage and management within some PICTs).²²³ In this context, in many PICTs, particularly on smaller islands and atolls, agroforestry and tree crops provide much of the food, construction materials, medicines, tools, firewood and numerous other benefits that cannot be replaced with imported alternatives. For larger nations, forests have contributed substantially to economic development in relation to infrastructure development, employment and revenue generated via exporting products; for example, in the Solomon Islands, log exports alone contribute between 50% and 70% of the country's annual export revenue.²²⁴ Thus, in consideration of the need for economic development and the social and environmental requirements of local populations, a significant challenge for PICTs is the sustainable management of forest and tree/timber resources.²²⁵ Illegal logging practices and trade represent a real threat to sustainable natural resources in the Pacific region, especially given that it continues to be a well-reported and significant law enforcement issue for a number of PICTs, particularly Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.²²⁶

Research in the Solomon Islands identified numerous factors that contribute to excessive (i.e., in terms of unsustainability, not simply illicit practices) logging in the region: economic interests; poor employment conditions in the sector; high forest accessibility; resource limitations for forest monitoring; a dearth of information for policy development; and, corruption. Regarding the latter, fraudulent conduct in the logging industry included under-reporting of export volumes, tax evasion through illegal logging, bribery, altering species names (e.g., using the names of species with low market value), and informal agreements between buyers.²²⁷ Indeed, a recent study in Papua New Guinea Regional law enforcement representatives have acknowledged that environmental crimes such as logging, fishing and mining are 'corruption prone' sectors, particularly because they typically operate in isolated or remote areas that are difficult to police and access.²²⁸

Recent, local (national) media in the Solomon Islands reported that the country's Ministry of Forestry is committed to combating illicit logging activities, particularly given indications of a rapid decline in the Solomon Islands' timber resources in the context of the country's heavy reliance on the logging industry for

219 Andreas Schloenhardt, *The illegal trade in timber and timber products in the Asia-Pacific region*, Research and Public Policy Series No. 89 (Canberra, Australian Institute of Criminology, 2008); Randy Stringer, *Protecting Forests and Timber Stocks*, in Victor R. Squires, *The Role of Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in Human Nutrition* (Vol. II) (Oxford, Eolss Publishers, 2009).

220 For example, in the United States, Arizona and New York prohibit the use of tropical timber in public construction projects (Stringer, 2011).

221 World Customs Organisation: *Illicit Trade Report 2014*. 2015, Brussels, Belgium.

222 SPC Land Resources Division, "Forest and Trees": <http://www.spc.int/lrd/our-work/forest-and-trees>

223 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations: *Pacific Forests and Forestry to 2020: Subregional Report of the Second Asia-Pacific Forestry Sector Outlook Study* (2011).

224 Katovai, E, Edwards, W, and Laurance, WF: *Dynamics of logging in Solomon Islands: The need for restoration and conservation alternatives*. Tropical Conservation Science. 2015, 8:718-31.

225 SPC Land Resources Division, "Forest and Trees": <http://www.spc.int/lrd/our-work/forest-and-trees>

226 Katovai, E, Edwards, W, and Laurance, WF: *Dynamics of logging in Solomon Islands: The need for restoration and conservation alternatives*. Tropical Conservation Science. 2015, 8:718-31; Lawson, S: *Illegal logging in Papua New Guinea*. 2014, London: Chatham House; Lawson, *Illegal logging in Papua New Guinea*, (London, Chatham House, 2014); Andreas Schloenhardt, *The illegal trade in timber and timber products in the Asia-Pacific region*, Research and Public Policy Series No. 89 (Canberra, Australian Institute of Criminology, 2008)

227 Katovai, E, Edwards, W, and Laurance, WF: *Dynamics of logging in Solomon Islands: The need for restoration and conservation alternatives*. Tropical Conservation Science. 2015, 8:718-31.

228 PTCN, *Transnational Crime Assessment* (2012).

revenue.²²⁹ Accordingly, the Solomon Islands is one of 11 PICTs which have ratified or acceded to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption in recent years (*Appendix IX*). Nevertheless, while law enforcement agencies reportedly undertake regular enforcement and education tours of logging camps in the Solomon Islands, there remain difficulties in monitoring large volumes of product. As discussed elsewhere in this report, the importance of addressing illicit logging practices and related trade is further highlighted by potential links between this sector and other crimes such as commercial sexual exploitation of children. For example, research on this issue in the Solomon Islands estimated that six to 12 children and young people aged nine to 16 years (mainly females but some males) were engaging in sexual activities at most of the logging camps in the Solomon Islands).²³⁰

With regard to global and regional guidelines and legislation relating to the illegal trade in illicit timber of protected species, CITES is a key instrument under existing international law; it is the sole convention requiring State Parties to penalise illicit trade in protected species, in addition to enabling importing countries to seize illegally-sourced flora, including timber and timber products.²³¹ However, as noted above in relation to fisheries crimes, a number of PICTs are yet to become signatories to, or ratify, the Convention (see *Appendix IV*).

229 Osifelo, E. *Forestry Act to be reviewed*, Solomon Star. 2015: 26 November; Theonomi, B. *Crackdown on Illegal logging*, Solomon Star. 2015.

230 Save the Children: *Dynamics of Child Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Solomon Islands: Cross Provincial Study*. 2015.

231 Schloenhardt, A: *The illegal trade in timber and timber products in the Asia–Pacific region*. Research and Public Policy Series No. 89. 2008, Canberra: AIC.

Table 8: Forest resources and management within select Pacific countries, 2015

Country	Total land area		Forest land area		Forest land area		Area change 2010-2015 (total forest)		Forest under management plan (2015)	
	000 ha	000 ha	000 ha	% of total land	000 ha/year	%	000 ha	% of forest area		
Fiji	1,827	1,017	55.7		+4.9	+0.5	6	1		
Kiribati	81	12	15.0		0.0	0.0	n.s.*	2		
Papua New Guinea	46,312	33,559	72.5		-2.8	0	10,447	31		
Samoa	283	171	60.4		0.0	0.0	-	-		
Solomon Islands	2,799	2,185	78.1		-5.6	-0.3	12	1		
Tonga	72	9	12.5		0.0	0.0	1	13		
Tuvalu	3	1	33.3		0.0	0.0	-	-		
Vanuatu	1,220	440	36.1		0.0	0.0	-	-		

* Not significant (a very small value)

Source: FAO, 2015

Illicit timber trade in Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea is one PICT in particular that is reportedly impacted by illegal logging and related trade practices. A recent (2014) assessment by London's Chatham House provided indications of levels of such dealings in the country through: a review of Papua New Guinea's policy framework and enforcement; wood balance and trade data analysis; and, a review of levels of certification and legality verification.²³² Research results suggested that illegal logging practices were widespread, with most timber production in the country being associated with illicit activities in some way. Reflecting the findings of similar research in the Asia-Pacific region,²³³ such practices reportedly included: substantial breaches of harvesting regulations by concessionaires; licences being issued or extended in breach of regulations, particularly those relating to consultation with indigenous landowners; and, the abuse of licences for clearfelling²³⁴ forest for commercial agricultural plantations. Despite findings indicating widespread illegal logging practices, the assessment indicated that there was relatively little completely unlicensed logging in Papua New Guinea, and little-to-no smuggling of timber abroad. Most of the country's timber was reportedly exported legally in the form of logs to China. While a very small percentage of Papua New Guinea's timber exports were to Europe and the United States, the assessment indicated that this share was declining as a result of increased concerns about illicit logging and import controls.²³⁵

With regard to combating illegal logging practices in Papua New Guinea, the research findings indicated that the country's legal framework for forestry was robust on numerous fronts (e.g., strong checks and balances, including limits to discretionary powers and the involvement of non-government stakeholders in decision-making).²³⁶ However, major failures in implementation and enforcement effectively undermined this framework. Examples of such failures included: minimal enforcement of the law; low penalties; insufficient monitoring resources; corruption (see further details below); and, a lack of best-practice methods in use to detect illicit operations from remote locations. Subsequent research has indicated that transfer pricing (i.e., undervaluing the price of timber that is sold and exported) is occurring in Papua New Guinea's logging industry, resulting in an estimated loss of tax revenue that possibly exceeds USD \$100 million per year.²³⁷

Though the Government of Papua New Guinea has the robust legal framework to combat illegal logging practices, it is not sufficient when enforcement measures are unable to support or enforce it. For this reason, this report recommends enhancing local and regional enforcement capacities. This will be returned to in the final section.

Corruption related to timber industries

Corruption is one key factor impacting forest degradation and facilitating illicit logging practices and related trade.²³⁸ According to the FAO, additional adverse outcomes from corruption (specifically in relation to logging/timber industries) may include the reduction of government revenue from taxes and royalties and taxes; the suppression of licit timber prices; rising transaction costs due to the need for further procedural auditing and graft payment costs; and, undermining confidence in forestry and law enforcement agencies and governments.²³⁹ Further to the illicit logging-related practices outlined above, forest-related corruption can include the laundering of illicit proceeds, tax evasion and fraud.

232 Lawson, S: *Illegal logging in Papua New Guinea*, London, Chatham House (2014).

233 Schloenhardt, A: *The illegal trade in timber and timber products in the Asia-Pacific region*. 2008, Canberra: AIC.

234 I.e., the removal of trees from an area licensed for harvesting/logging: <http://www.forestnetwork.net/Docs/clearf.htm>

235 Lawson, S: *Illegal logging in Papua New Guinea*. 2014.

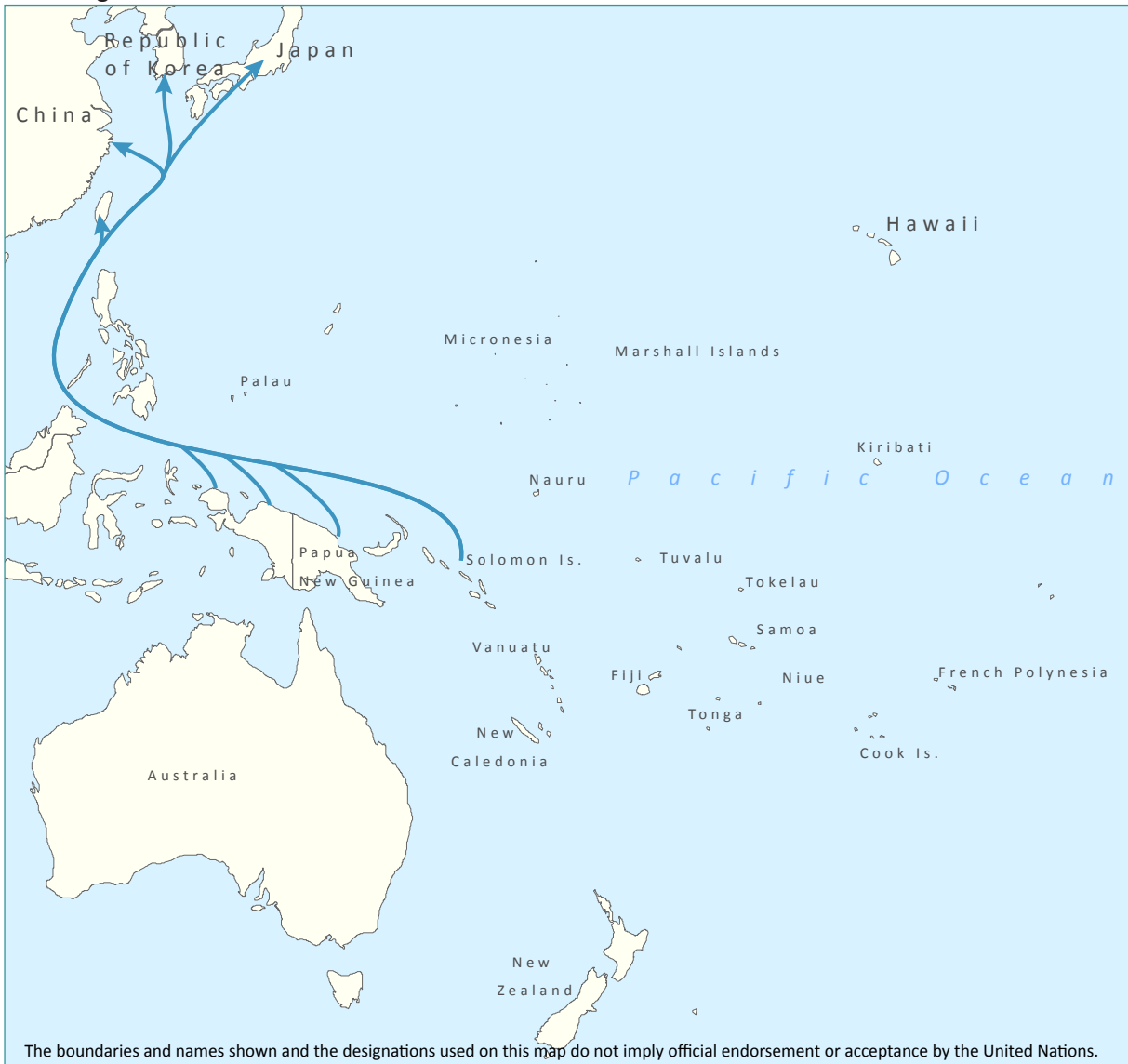
236 Ibid.

237 Oakland Institute. (2015). *The Great Timber Heist: The Logging Industry in Papua New Guinea*. Oakland, California: The Oakland Institute.

238 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations: *Pacific Forests and Forestry to 2020: Subregional Report of the Second Asia-Pacific Forestry Sector Outlook Study* (2011).

239 Ibid.

Figure 11: Key source and destination countries, and trafficking routes, for illicit timber products in the Asia-Pacific region



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Source: UNODC, *Transnational Organized Crime in East Asia and the Pacific – A Threat Assessment, 2013*.

THE FLOWS

TRAFFICKING OF SMALL ARMS

Trafficking of small arms

Firearms, armed violence²⁴⁰ & related crimes in the Pacific

Unlike other illicit commodities discussed in the report, small arms are durable goods; a well-maintained pistol could last indefinitely. Therefore, there is a little need for persistent trafficking flows of small arms.²⁴¹ This point is more apparent for PICTs given their relatively small populations. Trafficked small arms could cause serious adverse impacts such as increases in armed violence and prolonging conflicts. In this context, this chapter is not limited to examining the trafficking flows of small arms, but also threats posed to PICTs as a result of that challenge.

There are numerous instances of firearm involvement throughout the Pacific in armed violence and the commission of crimes.²⁴² Civil conflict involving firearms in PICTs such as Fiji and the Solomon Islands during the past two decades²⁴³ highlights the substantial and detrimental impacts that the availability and use of such weapons can have on Pacific societies.²⁴⁴ Further, levels of armed violence in urban areas of Papua New Guinea such as Goroka, Lae and Port Moresby are now some of the highest worldwide.²⁴⁵ This might be in part related to the high rate of homicides in the country. For instance, the most recent rate of international homicides²⁴⁶ per 100,000 population in Papua New Guinea (2010) was 10.4, higher than any other neighbouring countries in Melanesia (Fiji: 4.0, Solomon Islands: 4.3 and Vanuatu: 2.9 in 2012).²⁴⁷ In Papua New Guinea, insecurity is reportedly fuelled by the use of firearms in armed hold-ups, robberies and gender-based and sexual violence. In addition, organized criminal gangs involved in illicit and antisocial behaviours (e.g., drug trafficking, gambling and sex work) represent a challenge for local law enforcement given that they are well-armed. Such issues highlight the importance of developing and implementing effective arms controls to counter the high prevalence of arms used for criminal purposes.²⁴⁸

Firearms ownership and registration in the Pacific

The data presented in Table 9, obtained via GunPolicy.org²⁴⁹ and sourced from relevant literature with publication dates ranging from 1999-2014,²⁵⁰ highlight the diverse quality and quantity of information relating to firearm ownership and registration in the PICTs.

240 'Armed violence' is defined by the United Nations (as per the Armed Violence Prevention Programme) as, 'the intentional use of physical force, threatened or actual, with arms, against oneself, another person, group, community or state that results in loss, injury, death and/or psychosocial harm to an individual or individuals and that can undermine a community's, country's or region's security and development achievements and prospects' (<http://www.genevadeclaration.org/fileadmin/docs/UNSG-Report-Armed-Violence.pdf>)

241 UNODC, "The Globalization of Crime – A Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment" (2010).

242 Lewis, H. *Arms and Ammunition in Oceania: A guide for Pacific Governments* (2015).

243 Fraenkel, J, *The Manipulation of Custom: From Uprising to Intervention in the Solomon Islands* (2004), Wellington: Victoria University Press; Reilly, B. *Trouble in 'paradise': the Africanisation of the South Pacific*. *Policy: A Journal of Public Policy and Ideas*, 17:3-7 (2001).

244 Lewis, H. *Arms and Ammunition in Oceania: A guide for Pacific Governments* (2015).

245 Ibid.

246 "Intentional Homicide" means unlawful death purposefully inflicted on a person by another person.

247 UNODC, *Global Study on Homicide* (2013).

248 Lewis, H. *Arms and Ammunition in Oceania: A guide for Pacific Governments* (2015).

249 GunPolicy.org is hosted by the Sydney School of Public Health, University of Sydney, and funders include the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR). The site publishes available evidence from hundreds of jurisdictions, enabling comparisons of firearm regulation, gun-related violence and arms trafficking activities worldwide.

250 Alpers, P and Twyford, C. *Small Arms in the Pacific*. Occasional Paper No. 8 (A publication of the Small Arms Survey). 2003; Buchanan, K: *Statistical Information and Analysis - Firearm Numbers*. Firearms-Control Legislation and Policy: Australia. 2013; Dawson, C: *Australian Firearm Market*. ACC, Submission No. 75 to Senate Committee: Inquiry into the Ability of Australian Law Enforcement Authorities to Eliminate Gun-Related Violence in the Community; Submission No. 75 (Sections 10,11,12,13), p. 3. 2014; Fiji Police: *Summary of Firearms by Category*. Police Fact Sheet (1 May). 2001; GunPolicy.org: *Calculated Rates - Australia (Possession Data)*. Historical Population Data - USCB International Data Base. 2014; GunPolicy.org: *Calculated Rates - Fiji*. Historical Population Data - USCB International Data Base. 2011; GunPolicy.org: *Calculated Rates - New Caledonia*. Historical Population Data - USCB International Data Base. 2015; GunPolicy.org: *Calculated Rates - Northern Mariana Islands*. Historical Population Data - USCB International Data Base. 2011; GunPolicy.org: *Calculated Rates - Papua New Guinea*. Historical Population Data - USCB International Data Base. 2011; Maze, K and Issar, Y. *International Assistance for Implementing the UN Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects: Case Study of the South Pacific*. 2009; Morini, D. *Comment Désarmer La Brousse?*, Centre pour le Destin Commun. 2013; Radio New Zealand International. *New Caledonia Opposed to Tighter Gun Laws*, 2014; UN Crime Prevention & Criminal Justice Division: *Analysis of Country Responses*. United Nations International Study on Firearm Regulation. 1999, Vienna: UN Crime Prevention & Criminal Justice Division; Warner, N: 'Operation Helpem Fren: Rebuilding the Nation of Solomon Islands' RAMSI's mandate: Speech to National Security Conference. 2004, Canberra: RAMSI.

Recent observations and anecdotal evidence also suggest the following key issues:

Trends in firearms trafficking

Similar to other transnational criminal activities, a general lack of data means it is difficult to identify and monitor trends in firearms trafficking within and through the Pacific region. Historically, claims of ‘widespread smuggling’ in the region have often lacked supporting evidence.²⁵¹ Overall, however, available reports indicate that, in many – possibly, most – PICTs, firearms trafficking appears to be occurring only on a very small scale. Reported cases of weapons and ammunition trafficking in the Pacific over the last two decades include illicit importation of ammunition into Niue (from New Zealand)²⁵² and the Northern Mariana Islands (from the United States),²⁵³ in addition to the discovery of various firearms ranging from shotguns to rifles and an AK-47 in American Samoa between 2008 and 2012.²⁵⁴ Further, in late 2014, an organized crime syndicate was caught attempting to export firearms from Australia into Papua New Guinea, and (concurrently) methamphetamine precursor substances from Papua New Guinea into Australia.²⁵⁵

Nevertheless, some PICTs (including Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Tonga) have expressed concern that firearms trafficking is increasing and possibly leading to instability and insecurity in their countries. For example, anecdotal reports point to increased use of guns in tribal confrontations in the highlands in Papua New Guinea²⁵⁶ (see also the *Case Study* on pg.67). In Samoa, smuggled firearms seized by border agencies have primarily been small arms and hunting rifles for personal use.

There has been significant reporting of small arms trade between Bougainville and Solomon Islands. Given the disarming of Solomon Islands in 2003 with the arrival of the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI),²⁵⁷ together with the large number of firearms currently believed to be in Bougainville, it is likely that most of this trade is flowing from Bougainville to Solomon Islands and not in the opposite direction. While it is likely that not all firearms in the Solomon Islands were surrendered in 2003, despite the data presented in Table 9, the remaining firearms in Solomon Islands are not believed to be in significant numbers.²⁵⁸

Recent reports from the Pacific Small Arms Action Group (PSAAG)²⁵⁹ indicate that, while private firearm ownership across the Pacific is almost uniformly quite low (i.e., less than one firearm per 100 people), New Caledonia presents a contrast, with firearm ownership at around 48 per 100 people.²⁶⁰ Gun sales to New Caledonians have reportedly increased at a significant rate since 2011, when the French government liberalized arms sales to the PICT (ostensibly for hunting purposes).²⁶¹ However, anecdotal information points to an increase in weapons purchasing due to the risk of civil conflict (New Caledonia is currently undergoing a tense political transition that will endure until 2018, as citizens are called to vote on whether to become independent or to remain a French territory. A civil war erupted in the country in 1984 as a result of this same issue that lasted until 1988).²⁶² In addition to the inherent law enforcement challenges and risks to population safety and social and economic stability, this situation could have implications relating to the movement of ammunition across the region. The issue warrants ongoing monitoring.

251 Alpers, P and Twyford, C. *Small Arms in the Pacific*. 2003.

252 PacNews. *Government to Discuss Gun Control*, 2001.

253 Saipan Tribune. *Search Warrant Covers House of Acting Police Director*, 2006.

254 Feagaimaalii-Luamanu, J. *DPS Makes the Case for Arming the Police*, Samoa News. 2014.

255 AFP. *Media Release: Police seize ‘ice’ precursor, firearms and cannabis crops, eight people charged*. 2014.

256 For example: Wilson, C. *Gun violence rises in Papua New Guinea*, Asia Times Online. 2012.

257 Fraenkel, J, *The Manipulation of Custom: From Uprising to Intervention in the Solomon Islands*. 2004.

258 Ibid.

259 Pacific Small Arms Action Groups: <http://www.psaag.org>

260 In terms of rates of violent crime, the most recent data regarding homicides in the UNODC’s *Global Study on Homicide (2013)* indicated a rate of 3.3 intentional homicides per year 100,000 population in New Caledonia in 2009.

261 Morini, D. *New Caledonia: The Crisis America Isn’t Going to Do Anything About*, The National Interest. 2014.

262 Ibid.; Ware, H: *Demography, Migration and Conflict in the Pacific*. Journal of Peace Research. 2005, 42:435-54.

Table 9: Most recent (available) estimates of numbers of privately owned, licensed and registered firearms, and corresponding rates per 100 persons, for PICTs, Australia and New Zealand

	Num. privately owned* firearms (rate/100 pop.)	Num. licensed firearm owners (rate/100 pop.)	Num. registered firearms (rate/100 pop.)
American Samoa	250 (0.4)	250 (0.4)	250 (0.4)
Australia	3,050,000 (15.0)	730,000 (3.32)	2,750,000 (12.49)
Cook Islands	860 (2.5-6.6)	-	500 (3.3)
Fiji**	4,000 (0.5)	1,399 (0.17)	1,538 (0.19)
French Polynesia	610 (0.25)	-	-
Kiribati	8 (0.008)	-	8
Marshall Islands (Republic of the)	30 (0.05)	-	30
Micronesia (Federated States of)	612 (0.49)	-	612
Nauru	0	-	-
New Caledonia	100,000-150,000 (37.88- 58.59)	-	54,500 (20.64)
New Zealand	925,000-1,200,000 (22.6)	237,684 (5.45)	43,800 (1.03)
Niue	397 (19.85)	-	397
Northern Mariana Islands (Commonwealth of)	1,990 (2.55)	-	1,990 (2.52)
Palau	0	-	-
Papua New Guinea**	71,000 (1.2)	-	27,043 (0.5)
Samoa	17,845 (8.2)	-	17,845
Solomon Islands	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Timor Leste**	3,000 (0.3)	-	-
Tonga	800 (0.79)	-	800
Tokelau	-	-	-
Tuvalu	12 (0.12)	-	12

	Num. privately owned* firearms (rate/100 pop.)	Num. licensed firearm owners (rate/100 pop.)	Num. registered firearms (rate/100 pop.)
Vanuatu	4,700 (2.27)	-	4,700
Wallis and Futuna	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Summary data from numerous publications from 1999-2014 compiled by GunPolicy.org²⁶³

*Both *licit and illicit*

**In a comparison of the rate of private gun ownership in 178 countries in 2007, Fiji was ranked at No. 169, Papua New Guinea was ranked at 145 and Timor-Leste ranked at 177 (Source: Karp, 2007)

Relevant frameworks & legislation

Notably, of Australia, New Zealand and all the PICTs, at the time of writing only Nauru had ratified the *United Nations Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (see Appendix X)*. However, the regional *Nadi Framework and Pacific Islands Forum Model Weapons Control Bill (2010 Revision)* was developed by Pacific representatives for PICTs and indicates that efforts are being made to counter the adverse impacts of firearms-related violence and small arms trafficking within – and through – the region. The Nadi Framework, adopted via a unanimous vote by Pacific Islands Forum members in 2000, commits members to implement legislative measures that criminalise the illicit manufacturing, trafficking, sale and possession of firearms, ammunition and other related materials. In addition, the Pacific Model Weapons Control Bill was – broadly – designed to assist states with improving arms control.²⁶⁴

263 Alpers, P and Twyford, C. *Small Arms in the Pacific*. Occasional Paper No. 8 (A publication of the Small Arms Survey). 2003. Available from: <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/B-Occasional-papers/SAS-OP08-Pacific.pdf>; Buchanan, K: *Statistical Information and Analysis - Firearm Numbers*. Firearms-Control Legislation and Policy: Australia. 2013, Washington, DC: Law Library of Congress (USA); Dawson, C: *Australian Firearm Market*. Australian Crime Commission, Submission No. 75 to Senate Committee: Inquiry into the Ability of Australian Law Enforcement Authorities to Eliminate Gun-Related Violence in the Community; Submission No. 75 (Sections 10,11,12,13), p. 3. 2014, Canberra: Australian Crime Commission; Fiji Police: *Summary of Firearms by Category*. Police Fact Sheet (1 May). 2001, Nadi: Fiji Police; GunPolicy.org: *Calculated Rates - New Caledonia*. Historical Population Data - USCB International Data Base. 2015, Suitland, MD: US Census Bureau Population Division; GunPolicy.org: *Calculated Rates - Australia (Possession Data)*. Historical Population Data - USCB International Data Base. 2014; GunPolicy.org: *Calculated Rates - Papua New Guinea*. Historical Population Data - USCB International Data Base. 2011; Maze, K and Issar, Y. *International Assistance for Implementing the UN Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects: Case Study of the South Pacific*. 2009. United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research. Available from: <http://www.unidir.org/files/publications/pdfs/international-assistance-for-implementing-the-un-poa-on-the-illicit-trade-in-small-arms-and-light-weapons-in-all-its-aspects-case-study-of-the-south-pacific-en-256.pdf>; Morini, D. *Comment Désarmer La Brousse?*, Centre pour le Destin Commun. 2013: 26 August; Radio New Zealand International. *New Caledonia Opposed to Tighter Gun Laws*, Radio New Zealand International (Shortwave). 2014. Available from: <http://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/240683/new-caledonia-opposed-to-tighter-gun-laws>; UN Crime Prevention & Criminal Justice Division: *Analysis of Country Responses*. United Nations International Study on Firearm Regulation. 1999, Vienna: UN Crime Prevention & Criminal Justice Division; Warner, N: 'Operation Helpem Fren: Rebuilding the Nation of Solomon Islands' RAMSI's mandate: Speech to National Security Conference. 2004, Canberra: RAMSI.

264 Lewis, H. *Arms and Ammunition in Oceania: A guide for Pacific Governments*. 2015. Pacific Small Arms Action Group.

Case Study: Use of firearms in the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea

Less than a decade following the end of the Bougainville independence struggle ('Bougainville Conflict' or 'Bougainville Civil War') in the east of the country,²⁶⁵ and reflecting reports of relatively low levels of arms trafficking within and through the Pacific region, research published in 2005 indicated that very few of the thousands of firearms in the Southern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea had been smuggled from foreign nations; instead, local defence and law enforcement personnel had supplied the most destructive firearms used in crime and conflict.²⁶⁶

Gun-running from other parts of the country to the region was reportedly financed and enabled by civil servants and politicians – from even the highest levels of government – as attempts to intimidate and impress both rivals and voters. Indeed, an audit in August, 2004, of remaining Papua New Guinea Defence Force small arms indicated that 16% were 'unaccounted for' (five times the amount of any previous estimate of military losses).²⁶⁷

In consideration of constant high demand for 'military-style assault weapons' in the Southern Highlands, this research highlighted the substantial contribution to social disadvantage and adverse impacts on human life as a result of such firearms being readily available. For example, although residents of the region owned considerably (30 – 50 times) fewer factory-made firearms per capita in comparison to Australians or New Zealanders, such weapons were sourced almost entirely for use against other humans (i.e., as opposed for use against wildlife). Consequently, illegal, factory-made firearms in the Southern Highlands Province were several times more likely to be involved in homicides compared to similar weapons in the world's highest-risk countries, primarily Columbia, Ecuador, Jamaica and South Africa.²⁶⁸

In recent years, reports of gun violence in the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea are more rare.²⁶⁹ This change has been at least partly attributed to an Australian-led policy of reducing the availability of ammunition exports to the country.²⁷⁰ Recent research and anecdotal evidence from law enforcement in the Southern Highlands suggests that most illegal firearms in the region are trafficked into Papua New Guinea from Indonesia.²⁷¹

Notably, subsequent to a recommendation tabled in the country's Parliament in 2011, in 2014 local media reported that the Papua New Guinean Cabinet was intending to propose new legislation to prohibit the possession and use of guns among the general population (i.e., excluding law enforcement personnel).²⁷² Such legislation could impact levels of firearms trafficking into Papua New Guinea.

265 Regan, AJ: *Causes and course of the Bougainville conflict*. The Journal of Pacific History. 1998, **33**:269-85; Wilson, C. *Gun violence rises in Papua New Guinea*, Asia Times Online. 2012.

266 Alpers, P: *Gun-running in Papua New Guinea: From Arrows to Assault Weapons in the Southern Highlands*. A publication (Special Report) of the Small Arms Survey. 2005, Geneva.

267 Ibid.

268 Ibid.

269 For example: Radio New Zealand International. *Gun violence rears its head in PNG's Southern Highlands*, 2016; Radio New Zealand International. *PNG police confirm grenade used in tribal violence that killed 14*, 2013.

270 Alpers, P: *Gun-running in Papua New Guinea: From Arrows to Assault Weapons in the Southern Highlands*. 2005; Radio New Zealand International. *Restrictions on ammunition exports to PNG reduces availability of bullets*, 2005.

271 Firth, S: *Security in Papua New Guinea: The Military and Diplomatic Dimensions*. Security Challenges. 2014, **10**:97-113; Radio New Zealand International. *Gun violence rears its head in PNG's Southern Highlands*, 2016.

272 The National. *New law to ban guns*, 2014: 17 February.

THE FLOWS

OTHER TRANSNATIONAL CRIMES

Other transnational crimes

Counterfeit goods

Counterfeit goods, commonly including DVDs and fake designer handbags, are widely available in many parts of the Pacific region, including tourist hubs such as Fiji and Vanuatu. Continually-increasing digital/internet connectivity in the Pacific region reportedly facilitates the transfer of counterfeit media including music, movies and pornography.

The trade of counterfeit goods can produce some serious negative outcomes for the Pacific region and the world, including:

- Circulation and increased availability of dangerous goods;
- Perpetuation of exploitative working conditions;
- Loss of government revenue;
- Promotion of corruption; and
- In the case of fraudulent medicine, the cultivation of treatment-resistant microbial strains of disease (see below).

Adding to the issues listed above, there are broader concerns about stores selling counterfeit goods in the Pacific being used as 'fronts' for other organized crime activities.

Illicit & counterfeit pharmaceuticals

Some PICTs have recently raised concerns about the increasing availability of counterfeit medications. Indeed, the World Customs Organisation's most recent *Illicit Trade Report* indicated that illicit medicines accounted for almost half of the total number of seized commodities traded on a global scale in 2014 in terms of number of pieces; out of a total number of 118,773,296 commodity pieces intercepted in 2014, 113,719,528 (approximately 49%) were pharmaceutical products, with analgesics (painkillers) being the most frequent type of pharmaceutical seized during that year.²⁷³

Reflecting ongoing issues in other regions of the world, including nearby South-East Asia,²⁷⁴ in the Pacific region, the sale of counterfeit medications has been identified as a public health concern. Specifically, in a region with a high prevalence of malaria,^{275,276} fraudulent²⁷⁷ and substandard malaria drugs preclude a significant reduction in the burden of malaria disease.²⁷⁸ The private sector is a crucial factor in preventing, diagnosing and treating malaria in many countries in the Asia-Pacific region, via both formal and informal sectors. Most of the finances for malaria control come directly from users at point-of-sale. This model favours those producing inexpensive and often substandard antimalarial products.²⁷⁹ Importantly, local PICT governments have limited capacity to regulate the private sector; consequently, there is inconsistent availability of quality, effective medicines for malaria in the context of widespread and fraudulent pharmaceuticals, poor prescribing practices, and exorbitant costs in the private sector.²⁸⁰ Previous research on trafficking of fraudulent artesunate products identified Asia²⁸¹, a region increasingly connected to PICTs, as a primary source of such products, and it could pose a further challenge to PICTs.

273 World Customs Organisation: *Illicit Trade Report 2014*. 2015.

274 Karunamoorthi, K: *The counterfeit anti-malarial is a crime against humanity: a systematic review of the scientific evidence*. Malar J. 2014, **13**:209; Newton, PN, Fernandez, FM, Plancon, A, Mildenhall, DC, Green, MD, Ziyong, L, Christophel, EM, Phanouvong, S, Howells, S, McIntosh, E, Laurin, P, Blum, N, Hampton, CY, Faure, K, Nyadong, L, Soong, CW, Santoso, B, Zhiguang, W, Newton, J, and Palmer, K: *A collaborative epidemiological investigation into the criminal fake artesunate trade in South East Asia*. PLoS Med. 2008, **5**:e32.

275 World Health Organization: *World Malaria Report 2015*. Geneva, Switzerland: WHO.

276 In the Western Pacific Region, around 730 million people are at some risk for contracting malaria, with 30 million at high risk. Transmission of the vector-borne disease is highest in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu: <http://www.who.int/malaria/publications/world-malaria-report-2015/wmr2015-profiles.pdf>

277 In this instance, 'fraudulent' or 'falsified' medicines include purported medicines with inert contents, those which are less than, more than or different from what is indicated, or those which have expired: https://www.unodc.org/documents/organized-crime/FM/Resolution_20_EN.pdf

278 Lynch, C. *Access to Quality Medicines and Other Technologies Task Force: Asia-Pacific Burden, Success and Challenges*. 2014. Asia Pacific Leaders Malaria Alliance.

279 Ibid.

280 Ibid.

281 For further information, see UNODC, *The Globalization of Crime: A Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment* (2010).

Media discourse has recounted the issue in recent years, highlighting the numerous and considerable costs to individuals, families and communities worldwide, and in Pacific locations such as Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, as a result of fraudulent medicine distribution and consumption. Such effects reportedly include treatment failure, adverse physical symptoms, drug resistance and death.²⁸²

Cybercrime

Cybercrime, or internet-enabled crime, includes but is not limited to: identity crime; scams facilitated through email and social networking sites; sex offences; fraud; and the coordination of criminal activity through 'Voice over Internet Protocol' software (e.g., 'facetime,' Skype) via computers or mobile devices connected to the internet. Such crimes can transcend geographical boundaries and national jurisdictions, thereby facilitating a greater distance between offenders and victims (relative to some other crimes) and improving the likelihood of offender anonymity, in addition to presenting unique and difficult challenges for law enforcement agencies in relation to preventing, detecting, investigating and prosecuting such crimes.

The expansion of internet services across the Pacific has reportedly led to an uptake in usage by local businesses and communities. For example, an estimated 60% of all Pacific Islanders now have access to a mobile phone.²⁸³ The availability of mobile internet services in particular have changed the way users access and utilise online services, with mobile internet speeds beginning to supersede computer-enabled internet connections in some locations.²⁸⁴ As noted above, although improved digital connectivity enhances opportunities for social and economic development in the Pacific region, it also increases the vulnerability of PICTs to transnational criminal activities.

Along these lines, criminals are reportedly using the internet to build trust and source confidential details to access the bank accounts and identification information of Pacific Islanders that can be used for other crimes (although this is not a new form of cybercrime on a global scale, enhanced connectivity in the Pacific means such activities pose a risk for individuals who previously did not have access to email and other internet services). For example, there have been reports of individuals in Samoa willingly providing their bank account details to unknown persons who offered financial incentives for the transfer of money. Further, in 2011, Tokelau was ranked second in the world for malicious registrations aimed at stealing personal financial information.²⁸⁵ Law enforcement representatives have indicated that such crimes are facilitated by the use of native languages to secure the trust of potential victims.²⁸⁶

Cyber bullying and 'sexual grooming' are also international trends that have reportedly begun to emerge in the Pacific, primarily targeting adolescents. Again in Samoa, reports have emerged of criminal cases resulting from sexual acts being filmed using mobile phones and disseminated via the internet.²⁸⁷

Addressing cybercrime in the Pacific

Tracking and identifying cybercrime offenders can be expensive, time-consuming and resource-intensive. Even following the identification of offenders, weak legislation (particularly in comparison to international standards and 'best practice') and capacity to police cybercrime in PICTs limits the ability to prosecute and deter future offending. To date, Fiji is the only PICT with a dedicated Cybercrime Unit. There have been efforts to review and strengthen internet-enabled crime legislation in some PICTs such as Fiji, Niue, Samoa and Tonga (e.g., the *Samoa Crimes Act 2013* has been amended to reflect the increasing use of the internet and mobile phones); however, enforcing such laws remains a challenge.²⁸⁸ One example of a community-based education initiative to prevent cybercrime in the PICTs is *Cyber Safety Pasifika*. The program, launched

282 For example: Moriyasu, K. *Beware of Medicrimes, warn Asian pharmaceutical associations*, Nikkei Asian Review. 2015; Pacific Islands Broadcasting Association. *Fake medicines 'endangering PNG lives'*, 2008; Solomon Times. *Fake malaria drugs in Solomons endanger lives*, 2012; Wilson, C. *The Medicines Are Fake, the Illnesses Real*, Inter Press Service News Agency. 2013.

283 PTCN, Pacific Transnational Crime Assessment for 2015.

284 Ibid.

285 Ibid.

286 Ibid.

287 Ibid.

288 Ibid.

in 2011 in the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tonga, consisted of an educational website and school-based presentations, and aimed to inform children and families about how to protect themselves while using the internet.²⁸⁹

Given continued increasing access to the internet across the Pacific and ongoing challenges in policing cybercrime, further research and monitoring of the issue is warranted.

289 Ibid.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESPONSE

Recommendations for response

The following recommendations are intended to enhance the capacity of governments, law enforcement agencies and other relevant organisations, e.g. health services, to more effectively prevent, monitor and respond to transnational criminal challenges in the Pacific region. They are provided in line with the findings of this report.

Policy and legislation

Ratification of key international legal instruments and alignment of national legislation

The global community has developed several international conventions and tools to address transnational organized crime, including the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its supplementary protocols. States that are signatories are obligated to align their national legislation and revise their legal frameworks as needed. Many of the PICTs still need to ratify and implement the UNTOC and other related international legal tools.²⁹⁰ As a result, transnational organized crime-related legislation across several of the PICTs is outdated and inconsistent with international standards and norms, which limits the capacity of national and regional authorities to effectively deal with these challenges.

Although few PICTs are signatories to key conventions and treaties related to this assessment, it should be noted that this is not a definitive indicator regarding the effectiveness of national or regional efforts to counter illicit activities and markets. For instance, the Government of Papua New Guinea recently announced the Criminal Code Amendment of 2013, which includes anti-human trafficking provisions and led to the development of a novel training programme on anti-trafficking for judicial and frontline officers.²⁹¹ Nonetheless, steps need to be taken to ensure that the PICTs continue to ratify the UNTOC and other relevant conventions, in addition to aligning their national legislation and regional frameworks, e.g. the *Nadi Framework and Pacific Model Weapons Control Bill*, with the standards and obligations outlined therein. This will help strengthen existing regulations, as well as enhance current law enforcement strategies to more effectively deal with the challenges posed by transnational organized crime and related issues. UNODC has been able to provide technical assistance to the PICTs in order to ensure the effective ratification and implementation of related conventions and treaties, including the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), and could consider building on this model for the UNTOC.

Developing regional consensus on priorities

Pursuing a coordinated approach to priorities in the Pacific region will help increase the capacity of the PICTs to effectively respond to transnational organized crime threats. It is recommended that a risk assessment mechanism be developed that would help identify key threats facing the region. In addition to identifying transnational crime challenges, it would also help in assessing their potential impact on the PICTs. Using this information, efforts, even if modest, should be made to build capacity within relevant domestic institutions to investigate and prosecute cases involving transnational crime threats, as well as maintain and disseminate related information across pertinent agencies and between PICTs.

At the regional level, cooperation among the PICTs should be framed in line with the PIFS *National Guide to Combat Transnational Organized Crime* which was developed to assist PICT governments in implementing and enhancing processes to prevent, monitor and respond to transnational crimes on national and regional levels. In addition, national and regional approaches should be aligned with those outlined in the guide, and efforts should be made to ensure that relevant legislation and regulations are regularly evaluated and updated accordingly. This will assist in ensuring the consistency of counter-transnational crime initiatives across the PICTs, and over time. It could lead to a reduction in the reliance of outside partner countries to identify and respond to cross-border challenges, helping to develop more robust collaborative and independent efforts on the part of the PICTs throughout the region.

²⁹⁰ See *Appendices IV-X* for more details regarding the ratification and implementation status by countries in the region.

²⁹¹ U.S. Department of State. *Trafficking in Persons Report*. 2015.

Another issue that needs to be considered further is a more coordinated regional approach with regard to the transnational mobility of sea-going vessels and their engagement in organized criminal activity throughout the Pacific. The challenges posed are particularly relevant to illicit fishing activities, but also crimes including drug trafficking, human trafficking and migrant smuggling. Indeed, because of the potential flow-on effect from illicit fishing activities to other transnational organized crimes, it is crucial that the threat presented by fishing vessels engaging in illicit activities, including transnational organized crimes, is addressed through regional cooperation, bolstered by prioritised regional resources.

Although crucial steps have been taken to assist local and regional authorities to detect and intercept vessels involved in transnational organized crimes, the capacity of law enforcement in the region to do so remains limited. A more coordinated effort on the regional level to build capacity and strengthen collaboration is needed and would be more effective than if individual PICTs were to undertake such actions in isolation. In addition, it is important when designing and implementing strategies and mechanisms for cooperation that all those engaged in, and profiting from, illicit activities in the region are targeted.

Integrate security concerns into existing platforms

The PICTs are integrated and connected with other regions more today than before. While this is a positive development for economic purposes, it also means that the region is more susceptible to the type of transnational security and crime challenges that can accompany increased integration. At present, there are a number of platforms available for discussing the stimulation of economic growth, trade and transport under the Economic Governance Programme of PIFS.²⁹² It is recommended that security agendas which incorporate transnational crime issues be incorporated into, or at a minimum are connected to, the Programme, which will assist the PICTs in identifying linkages between economic growth and integration with the threats posed by transnational security and crime issues.

²⁹² Elliott, L. *Transnational environmental crime in the Asia-Pacific: A workshop report*. Public Forum on Transnational Environmental Crime in the Asia Pacific. 22 March 2007. Australian National University, Canberra.

Research and data

Strengthening national and regional data collection capacity and reporting

The ability to collect, manage, analyse and disseminate data is important in being able to identify and counter transnational security and crime threats. The lack of available high-quality and comprehensive data in the Pacific region was a key issue identified over the course of this assessment. As a result, it is difficult to define and understand transnational crime trends and their impact in the PICTs and the wider region over time. Improving countries' capacity to collect, analyse and disseminate data in the region would assist in identifying key trends and concerns, as well as aid in developing evidence-based interventions on the local, national and regional levels.²⁹³

Data on transnational crime issues are currently collected and disseminated by 19 Transnational Crime Units (TCU) across the 13 PICTs, all of which report to the Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre (PTCCC). This information, along with that collected by other parts of the criminal justice system and multilateral organizations in the Pacific region, is integral to the regional transnational crime assessment report produced annually by the PIFS. Though the report provides the most current information for the region, its quality could be improved if data collection and dissemination capacities on the national level were strengthened. In addition, the PICTs should also work to strengthen information-sharing networks at the regional level. These networks should consist of representatives from government agencies and other relevant community groups, and would assist in filling in current knowledge gaps regarding the crime situation and its impact on transnational security in the region. Notably, the PIFS' *National Guide to Combat Transnational Organized Crime* details approaches that could be taken, and even provides important indicators regarding current resource and data gaps, as well as specific issues relevant to the region. PIFS regional data management also needs to be improved to connect better with PICTs and produce better reports.

At present, the PIFS annual assessment report is largely based on individual cases instead of data collected systemically across several sectors in line with international standards and norms. Improved collection techniques and capacities would aid in building a better knowledge base and filling in current gaps, as well as help ensure that the region is better reflected in a number of global assessments that cover transnational crime issues.

The PICTs' capacity to address known data and knowledge gaps could be achieved through a combination of the following:

- Increase the capacity of countries to record and analyse the administrative data of the criminal justice system and other relevant authorities and report the results to support the policy making adequately as well as monitor the SDGs, targets and indicators
- Develop national plans for the gradual adoption of the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS)
- Increase the capacity to provide data for the international data collection efforts such as ARQ, CTS and GLOTIP
- Organize victimization surveys to measure different crime types
- Incorporate questions related to specific illicit activities and markets into current data collection tools
- Review and update data entry and analysis techniques²⁹⁴
- Strengthening regional data collection and research instruments to address knowledge gaps²⁹⁵

293 Howard, J, Ali, H, and Robins, L: *Alcohol, cannabis and amphetamine-type stimulants use among young Pacific Islanders*. Drug Alcohol Rev. 2011, 30: 104-10.

294 For instance, existing mechanisms such as the Pacific Drug and Alcohol Research Network, which has been inactive since 2011 due to financial constraints, could help address this issue. Although focussed mainly on drug research, it could provide a template for collaborative research on other transnational security and crime issues.

295 Ongoing regional drug and crime data collection mechanisms used elsewhere could serve as models, e.g. the Drug Abuse Information Network for Asia and the Pacific (DAINAP) and the Voluntary Reporting System on Migrant Smuggling and Related Conduct (VRS-MSRC).

Further Research

Additional targeted research and thematically specific capacity assessments in this area should be conducted in the PICTs in order to better understand issues, e.g. the illicit drug market, and identify key areas for improvement and related recommendations with regard to data collection, management, analysis and dissemination.

Capacity building and cross-border cooperation

In the context of limited resources and capacity to police a large geographical region, including multiple nations with many extensive, porous national boundaries, assistance from regional partners and a collaborative approach are crucial for the PICTs to maintain and advance their capacity to prevent, detect, monitor and respond – efficiently and effectively – to transnational crime threats.

Capacity building for trade security and border management

The geography and varying national capacities of the PICTs necessitate more effective border management and cross-border cooperation amongst law enforcement and other relevant agencies. At present, most law enforcement operations related to transnational security and crime threats are taken on a national level. However, it is important that steps are taken to integrate these national responses with international and regional strategies, especially at maritime borders, seaports and airports.

As the Pacific region becomes increasingly integrated with the greater global community, the ability of the PICTs to identify illicit flows of goods and persons, while securing trade growth through the region is a key challenge. Several organisations are assisting with community law enforcement protection, trade facilitation and security, revenue collection and border security in the region.²⁹⁶ However, a large number of states and their respective officers lack adequate knowledge, skills and capacity to effectively carry out their duties. It is important that steps be taken to improve these capacities to not only identify and counter transnational criminal activities, but also to engage in cross-border cooperation efforts on the regional and international levels, especially at maritime borders, seaports and airports.

Identifying and establishing productive working relationships with key stakeholders is also an important step towards enhancing border management and trade security. For example, in consideration of instances of drug trafficking via postal services, local and regional law enforcement agencies need to ensure that Customs and mail service handlers are knowledgeable about drugs trafficked via this system (e.g., common forms and concealment methods) and advised of any suspected importers to heighten the risk of detection.

Capacity building for cross-border criminal justice cooperation and anti-money laundering

A general lack of existing information and resources necessitates cross-border cooperation aimed at increasing technical capacity, providing training and awareness-raising, and encouraging intelligence collection and dissemination among the PICTs.

At present, cross-border criminal justice cooperation varies throughout the Pacific region (presently, many countries are unable to engage effectively in it). Steps could be taken to counter this. For example, efforts to address trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants must be embedded in a wider and coordinated migration and development policy framework; uncoordinated efforts may simply divert routes elsewhere and increase the demand for high-risk smuggling services.²⁹⁷

Regarding anti-money laundering efforts, knowledge and capacity in the PICTs' justice authorities could be strengthened, including relevant prosecutorial authorities and financial intelligence units (FIUs). This should also include initiatives to promote a regional network of justice practitioners and strengthen the use of mutual legal assistance (MLA) tools and resources in the PICTs.

²⁹⁶ Those agencies include the Oceania Customs Organization (OCO), the Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference (PIDC), the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (PICP), the Pacific Islands Law Officers' Network (PILON), the Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre (PTCCC) and law enforcement agencies in neighbouring countries – primarily Australia and New Zealand.

²⁹⁷ UNODC: *Transnational Organized Crime in East Asia and the Pacific: A Threat Assessment*. 2013.

Capacity building for law enforcement forensics

Training needs to be provided to relevant law enforcement officers in order to improve their basic forensic capacity in the field. For instance, provision of basic training and necessary equipment would aid frontline law enforcement officers in PICTs to better identify fraudulent documents used by criminals to facilitate their illicit activities. Additionally, provision of and training on UNODC drug and precursor test kits would help frontline law enforcement officers to easily identify drugs and precursors most commonly encountered in the illicit traffic.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Criminal activities, including those undertaken by transnational organized crime groups, are increasing throughout the Pacific region. This TOCTA summarised available information relating to trends across four key crime flows impacting PICTs and surrounding areas: drug and precursor trafficking; trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants; environmental crimes (with a focus on fishers crimes and illegal timber trades); and, small arms trafficking. Cybercrime and illicit trades in counterfeit goods were also briefly discussed. The prevalence of this activity is exacerbated by the increasing connectivity with other countries and regions.

There are numerous indications that these different crime types are affecting individuals, families, communities and countries across the Pacific region to varying degrees, in addition to impacting sustainable economic development and regional safety and security. For example, ongoing seizures in numerous PICTs of illicit drugs such as methamphetamine, cocaine and heroin highlight the risk of spillover effects of illegally manufactured and trafficked substances into local markets. Human trafficking for sexual exploitation also continues to occur in parts of the Pacific region, with evidence of links between such crimes and extractive industries, including fishing, logging and mining. Consequently, it is crucial that appropriate measures be taken to address these wide-reaching criminal activities. In general, however, considerable gaps in data, knowledge/expertise, legislation and resources prohibit timely and effective prevention, detection and monitoring of, and responses to, transnational crimes in PICTs and across the broader region. It is therefore highly recommended that PICT governments and authorities focus on: addressing key knowledge, resource, and data gaps relevant to transnational crimes; ratifying treaties and conventions relevant to transnational crimes in the region; strengthening cross-border cooperation and building the technical capacity at both the national and regional levels; and developing a regional consensus on priorities so as to mitigate the risk posed by limited resource availability.

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APPENDICES

Appendices

Appendix I: Summary of available population data for PICTs, in addition to Australia & New Zealand (data are for 2015 unless otherwise stated)²⁹⁸

PICT	Population (000's)	Pop. sex ratio (males per 100 females)	% children (≤14 years)	% pop. in rural areas	Crude birth rate (per 1,000 pop.)	Life expectancy at birth (years)	Net enrolment secondary education (%) ^a	Adult (≥15 years) literacy rate
American Samoa	56	-	-	13	-	-	-	-
Cook Islands	21	-	-	25	-	-	80.1	-
Fiji	892	103.4	28.7	46	19.7	69.7	83	-
French Polynesia	283	104.2	22.1	44	16	76.1	-	-
Kiribati	112	97.2	34.9	56	28.5	65.7	-	-
Marshall Islands (Rep. of the)	53	-	-	27	-	-	-	-
Micronesia (Fed. States of)	104	105	34.1	78	23.6	68.9	-	-
Nauru	10	-	-	0	-	-	75	-
New Caledonia	263	101.8	22.2	30	15.2	76.2	-	96.9
Niue	2	-	-	79	-	-	-	-
Northern Mariana Islands (Comm. of)	55	-	-	11	-	-	-	-
Palau	21	-	-	13	-	-	94.5	99.5
Papua New Guinea	7,619	104.1	37.1	87	28.2	62.3	-	64.2
Samoa	193	106.5	37.3	81	25.1	73	79.7	99
Solomon Islands	584	-	39.5	78	29.3	67.5	31	-
Timor Leste								

²⁹⁸ Source: UN ESCAP: <http://www.unescap.org/subregional-office/pacific>

²⁹⁸ Source: Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) World Factbook: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/wfbExt/region_aus.html

PICT	Population (000's)	Pop. sex ratio (males per 100 females)	% children (≤14 years)	% pop. in rural areas	Crude birth rate (per 1,000 pop.)	Life expectancy at birth (years)	Net enrolment secondary education (%) ^a	Adult (≥15 years) literacy rate
Tokelau								
Tonga	106		36.8	76	24.3	72.6	69	99.4
Tuvalu	10		-	40		71.5	78.7	-
Vanuatu	265		36.5	74	26.2		51.6	85.2
Wallis and Futuna ²⁹⁸	15	-	22.7	-	13.5	79.6	-	-
Australia	23,969	99.9	18.7	11	13.3	82.1	85.7	-
New Zealand	4,529	95.6	20.2	14	13.2	81.6	97.4	-

^a Enrolment of the official age group for secondary education (% of secondary school age population); data displayed is the most recent estimate for the period 2007-2014

Appendix II: Summary of available economic & environmental data for PICTs, in addition to Australia & New Zealand²⁹⁹

PICT	2013 GDP* (USD per capita)	Gov't expenditure (% of GDP) ^a	2014 inflation rate (% per annum)	2013 net external debt (million USD)	2013 unemployment rate ^b	Total land area (sq km) ³⁰⁰	Marine areas protected (% of territorial water)	Agricultural area (% of land area, 2013)	2012 forest area (% total land area)
American Samoa	-	-	-	-	-	199	17.3	24	88.2
Cook Islands	16,008	30.7	-	-	-	236	0	6	64.6
Fiji	4,581	29.2	0.5	797	8.1	18,274	6.2	23	55.9
French Polynesia	23,167	-	-	-	-	3,827	0.1	12	45.1
Kiribati	1,608	57.5	-	-	-	811	20.2	42	15
Marshall Islands (Rep. of the)	3,575	55.8	-	-	-	181	3.4	64	70.2
Micronesia (Fed. States of)	3,211	65.2	-	-	-	702	0.1	31	91.7
Nauru	15,100	-	-	-	-	21	0	20	-
New Caledonia	37,866	-	-	-	-	18,275	56.6	10	45.9
Niue	-	-	-	-	-	260	1.2	19	70.8
Northern Mariana Islands (Comm. of)	-	-	-	-	-	464	20.4	7	65.2
Palau	11,479	36.5	-	-	-	459	31.4	11	87.6
Papua New Guinea	2,110	34.3	5.2	21,733	2.1	452,860	0.4	3	62.8
Samoa	3,632	35.4	-0.4	447	-	2,821	1.1	12	60.4
Solomon Islands	1,913	44.1	5.2	204	3.8	27,986	0.9	4	78.7
Timor Leste									
Tokelau						12			

299 UN ESCAP, available at <http://www.unescap.org/subregional-office/pacific>300 Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) World Factbook, available at https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/wfbExt/region_aus.html

PICT	2013 GDP* (USD per capita)	Gov't expenditure (% of GDP) ^a	2014 inflation rate (% per annum)	2013 net external debt (million USD)	2013 unemployment rate ^b	Total land area (sq km) ³⁰⁰	Marine areas protected (% of territorial water)	Agricultural area (% of land area, 2013)	2012 forest area (% total land area)
Tonga	4,180	-	2.5	199	-	717	9.6	43	12.5
Tuvalu	3,882	-	-	-	-	26	0.3	60	33.3
Vanuatu	3,160	23.4	0.8	132	-	12,189	0	15	36.1
Wallis and Futuna ³⁰¹	3,800	-	2.8	3.67	12.8	142	-	43	41.9
Australia	65,804	25.1	2.5	-	5.7	7,682,300	48.5	52	19.2
New Zealand	42,332	35.8	0.9	-	6.2	267,710	12.5	42	31.3

^a Most recent data from either 2012 or 2013

^b The % people in the labour force who, during the reference period, were without work, available for work and seeking work. Note that definitions and coverage of unemployment may vary between nations.

Appendix III: Regional & international agencies combating transnational organized crime in the Pacific

Key regional and international agencies that exist to prevent, detect, monitor and combat transnational organized criminal threats and activities in the Pacific region include:

Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO)³⁰³

The OCO, formerly the Customs Head of Administration Regional Meeting, is responsible for providing technological advice and support to members (i.e., national PICT Customs departments). Its head office is located in Suva. Core functions include community protection, trade facilitation and security, revenue collection and border security. Members are expected to submit online updates to an analyst in Wellington, New Zealand (i.e., New Zealand Customs head office) on a monthly basis, which are collated in a quarterly report and disseminated amongst OCO members, in addition to an annual report. However, the funding and resource constraints of some national administrations often preclude such regular reporting. In addition, a general issue for all OCO members is a lack of knowledge, skills and experience among Customs staff relating to the identification and detection of certain transnational organized crimes (e.g., specific illicit drugs and precursor substances) at the border.

Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (PICP)³⁰⁴

The PICP is a non-profit organisation comprising police services in the Pacific. Specifically, membership is open to national police services of PICTs and the organisation is currently made up of 21 members (more than 75,000 serving police officers), ranging from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (north) to New Zealand (south), French Polynesia (east) and the Republic of Palau (west). The PICP aims to improve policing practices throughout the region by providing a 'common voice' on law enforcement and forum to share ideas and details on criminal activities and policing approaches, in addition to coordinating training and development programs for members.

Pacific Islands Law Officers Network (PILON)³⁰⁵

The PILON, established in 1982 as the Pacific Islands Law Officers' Meeting, comprises senior public law officers from PICTs and focuses on common legal challenges throughout the Pacific region. Member countries include: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn Islands, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. PILON provides a forum for addressing law and justice issues common to PICTs, with a focus on areas that are not covered in other Pacific policy forums. The network is an independent body; however, it works closely with regional and international organisations. PILON enhances communication and cooperation between law enforcement workers and agencies in the Pacific region. The PILON Secretariat, based in Apia, Samoa, is the coordination mechanism for PILON and is responsible for progressing the network's Work Plan and assisting with organising its annual meetings.

Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre (PTCCC)³⁰⁶

The Fiji Islands Revenue and Customs Authority established the Transnational Crime Unit (TCU) in 2004. The TCU subsequently relocated to Apia, Samoa in 2008 as the PTCCC following the Fijian military coup in 2006 which led to deterioration in regional relations. The PTCCC currently:

- Facilitates the collection, collation, analysis and dissemination of intelligence relating to transnational crime throughout the Pacific region;
- Provides technological and investigative support to 19 TCUs located in 13 PICTs;
- Brokers collaboration with key law enforcement partners in the Pacific and worldwide;

303 For further information, see <http://www.ocosec.org/>

304 For further information, see <http://www.picp.co.nz/>

305 For further information, see <http://www.pilonsec.org/>

306 For further information, see http://www.ptcn.ws/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=104&Itemid=470

- Enhances the capacity and professional development of members of the PTCN (see below) and participating law enforcement partners.

Each TCU is expected to submit a situational report to the PTCCC on a monthly basis, although feedback is generally ad hoc and can occur more frequently if necessary. In general, a number of factors can impact on the quality and frequency of information provided to the PTCCC by individual TCUs, including: political issues and instability, fragmentation of law enforcement agencies on a local level, and limited funding, communication capabilities, resources and staffing. As of 2013, the PTCCC will be providing biannual updates to the PTCN regarding drug seizures in the Pacific.

Pacific Transnational Crime Network (PTCN)³⁰⁷

The PTCCC is part of the PTCN, which provides a proactive, interconnected and investigative capability to combat transnational crime in the Pacific region. Other members and collaborators include: the 19 TCUs, the PICP, the PIFS, the OCO, the Pacific Immigration Directors Conference (PIDC), the AFP, NZPOL, and the United States Joint Interagency Taskforce West.

Other agencies and organizations combating transnational organized crime in the Pacific and surrounding regions include:

- Commonwealth Secretariat
- FFA
- International Civil Aviation Organisation
- International Criminal Police Organisation
- International Maritime Organisation
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- PIDC
- SPC
- UNDP
- UNODC
- World Customs Organisation

307 For further information, see <http://www.ptcn.ws/>

Appendix IV: Signatories to the CITES³⁰⁸

PICT	Date joined	Type
American Samoa	-	-
Australia	29/07/1976	Ratification
Cook Islands	-	-
Fiji	30/09/1997	Accession
French Polynesia	-	-
Kiribati	-	-
Marshall Islands (Rep. of the)	-	-
Micronesia (Fed. States of)	-	-
Nauru	-	-
New Caledonia	-	-
New Zealand	10/05/1989	Accession
Niue	-	-
Northern Mariana Islands (Comm. of)	-	-
Palau	16/04/2004	Accession
Papua New Guinea	12/12/1975	Accession
Samoa	09/11/2004	Accession
Solomon Islands	26/03/2007	Accession
Timor Leste		
Tonga		
Tokelau		
Tuvalu		
Vanuatu	17/07/1989	Accession
Wallis and Futuna		

308 For further information, see https://cites.org/eng/disc/parties/chronolo.php?order=field_country_official_name&sort=asc

Appendix V: Signatories to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Crime and its Protocols among PICTs; i.e., Status of Ratification³⁰⁹

PICT	Date of signature	Date of ratification
American Samoa	-	-
Australia	13 Dec 2000	27 May 2004
Cook Islands		4 Mar 2004 ^a
Fiji	-	-
French Polynesia	-	-
Kiribati		15 Sep 2005 ^a
Marshall Islands (Rep. of the)		15 Jun 2011 ^a
Micronesia (Fed. States of)		24 May 2004
Nauru	12 Nov 2001	12 Jul 2012
New Caledonia	-	-
New Zealand	14 Dec 2000	19 Jul 2012
Niue		16 Jul 2012 ^a
Northern Mariana Islands (Comm. of)	-	-
Palau	-	-
Papua New Guinea	-	-
Samoa		17 Dec 2014 ^a
Solomon Islands	-	-
Timor Leste		9 Nov 2009 ^a
Tonga		3 Oct 2014 ^a
Tokelau	-	-
Tuvalu	-	-
Vanuatu		4 Jan 2006 ^a
Wallis and Futuna	-	-

^aAccession

309 For further information, see http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtmsg_no=XVIII-12&chapter=18&lang=en

Appendix VI: Signatories to the United Nations Drug Control Conventions in the Pacific Region; i.e., Status of Ratification³¹⁰

PICT	1961 ^a	1972 ^b	1988 ^c
American Samoa	-	-	-
Australia	Y	Y	Y
Cook Islands	-	Y	-
Fiji	Y	Y	Y
French Polynesia	-	-	-
Kiribati	-	-	-
Marshall Islands (Rep. of the)	Y	Y	Y
Micronesia (Fed. States of)	Y	Y	Y
Nauru	Y	Y	-
New Caledonia	-	-	-
New Zealand	Y	Y	Y
Niue	Y	Y	-
Northern Mariana Islands (Comm. of)	-	-	-
Palau	Y	-	Y
Papua New Guinea	Y	-	Y
Samoa	-	Y	-
Solomon Islands	Y	-	-
Timor Leste	-	Y	-
Tokelau	Y	-	-
Tonga	Y	Y	Y
Tuvalu	-	-	-
Vanuatu	-	Y	-
Wallis and Futuna	-	-	-

^a1961 *Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs*

^b1971 *Convention on Psychotropic Substances*

^c1988 *United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances*

310 For further information, see <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/index.html#Drugrelated>

Appendix VII: Signatories to the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime³¹¹

PICT	Date of signature	Date of ratification
American Samoa	-	-
Australia	11 Dec 2002	14 Sep 2005
Cook Islands	-	-
Fiji	-	-
French Polynesia	-	-
Kiribati	-	15 Sep 2005 ^a
Marshall Islands (Rep. of the)	-	-
Micronesia (Fed. States of)	-	2 Nov 2011 ^a
Nauru	12 Nov 2001	12 Jul 2012
New Caledonia	-	-
New Zealand	14 Dec 2000	19 Jul 2002
Niue	-	-
Northern Mariana Islands (Comm. of)	-	-
Palau	-	-
Papua New Guinea	-	-
Samoa	-	-
Solomon Islands	-	-
Timor Leste	-	9 Nov 2009 ^a
Tonga	-	-
Tokelau	-	-
Tuvalu	-	-
Vanuatu	-	-
Wallis and Futuna	-	-

^aAccession

311 For further information, see https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XVIII-12-a&chapter=18&lang=en

Appendix VIII: Signatories to the United Nations Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime³¹²

PICT	Date of signature	Date of ratification
American Samoa	-	-
Australia	21 Dec 2001	27 May 2004
Cook Islands	-	-
Fiji	-	-
French Polynesia	-	-
Kiribati	-	15 Sep 2005 ^a
Marshall Islands (Rep. of the)	-	-
Micronesia (Fed. States of)	-	-
Nauru	12 Nov 2001	12 Jul 2012
New Caledonia	-	-
New Zealand	14 Dec 2000	19 Jul 2002
Niue	-	-
Northern Mariana Islands (Comm. of)	-	-
Palau	-	-
Papua New Guinea	-	-
Samoa	-	-
Solomon Islands	-	-
Timor Leste	-	9 Nov 2009 ^a
Tonga	-	-
Tokelau	-	-
Tuvalu	-	-
Vanuatu	-	-
Wallis and Futuna	-	-

^aAccession

312 For further information, see https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XVIII-12-b&chapter=18&lang=en

Appendix IX: Signatories to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption as of 1 December 2015³¹³

PICT	Date of signature	Date of ratification
American Samoa	-	-
Australia	9 Dec 2003	7 Dec 2005
Cook Islands	-	17 Jul 2011
Fiji	-	14 May 2008 ^a
French Polynesia	-	-
Kiribati	-	27 Sep 2013 ^a
Marshall Islands (Rep. of the)	-	17 Nov 2011
Micronesia (Fed. States of)	-	21 Mar 2012 ^a
Nauru	-	12 Jul 2012
New Caledonia	-	-
New Zealand	10 Dec 2003	1 Dec 2015
Niue	-	-
Northern Mariana Islands (Comm. of)	-	-
Palau	-	24 Mar 2009 ^a
Papua New Guinea	22 Dec 2004	16 Jul 2007
Samoa	-	-
Solomon Islands	-	6 Jan 2012 ^a
Timor Leste	10 Dec 2003	27 Mar 2009
Tonga	-	-
Tokelau	-	-
Tuvalu	-	4 Sep 2015 ^a
Vanuatu	-	12 Jul 2011 ^a
Wallis and Futuna	-	-

^aAccession

313 For further information, see <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CAC/signatories.html>

Appendix X: Signatories to the United Nations Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime³¹⁴

PICT	Date of signature	Date of ratification
American Samoa	-	-
Australia	21 Dec 2001	-
Cook Islands	-	-
Fiji	-	-
French Polynesia	-	-
Kiribati	-	-
Marshall Islands (Rep. of the)	-	-
Micronesia (Fed. States of)	-	-
Nauru	12 Nov 2001	12 Jul 2012
New Caledonia	-	-
New Zealand	-	-
Niue	-	-
Northern Mariana Islands (Comm. of)	-	-
Palau	-	-
Papua New Guinea	-	-
Samoa	-	-
Solomon Islands	-	-
Timor Leste	-	-
Tonga	-	-
Tokelau	-	-
Tuvalu	-	-
Vanuatu	-	-
Wallis and Futuna	-	-

314 For further information, see https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XVIII-12-c&chapter=18&lang=en



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