



# Funding Niue's Ocean Wide Conservation and Resilient, Sustainable Blue Economy

A brochure about the Niue & Ocean Wide Trust (NOW Trust) and Ocean Conservation Commitments (OCCs)

September 2023

[www.niueoceanwide.com](http://www.niueoceanwide.com)



Public-Private Partnership  
Government of Niue & Tofia Niue

# About the NOW Trust

The Niue and Ocean Wide Trust (“NOW Trust”) is a charitable trust under New Zealand law. It is governed by a Trust Deed dated 28th August 2023. It has a trust board incorporated under the Charitable Trusts Act 1957 (NZ) with registered number 50178753 and is a charity registered with Charities Services, Department of Internal Affairs, New Zealand, with registered number CC61526.

## Glossary of Key Terms

**Charitable Purposes** means the Charitable Purposes of the NOW Trust, as identified in Clause 3 of the Trust Deed.

**NOW Trust Contributors** means persons who make donations of funds that can be used for wider purposes than just ocean-related activities, known as “unrestricted funds”. “Unrestricted funds”, unless otherwise agreed between the Trustees and the donor, can be used generally to support any and all of the Charitable Purposes, including, among other things, both terrestrial and marine conservation. In some cases, despite donating over NZD \$250, donors may prefer the funds to be held as “unrestricted funds” so that the funds can be used for general operations.

**OCC Sponsors** means persons who make donations of funds that can be used only for restricted purposes. The funds (a minimum of NZD \$250) donated to the Trust by persons who sponsor an OCC, will be used to support specified activities (as noted in the Brochure) generally relating to ocean conservation, including on-island activities to create a resilient sustainable blue economy. These funds will either be tracked (via accounting procedures) as going to ocean conservation and related activities or general trust administrative / operating expenses. OCCs can be sponsored at the amount of NZD \$250 per OCC, which represents the costs to maintain one square kilometer of the Moana Mahu for a period of 20 years. The amount of an OCC sponsorship may increase over time to reflect any increase in costs associated with the supported activities.

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# Executive Summary

Niue is a small island developing state (SIDS), self-governing in free association with New Zealand and is located in the South Pacific. Its large ocean real-estate includes globally significant marine ecosystems like no other on Earth. It boasts some of the clearest waters in the world, and an array of fish species, coral reefs, sea turtles, sharks, dolphins, and whales. Beyond such ecological values, Niue and its waters are valuable for diverse reasons including socioeconomic, cultural, and climate reasons, as well as providing resilience to Niue's people and the global community through the strength and scale of the marine protection and management efforts in Niue's waters. The preservation of these oceans is a responsibility the Niuean people have carried for thousands of years and seek to continue to nurture for generations to come.

As a SIDS, Niue has limited resources to undertake marine conservation and resilience efforts. However, through the combined effort of its government, local organizations and communities, Niue has made significant advancements in its commitments, policy development and actions to strengthen marine conservation and the sustainable blue economy. Most significantly, Niue has legally designated 40% of its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) as a no-take Large-Scale Marine Protected Area (LSMPA), Niue Moana Mahu. Niue is one of the first countries to protect 100% of its EEZ and Territorial Sea under a comprehensive Marine Spatial Management Plan (MSMP), designating the Nukutuluea Multiple-Use Marine Park.<sup>1</sup>

The Niue Ocean Wide (NOW) Project is Niue's first Public Private Partnership between the Government of Niue and Tofia Niue and was established to ensure effective management and continuity of Niue's marine protection efforts and sustainability.

After 8 years of working successfully together to protect Niue's oceans, the NOW Project is evolving into the Niue & Ocean Wide Trust (NOW Trust). The NOW Trust and its unique capitalization approach present a game changing innovative funding mechanism to support the development of a holistic ocean-oriented strategy supported by predictable, long-term funding. Along with reducing the high transaction costs of project-based funding, the NOW Trust will enable a paradigm shift towards country-driven, long-term ocean protection, resilience, and sustainable development that prior funding could not.

To capitalize the NOW Trust, the Trustees will launch in 2023 the first-of-its-kind Ocean Conservation Commitment (OCC), in addition to other funding options. To summarize:

- Money coming into the NOW Trust, via OCC sponsors and donors, will be used to support Niue's commitment to fund a range of conservation, resilience and sustainable development efforts that reinforce sustainable ocean conservation that are consistent with the Charitable Purposes of the NOW Trust (e.g., hiring a Fisheries Compliance Officer, supporting new monitoring, control and surveillance technology

for community-driven EEZ and Marine Protected Area (MPA) protection, sustainable business training through the Chamber of Commerce, marine and cultural education programs/scholarships for Niuean children).

- By creating a holistic sponsorship instrument (OCCs) that factors in shared costs associated with effective management of Niue Moana Mahu over a period of 20 years, OCCs provide a vehicle to share the cost burden of conservation, whilst creating the enabling condition to catalyze and maintain a resilient sustainable blue economy that ultimately provides the longevity of ocean conservation commitments. The mechanism will also help reduce multiple reporting requirements of projects and delivery against desired conservation and sustainability outcomes of Niue.
- Each year, the NOW Trust will provide OCC Sponsors and NOW Trust Contributors with an annual report, impact stories, and other MRV<sup>2</sup> materials showcasing their impact as an OCC Sponsor and/or NOW Trust Contributor. This will provide transparency and line of sight of the impact that the collective contributions are having on important conservation, resilience and sustainable development targets and commitments (e.g., UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the new Global Biodiversity Framework 2030, Science Based Targets for Nature (SBTNs)<sup>3</sup>, and the 30x30 Target).
- OCCs present a foundation for other SIDS to fully incorporate local values and local leadership in ocean conservation efforts and raise supporting capital from everyone who benefits from the health and wealth of a pristine blue ocean and wishes to contribute to ocean conservation.
- OCCs can be sponsored at \$NZD12.50 / km<sup>2</sup> / year and must be sponsored in 20-year increments equating to \$NZD250.00 / OCC.<sup>4</sup> A total of 127,000 OCCs will be created based on the size of Niue's Moana Mahu MPA (127,000 km<sup>2</sup>).<sup>5</sup>

As an OCC Sponsor or NOW Trust Contributor, you will aid these efforts and empower Niue to save its unique ecosystems in a rapidly changing climate whilst contributing to a sustainable blue economy that reinforces the centrality of ocean protection.

Our Vaka (a traditional Niuean canoe) is about to set sail and we are excited to invite you to be a part of our journey!

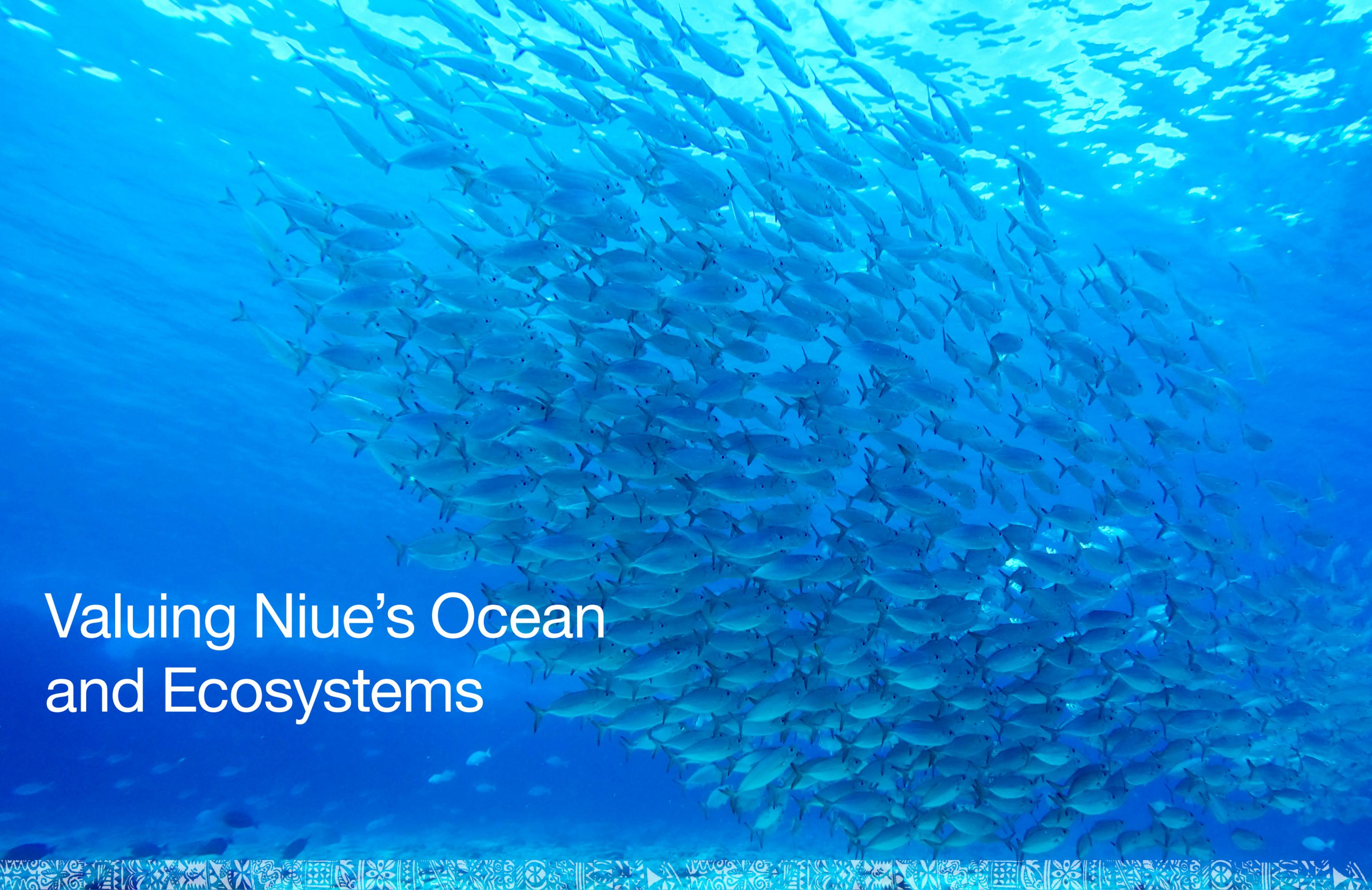
1. The LSMPA is known as Niue Moana Mahu (127,000sq/km of no take zone) and the MSMP is constituted as the Niue Nukutuluea Multiple-Use Marine Park.

2. Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) is a term commonly used in international Multilateral Environmental Agreements to indicate robustness of reporting and transparency.

3. A collaboration of leading global non-profits and mission driven organizations working together to equip companies and cities with the guidance to set science-based targets for all of Earth's systems.

4. 20 years is the intended period of lock up of Niue Moana Mahu, to be realized with capitalisation of the NOW Trust.

5. Accounting for 40% of Niue's EEZ, exceeding global conservation targets such as the 30x30 Target (protecting at least 30% of the ocean by 2030).



# Valuing Niue's Ocean and Ecosystems



# A Shared Perspective on a Global Challenge

As Niueans, it is easy for us to extoll the importance of our oceans and ecosystems. Our pristine waters provide natural resources and economic opportunity for our people as well as a sanctuary for an abundance of marine life. Moreover, the ocean is a source of deep cultural heritage and pride for Niue. Niue’s wellbeing, our children’s, and our future generations’ way of life are all deeply engrained in our oceans and dependent on its health.

Yet, while we are Niuean, we are also citizens of the Pacific and members of the global community. We, like everyone the world over, rely on an ocean that is increasingly under threat from the impacts of climate change, pollution, and over harvesting. It is hard to overstate the value of Niue’s waters to every Niuean or the threat those waters face due to actions far from our shores.

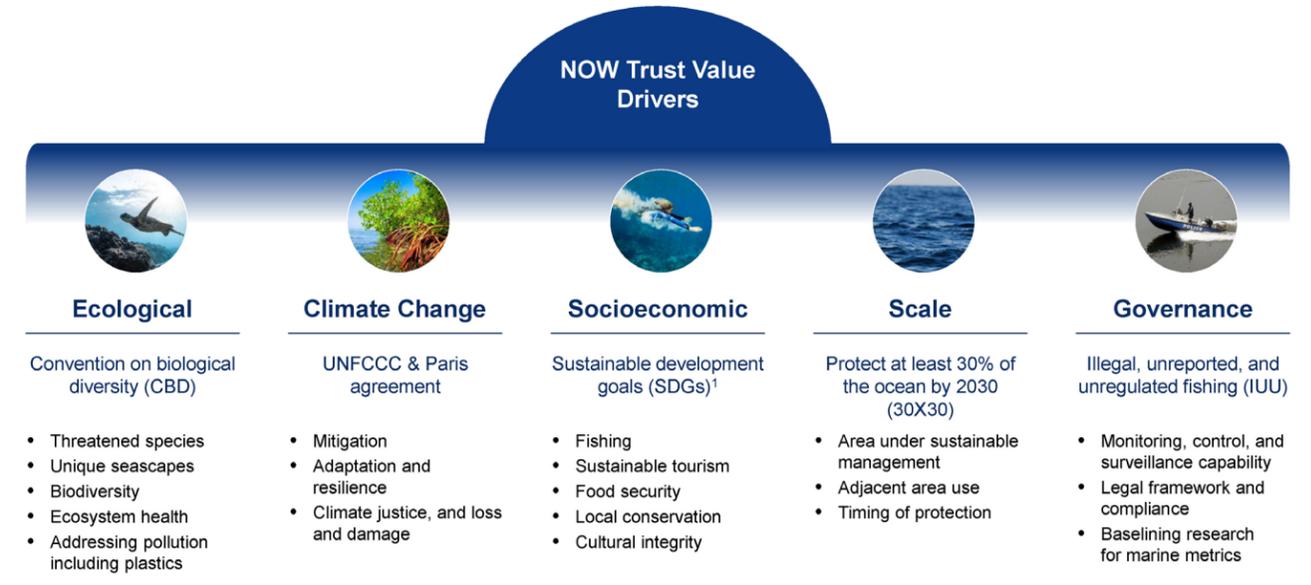
And it is from these shared perspectives, as Niueans and as global citizens, that the value of our oceans and ecosystems – especially the integrity of Niue’s protected and managed marine areas – increases significantly. These values range across several dimensions.

- **Ecological** dimension, which includes protecting threatened species, defending against exploitative fishing practices, boosting biodiversity of both domestic and migratory species, reducing pollution, and maintaining overall ecosystem health. Niue’s marine environment is globally unique and ecologically irreplaceable (see breakout on Niue’s Unique Ecological Heritage below).
- **Socioeconomic** dimension, which includes maintaining cultural integrity and local fishing traditions, enhancing food security, fostering sustainable tourism, promoting community-led conservation and enforcement and livelihoods, and empowering a new generation of passionate young people to champion the cause of ocean sustainability well into the future.
- **Climate and resilience** dimension, which includes using nature-based solutions to enhance our ocean’s ability to continue to absorb greenhouse gases amidst intensifying acidification, warming, and sea-level rise – all of which threaten the ecological and socioeconomic values derived from our ocean.
- Strength of **protection** dimension, which enables the realization of the above and includes both the scale of the protected area (e.g., area and duration) and the strength of protection and related governance.

These many values and actions are sought in a range of global agreements, including those identified in the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), UN Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the Paris Agreement, as well as a number of regional agreements such as the 2050 Strategy for a Blue Pacific Continent, the Pacific Oceanscape Framework, Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation (PIRT), the Waigani Convention, and regional fish stock agreements.<sup>6</sup> Under these agreements, Niue is in the process of building a sustainable, climate resilient economy. On all counts, Niue already exceeds the conservation ambitions and country-based responsibilities outlined in its commitments.

6. As outlined by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), established by the Convention for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean under the UN Fish Stocks Agreement.

Exhibit 1: DIVERSE VALUE DRIVERS OF OUR OCEANS



1. Specifically, SDGs 8, 12, 13, 14, & 17

Despite these global agreements, as UN Secretary-General António Guterres outlined in his State of the Planet speech in December 2021, the global environment continues to deteriorate at an unprecedented rate. From our perspective, the many international and multilateral agreements signed to date will be insufficient if three things do not change:

1. The value of our ocean space must be holistically evaluated and understood across the dimensions outlined above
2. Commensurate investment must be made to protect that holistic value in perpetuity
3. These investments must benefit countries on the frontlines of the climate crisis

Quoting from the same speech, doing so would allow us to “not simply reset the world economy but to transform it.”

As a SIDS, Niue has limited resources to continue its deep commitment to conservation and resilience-building efforts while also generating sustainable development opportunities. At the very moment when effective conservation is most needed, the ability of SIDS to independently mobilize additional resources and create a holistic, country-driven strategy needed for effective conservation action is limited. This is at the heart of why Niue is seeking to capitalize a trust fund for conservation and sustainable development activities, the Niue & Ocean Wide Trust (NOW Trust), and capture at least some of the values associated with these efforts through contributions from third parties in the form of sponsoring Ocean Conservation Commitments (OCCs). We need sustainable funding to build and sustain Niue’s conservation capabilities and associated resilient sustainable development over time to benefit both Niue and the world at large.

# Niue's Unique Ecological Heritage

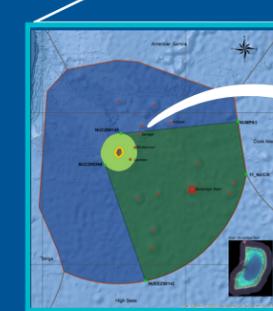
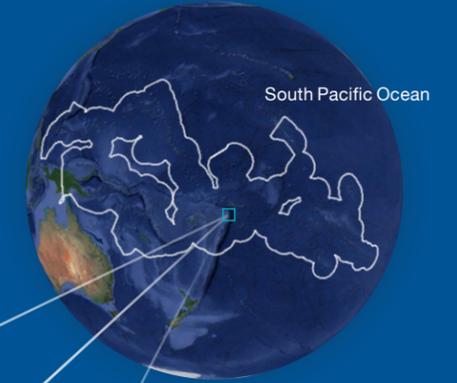
There is no other place on Earth quite like Niue. Halfway between Fiji and the Cook Islands, Niue is renowned as one of the largest raised coral atolls in the world. Niue boasts over 100 coral species, was designated the world's first "Dark Sky Nation" and was awarded recognition as being in the top 100 global sustainable tourism destinations by Green Destinations.<sup>7</sup> Despite being one of the smallest self-governing Nations, its entire marine real estate<sup>8</sup> is 321,018km<sup>2</sup> and contains pristine coral reefs and undersea mountains that are known for hosting a diverse array of marine life.

Harboring a dazzling array of biodiversity, including more than 300 fish species, coral reefs, sea turtles, dolphins, humpback and beaked whales, and amongst the world's highest density of grey reef sharks, Niue's crystal-clear waters reveal a host of treasures across six bioregions. Niue's ocean is home to more than 70 critically endangered, endangered, or vulnerable species and endemic species and serves as an annual birthing and breeding ground for humpback whales. Katuali (*Laticauda Schistorhynchus*), a vulnerable venomous sea snake, can be found only in Niue.

For over 1,000 years, the Niuean people have nurtured and protected our ocean. Our culture demands nothing less – for example, humpback whales are not only fully protected by law, but culturally revered by Niuean people. Beverage Reef is not only protected within a marine protected area, but is a culturally significant area to the people of Niue. Niue's waters remain largely unexploited and pristine, and our goal is to keep them that way for the benefit of our people and our environment.

# A snapshot of Niue

- Blue Pacific Continent
- Largest raised coral atoll at 256 km<sup>2</sup>
- EEZ: 320,000 km<sup>2</sup>
- Moana Mahu MPA: 127,000 km<sup>2</sup>
- 1,700 population
- Self-governing free association with NZ
- Tourism, fisheries, exports
- Climate change effects: cyclones,



7. 2021 Green Destinations Story Awards took place in 2021. The globally recognised award ceremony showcased the most inspirational stories of resilient tourism practices from the 2020 Top 100 Competition.  
8. Including Niue's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and Territorial Sea.



# Niue's Commitment: A Brief History of Niue's Conservation

## Niue's Commitment

In early 2015, the Government of Niue, in close collaboration with local stakeholders, secured funding and technical support from Oceans 5 to develop an EEZ-wide approach to ocean conservation and management. Drawing on decades of regional experience, Niue's goal, which remains the same today, was to ensure an approach grounded in nation-specific practices and values while also creating a sustainable development paradigm that centers local communities, builds resilience to climate change, and creates regional and global environmental benefits.

To advance these goals, in early 2016 a local NGO, Tofia Niue, and the Government of Niue established the Niue Ocean Wide (NOW) Project. As Niue's first-ever public private partnership, NOW's vision is to build a resilient, blue economy that reinforces long-term ocean protection, climate resilience and sustainable development for Niue and the global community now and into the future. NOW's specific goals are outlined in the breakout box on the next page.

In 2017, Niue was one of the first countries to announce its commitment to designate 40% of its EEZ as a Large-Scale Marine Protected Area (LSMPA) and to manage 100% of its EEZ under a sustainable Marine Spatial Management Plan.

This followed a scientific survey conducted with the support of National Geographic Pristine Seas and other partners, a comprehensive cost benefit analysis, and consultation with all of Niue's population. We do not overstate matters when we say the whole of Niue is committed to protecting our marine resources.

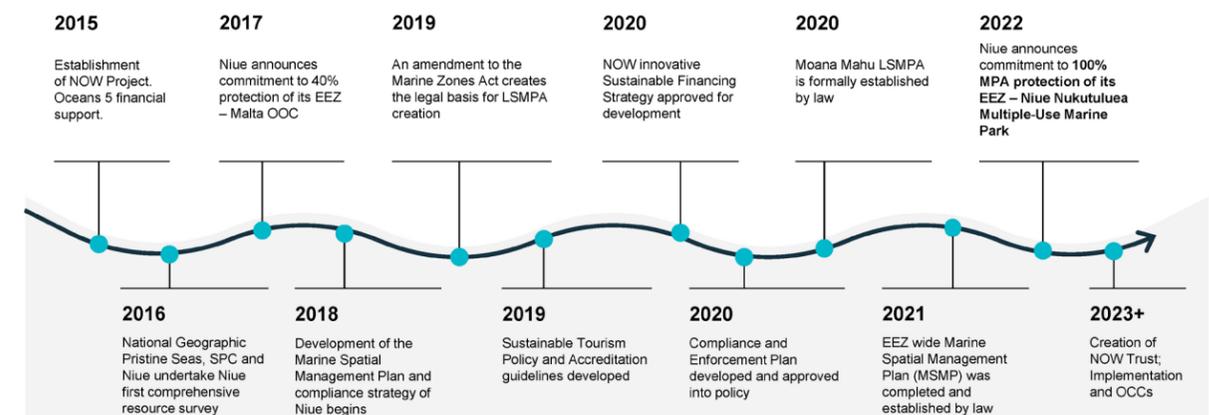
Since 2017, Niue has followed through on these commitments with a number of legal and policy actions, including:

- In 2019, the development of Niue's Sustainable Tourism Policy and a set of operator certification standards and accreditation guidelines
- In 2020, the legal establishment of the Niue Moana Mahu LSMPA and the development of Niue's Compliance Strategy
- In 2020, the Sustainable Financing Strategy (SFS) for Niue Ocean Wide.
- In 2021 and 2022, the completion and legal establishment of an EEZ-wide Marine Spatial Management Plan (MSMP) constituted through the Niue Nukutuluea Multiple-Use Marine Park and Niue Moana Mahu MPA.
- In 2023, a second full scientific expedition with National Geographic Pristine Seas to follow up baselines and create a documentary.

Exhibit 2: HISTORY OF NIUE'S PROTECTED OCEAN 2023 - CREATION OF THE NOW TRUST

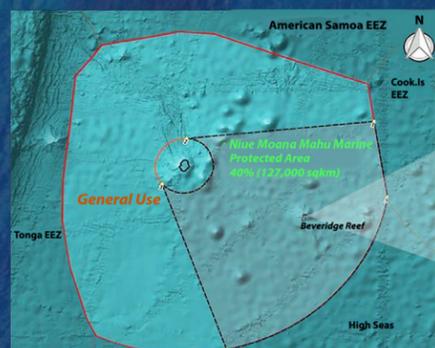
### Foundation of the strength of Niue's protected ocean

Key milestones and commitments underpinning Niue's Ocean protection and sustainability



# Niue Ocean Wide

Holistic Sustainable development and management of our Ocean and its resources to improve livelihoods of Niueans now and into the



Niue Moana Mahu Marine Protected Area

Beveridge Reef Special Management Area

## EEZ Wide

- 1 Marine Spatial Management Plan
- 2 Niue Moana Mahu MPA (40% of EEZ)
- 3 Comprehensive Compliance
- 4 Benefits & Sustainable Financing



## Niue Ocean Wide's Goals

- 1** Develop an EEZ-wide Marine Spatial
  - Establish an ocean-wide Marine Spatial Management Plan, including designating specific areas for conservation
  - Survey and document Niue's natural resources, including Beveridge Reef, a hotspot for marine activity
  - Align on how Niue will develop and manage its natural resources into the future
- 2** Establish an effective Compliance and
  - Develop a comprehensive compliance and enforcement strategy
  - Continue to monitor and survey, including monitoring the abundance and health of key species such as whales, as well as levels of fishing and reef harvesting
- 3** Establish sustainable funding and increased
  - Align on key activities and develop a plan to mobilize resources to sustainably finance Niue's conservation actions
  - As part of that effort, develop a sustainable tourism strategy, including implementation and marketing, to showcase Niue internationally as a pristine ocean destination for high end ecotourism
  - Launch sustainable development initiatives that tie Niue's conservation actions to



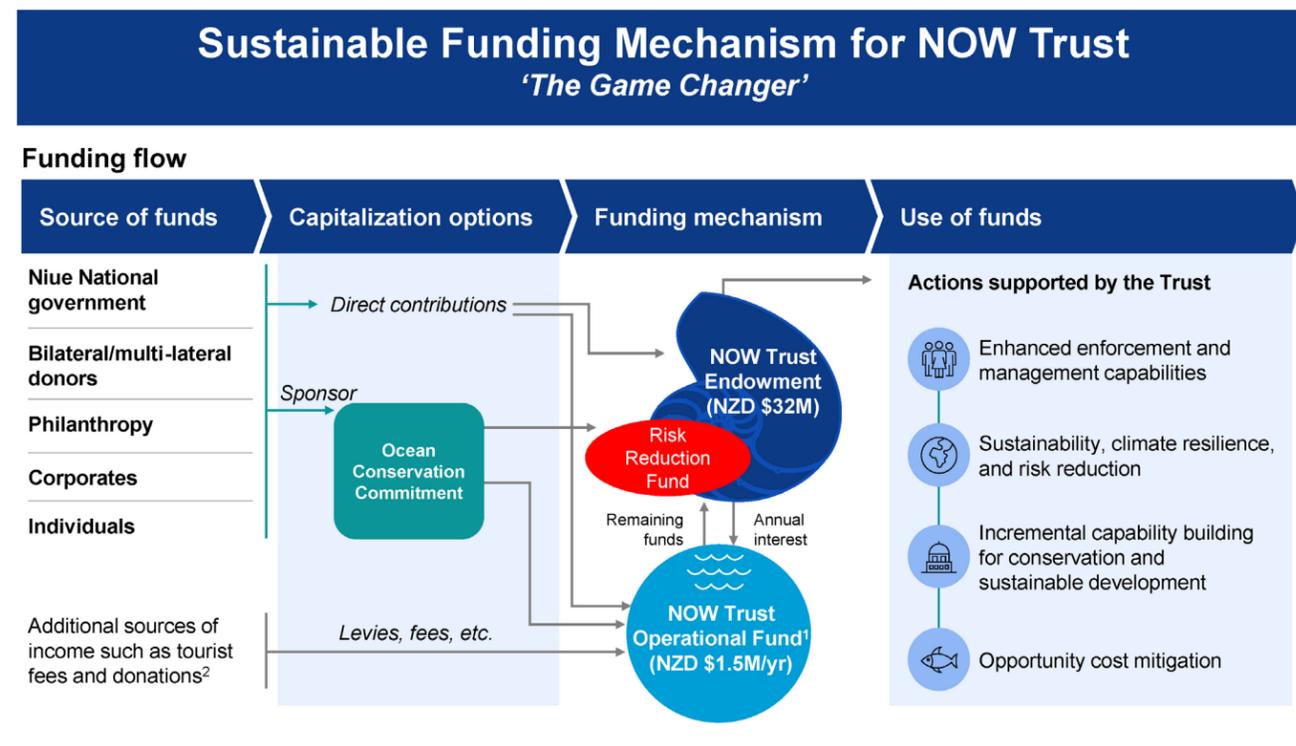
# Introducing the Niue & Oceanwide Trust



# To Achieve Sustainability: Implementing Niue's Sustainable Financing Strategy

In cooperation with the Government of Niue, the NOW team is currently working to implement its Sustainable Financing Strategy, adopted in 2020, through the establishment of the NOW Trust. NOW's goal is to ensure that Niue has sufficient resources to maintain and expand Niue's conservation and sustainable development achievements to date. The objectives of the NOW Trust's Sustainable Financing Strategy are outlined in the infographic below.

Exhibit 3: SUSTAINABLE FUNDING MECHANISM AND FUNDING FLOW FOR THE NOW TRUST



1. In the case of a natural disaster, as declared by the Government of Niue, the NOW Trust may use funds to address immediate needs as determined by the Board of Trustees. In these rare and exceptional cases, OCC sponsorship monies may be used for purposes which may not all be directly connected with ocean conservation  
 2. To be ramped up over a longer timeframe due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic

As outlined on the previous page, there are two main elements in NOW's sustainable funding mechanism. First, an operational/revolving fund charged with supporting conservation, resilience and sustainable development actions and, secondly, an endowment designed to generate the investment returns needed to sustain those efforts in perpetuity. The operational fund will contain both a bank account for day-to-day expenses and a revolving fund, which will be invested and subject to regular withdrawals and deposits. The operational fund will be supported by both the endowment and other sources of revenue (levies, fees and the like) and project funding. In addition, a ring-fenced Risk Reduction Fund is envisaged as part of the climate resilience activity. This may build up over time with the accumulation of any unused funds. The Risk Reduction Fund would help to build resilience for local stakeholders in times of increased natural disasters due to climate change (e.g., cyclones and droughts and other unpredictable catastrophic events). This is particularly important as insurance is not available for local stakeholders.

NOW's immediate priority is to fully fund operations such that the NOW Trust can establish a strong foundation for ongoing conservation efforts, test and calibrate funding priorities, and begin showing results. To support this initial effort, NOW will prioritize securing and maintaining three years' worth of minimum operating funds in the Operational Fund. Initial estimates of minimum operating funds are approximately NZ \$1.5 million per year, or up to NZ \$4.5 million over a three-year period. It should be noted that unless otherwise specified, all initial contributions and OCC sponsor funds will go towards the initial capitalization of the Operational Fund. After the minimum operating funds have been raised, additional fundraising will generally be aimed at fully capitalizing the endowment, as outlined in the next section. It is intended that at any given time, the NOW Trust will hold enough capital in the Operational Fund to cover three years' worth of activities.

# The NOW Trust Road to Capitalization

A critical element of Niue's Sustainable Financing Strategy is the establishment and capitalization of the NOW Trust, established through the same public private partnership that manages the NOW Project.

The NOW Trust is a paradigm shift in Niue's approach to conservation and sustainable management and development. Reflecting the capacity limitations of Niue's local stakeholders to continually seek project-based funding, capitalization of the NOW Trust Endowment Fund will provide sustainable and ongoing funding for Niue's conservation and resilient sustainable management and development activities and help build related capabilities over time. The durability and reliability of predictable trust-based funding (as opposed to the variability, high transaction costs, and the start-stop nature of project-based funding, which make it challenging to support a holistic approach to conservation) will allow Niue to continually plan for and build on incremental outcomes over time, reinforcing benefits to local, regional, and international stakeholders. (See Exhibit 7: Long term Outcomes Framework of NOW Trust)

The NOW Trust aims to raise at least NZ \$32 million to capitalize an endowment fund to provide about NZ \$1.5 million in consistent annual funding. A range of potential capitalization sources and approaches were canvassed in the 2020 Niue Sustainable Financing Strategy, including sustainable tourism levies, merchandise sales, donations and funding mechanisms. Given the severe impact that COVID-19 travel restrictions have had on tourism, however, the NOW team and partners have recently focused on establishing the NOW Trust using both traditional donations and more innovative methods.

It was through this expanded effort and based on the original findings of the cost benefit analysis undertaken to inform the MSMP and Niue Moana Mahu protected area, that local leaders in Niue focused on developing the idea to monetize at least some of the value associated with maintaining and growing Niue's ocean conservation efforts, as outlined above, through an innovative approach – Ocean Conservation Commitments (OCCs). The sponsorship of OCCs is just one piece of NOW's effort to capitalize the endowment, with other potential sources of funding including philanthropic donations, bilateral and multilateral donations, and Niuean Government support.

This innovative approach aligns with a new global and regional focus on the use of innovative funding approaches to invest in ocean conservation, the growing recognition of the importance of the ocean-climate nexus, and new commitments from donor partners towards these efforts, including the doubling of funds aimed at helping the most vulnerable states (including SIDS) adapt to climate change.<sup>9</sup>

9. Such commitments and funding include the 30 by 30 goal to protect 30% of marine and terrestrial land by 2030 [<https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/sciadv.aaw2869>], the UK's Blue Planet Fund that has committed £500 million to help developing countries protect marine environments and reduce poverty [<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/blue-planet-fund/blue-planet-fund>], Bezos Earth Fund which will distribute \$10 billion as grants to fighting climate change and protecting nature [<https://www.bezosearthfund.org/>], as well as Walmart that has committed to helping protect, restore, or more sustainably manage one million square miles of ocean by 2030 [<https://www.walmartsustainabilityhub.com/nature-commitments>].



# Governance Structure and the NOW Team

Beyond generating the necessary scale of funding for large-scale ocean protection and sustainable development, Niue recognizes the need to manage this funding in a way that is transformational in the predictability and effectiveness of its delivery and at a rate commensurate with Niue’s absorptive capacities as a small country.

As such, the NOW Project and public private partnership, which has been successfully operating for the past 8 years, plans to fully transition to the NOW Trust in 2023. This transition will establish a comprehensive governance structure that integrates the guidance of a Board of Trustees with the operational expertise of the NOW team, support of our partners and the perspectives of local beneficiaries, such as villages, sustainable businesses, Niuean children, and so on. This governance structure is outlined on the next page.

## We envision a fund structure as follows:

### 1. Operational Fund

- a) Operating Account – bank account holding funds to cover day-to-day operating expenses.
- b) Revolving Fund – the remainder of the operating funds would be invested, but subject to regular withdrawals to the Operating Account on an as needed basis to cover short to medium term operating costs. Likewise, the Revolving Fund will be replenished either through withdrawals from the Endowment Fund or from other contributions, such as from levies, fees, general contributions, and OCC Sponsor funds, as needed and/or may be appropriate.

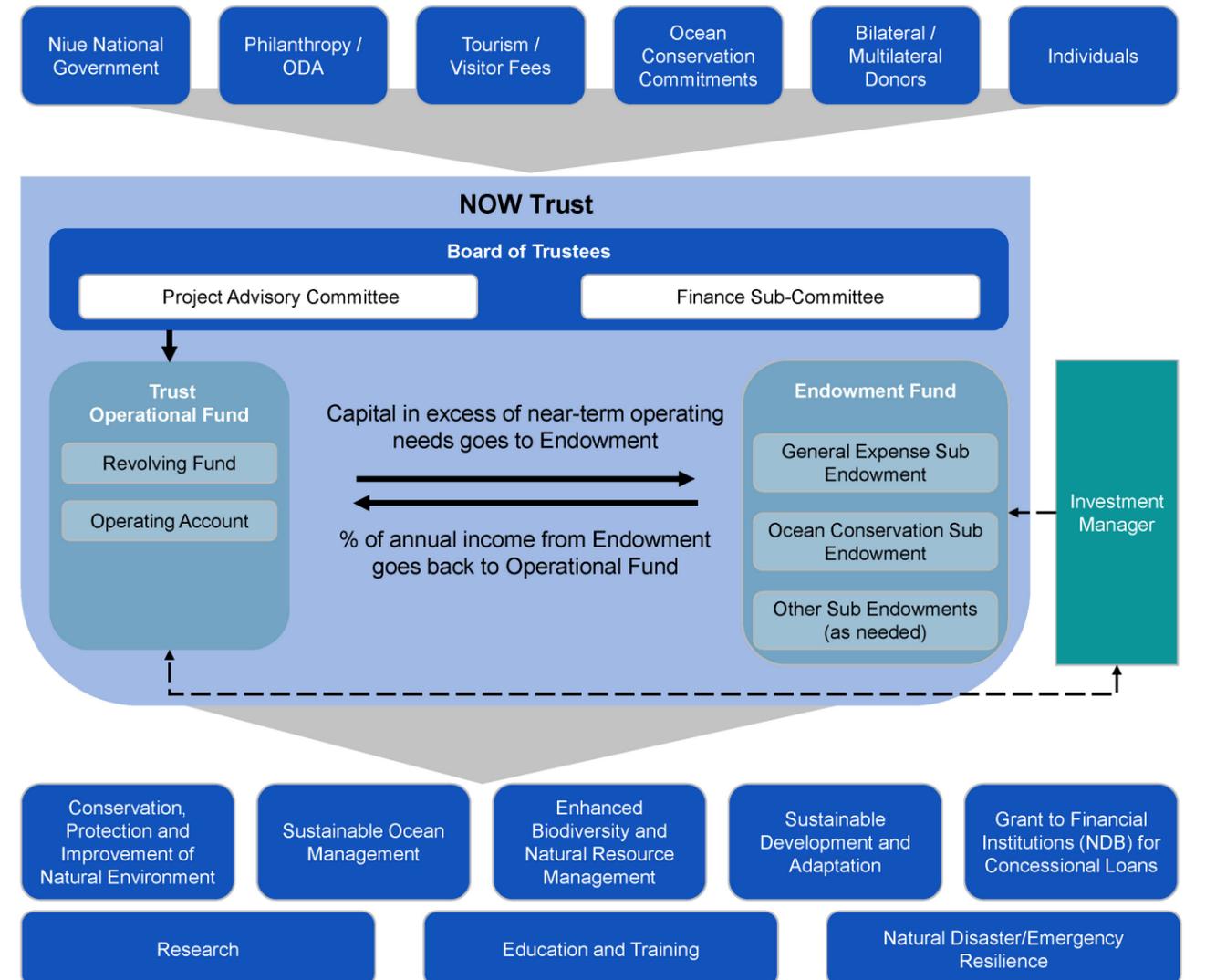
2. Endowment Fund – to be created after initial capitalization of the Operational Fund. The Endowment Fund will be invested to generate income while promoting long-term preservation of capital. As noted above and subject to the terms of the Trust Deed, the Endowment Fund will regularly disburse a share of annual income / funds to the Operational Fund. The endowment would be broken down into at least two subsidiary funds:

- a) General Expense Sub Endowment Fund (All purposes) – General Expense Sub Endowment Fund (All purposes) – General NOW Trust Contributors providing funds in excess of the minimum operating amount of the Operational Fund can be allocated to support any and all Charitable Purposes of the Trust.
- b) Ocean Conservation Sub Endowment Fund (only ocean conservation-related purposes + general trust operations) – Funds raised from OCC Sponsors in excess of the Operational Fund capitalization amount would be held in a sub endowment fund exclusively to fund efforts related to ocean conservation.
- c) Future Sub Endowment funds can be created, as desired (e.g., could cover terrestrial activities).

Exhibit 4: NOW TRUST GOVERNANCE & STRUCTURE

# NOW Trust Structure

<b>Governance</b>	4 Trustees on Incorporated Board Balanced representation (Govt / Civil Society / Private Sec) High-Capacity Board with Relevant Experience Alignment with Govt Activities via Project Advisory Cmte	Room for additional Committees and Trustees Established under NZ Charitable Trusts Act Operations Manual guides investment
<b>Beneficiaries &amp; Implementing Entities</b>	Villages (RMAC's) Govt (DAFF, Enviro, Social Services) Private Sector ( <i>Sustainable Tourism Operators - Dive, Fishing, Tours, whale watching</i> )	NDB/Niue Tourism/Chamber of Commerce NGO's (NIFA, Vaka, Oma Tafua, Tofia Niue, Churches etc.) Schools and Training (NPS, NHS, USP, vocational)



The NOW Trust Board will be represented by members from across local government, non-profit and private institutions who possess significant expertise and rigorous oversight to ensure and monitor effective performance of the NOW Trust and its endowment. Once the NOW Trust is operational, its trustees will be guided by the NOW Trust Deed, operations manual and spending policy to ensure effective governance that reinforces the NOW Trust’s vision and conservation of Niue’s precious ocean, ecosystems and culture.

The NOW Trust Board will be supported by the NOW team which will operate and implement the NOW Trust’s objectives and activities to support enforcement & management capabilities, climate resilience, sustainable development and support for alternative livelihoods. Our team consists of individuals – most of whom are Niuean – with a strong passion for, and career in, conservation, climate resilience and sustainable blue development. They have played many critical roles in establishing Niue as a global leader in protecting our oceans. See below to get to know a few key members of our team. For information on the full team, please see appendix section A:

Furthermore, as the continuation of the public private partnership behind the NOW Project, the NOW Trust will work closely with partners across government, philanthropic organizations, universities and regional institutions to establish and implement marine initiatives. The partners involved in the NOW Project include Oceans5, National Geographic Pristine Seas, GLISPA, Global Fish Watch, Blue Nature Alliance, Conservation International, IUCN, PEW, Pacific Community (SPC), Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Kaiika, Sustainable Pacific Consultancy, Niue Chamber of Commerce, Niue Tourism, OMA Tafua, Niue Ridge Reef, Sharks Pacific, Marae Moana), University of Wollongong Australia, Massey University, University of California Santa Barbara, and many more.

In addition to these partners, a core part of the NOW Trust’s vision is to ensure the perspectives and values of the Niuean people are central and well-integrated to ensure effective, country-driven action and lasting impact for generations to come. As a result, the NOW Trust will work on the ground with Niuean village leaders, schools, businesses and organizations to develop education and training opportunities that teach future generations of Niue’s ocean values and marine conservation, to strengthen local businesses in the face of climate risk, to align conservation and economic goals.

## Meet members of the NOW team



**Coral Pasisi**  
*President of Tofia Niue and NOW*

Coral is President of Tofia Niue and Niue Ocean Wide Project and Director of Climate Change and Sustainability SPC. She is a member of the Climate Security Experts Network and sits on the global Strategic Advisory Board on Climate Security and Foresight. She has briefed the UN Security Council on the issue of climate security and its impacts on the Pacific region. Coral was also the Pacific Regional Advisor to the Green Climate Fund.



**Brendon Pasisi**  
*NOW Project Manager*

Brendon Pasisi is currently Project Manager for Niue Ocean Wide Project and has served as Director of Agriculture amongst other positions for the Niuean government for 25 years now. In addition to leading conservation and marine education projects across Niue, Brendon is trained and qualified as a marine biologist in North Queensland, Australia.



**Dr. Josie Tamate**  
*Advisor, Ministry of Natural Resources Director General*

Dr. Josie Tamate is a code advisor to NOW and has served as Ministry of Natural Resources Director General since 2014, and from Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Vice Chair to Chair 2023-2024. Prior to her current roles, Dr. Tamate was a Project Economist for Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency and policy advisor for Niue government. Dr. Tamate holds a PhD from Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security from University of Wollongong.

# What the NOW Trust Will Fund

By leveraging OCCs, donations, grants and other funding streams from bilateral, corporate, philanthropic, and individual contributors, the NOW Trust will be able to implement a holistic solution that supports a broad range of actions in Niue related to conservation, socioeconomic development, resilience, and preservation of cultural values.

## 1 Enhanced enforcement and management capabilities

Enhance and support monitoring and enforcement efforts, including the full integration of local villages in the protection of our ocean. There are two components of this effort.

### 1a. Enhanced compliance and enforcement capability

Ensure robust monitoring, control, surveillance, and enforcement of MPA and Marine Spatial Management Plan (MSMP) areas to enhance and incentivise conservation protection. Potential investments and activities include:

- Providing additional enforcement above and beyond “eyes on water” provided by the government to ensure compliance with new MPA and MSMP frameworks, through hiring a Fisheries Compliance Officer, project and resource manager, and other dedicated personnel
- Supporting ecological and socioeconomic resource monitoring and management for the MPA and MSMP, including ongoing scientific work and investment in emerging technologies to establish baselines against which to measure long-term environmental and ecological outcomes

### 1b. Funding of village sustainable resource use management plans

Support the programmatic and incremental implementation of village-level sustainable resource management, conservation, and sustainable development plans. Such an approach would prove transformational for all fourteen of Niue’s village communities by providing a steady, predictable stream of funding for all local Resource Management Advisory Committees (RMACs). Conservation best practices ensure that local leaders are empowered to drive change in their areas and foster sustainable livelihoods. Potential investments and activities include:

- Providing resources to support villages in local area conservation, MPA monitoring and enforcement efforts, and coordinating those efforts with national authorities under the co-management arrangement now in place through the MSMP framework. This would be enabled by investment into additional monitoring, control and surveillance technology for community-led EEZ and MPA protection (e.g., drones, camera, surface patrol, 3D mapping)
- Building awareness and educating community members about conservation and sustainability to create an environment supportive of both conservation efforts and environmentally-compatible development projects
- Capturing the use of traditional knowledge and science in the implementation and monitoring of local area plans (LAPs)



## 2 Sustainability, climate resilience, and risk reduction

Build a climate-resilient and sustainable blue economy to help ensure that Niue’s conservation efforts are durable in the long term. There are 4 components to this effort:

### 2a. Funding and sustainability capacity building for local businesses and stakeholders

Increase the sustainability and revenue generation capability of sustainable blue economy-focused businesses in Niue to ensure that all stakeholders have the capacity and motivation to contribute to conservation outcomes and the resilience and self-sufficiency profile of Niue. Potential investments and activities include:

- Providing incentives and funding for businesses and relevant entities to upgrade to environmentally sound and climate resilient practices and infrastructure, (e.g., providing screw nails, shutters, maritime safety gear, incorporating conservation education into provision of services, etc.)
- Incentivizing and enabling the building of climate compatible infrastructure and business approaches (e.g., expanding the use of renewable energy and use of energy efficient and energy saving technologies and techniques)
- Expanding local business capacity to meet sustainable business goals, including plastic waste minimization, waste management, and pollution reduction (e.g., providing sustainable business

training through the Chamber of Commerce, implementing related accreditation standards, allocating grants to sustainable local businesses and projects)

## 2b. Funding and support for sustainable ecotourism

Promote Niue's development of a "conservation economy" built around sustainable and environmental tourism. Such efforts add value to the tourism product, whilst also making conservation more durable in the long term by ensuring that the economic promise of Niue's ocean protection – namely that it enhances Niue's brand and attraction of tourists – benefits Niue workers directly. At present, there are limited local funding options for such businesses and products.

Potential financial support and activities include:

- Supporting sustainable tourism development and corporate responsibility and helping tourism businesses adapt to the impacts of climate change<sup>10</sup> through working with the Niue Development Bank to facilitate concessional financing and hiring a sustainable tourism and accreditation officer
- Improving sustainable tourism standards and expanding compliance, for instance by expanding the Niue Tourism Office compliance and capacity building function
- Increasing the potential for revenue generation from sustainable tourism while not expanding tourism beyond Niue's cultural, environmental, or physical carrying capacity (e.g., locally allocated grants can enable innovative new business models and expanded services and products)
- Expanding direct conservation-related opportunities for tourists, such as promoting enviro-tourism (where tourists directly participate in a conservation project, e.g. coral planting; invasives removal; surveying ecosystems and species like whales), developing a coral "sponsorship" program, educating tourists about Niue's ocean conservation efforts while on tours, and more

## 2c. Sustainable development projects

Sponsor projects that improve conservation outcomes, enhance and incentivize cultural preservation, promote climate resilient development, adaptation and restoration, and build conservation capacity through education. Taken together, such sustainable development projects can help reinforce an existing national culture centered on traditional practices meant to help conserve marine resources. Potential support and activities include:

- Developing projects that can help further protect or restore marine assets (e.g. strengthening sea track access)
- Enhancing resilience and promoting adaptation for communities and businesses that may be affected by a changing marine environment (e.g., providing alternative livelihood options to reduce pressure on marine and coastal ecosystems; or deploying Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) to take pressure off coastal and reef fisheries)
- Promoting efforts to both collect and reduce marine and coastal waste

10. Increasing intensity of storms, rough seas, and cyclones associated with climate change, has created a high-risk environment for business development. Concessional financing can help grow resilient businesses and harness additional tourism dollars. Concessional financing can help grow resilient businesses and harness additional tourism dollars.

## 2d. Risk reduction

Strengthen Niue's resilience to climate change and reduce risks associated with sustainable business development. A key barrier to Niue realizing the benefits of conservation efforts is the risk associated with severe weather events, which have increased in frequency and intensity due to climate change. Funding for risk reduction would help to reduce recovery time for communities and businesses following disasters, thus helping de-risk investment and decrease recovery time. Potential activities include:

- Supporting parametric insurance arrangements for sovereign and private sector entities. For instance, cyclone insurance from the Pacific Catastrophe Risk Insurance Company (PCRIC) could ensure that businesses receive an insurance payout if windspeeds exceed a certain threshold over a certain period of time
- Engaging and supporting financial institutions to develop local risk reduction measures such as business interruption insurance, especially to address cyclone damage to key coastal access points
- Building up predictable recovery funding for natural disasters (e.g., funding that is triggered when there are states of emergency or that could deploy disaster aversion measures such as relocating key assets from coastal areas during a cyclone)
- Building capacity of local stakeholders to leverage climate finance to address their adaptation, mitigation, and loss and damage needs





### 3 Incremental capability for conservation and sustainable development

Institutionalize the nature of the public private partnership between the government of Niue and Tofia Niue through the NOW Trust and build local capacity to support conservation, resilience, and sustainable development over the long term.

#### 3a. Cohesive operational and administrative capability

While the NOW Trust will reduce the high transaction and administrative costs associated with short term project-based funding, there will remain expenses to fund the ongoing capability of the NOW Trust. Potential investments and activities include:

- Providing funding for salaries, equipment, office space, and other administrative costs to ensure that supported conservation efforts are enacted, managed effectively, and transparently reported to investors and the public.

#### 3b. Global and regional advocacy and development

Core to the NOW Trust vision is the belief that effective ocean conservation and management requires regional and global engagement. From an operational perspective, the NOW team seeks to coordinate with regional and global stakeholders to coordinate conservation efforts and share outcomes. Furthermore, the NOW team hopes the knowledge and strategies developed for Niue can be replicated and scaled to other SIDS across the Pacific providing incentives for conservation rather it being perceived as a cost burden. Potential investments and activities include:

- Ensuring ongoing monitoring of the value of ocean conservation, including liaising with regional bodies and expanding monitoring efforts over time to capture and report on a wider range of conservation and sustainable development outcomes
- Supporting the broader dissemination of lessons learned from the OCC proof of concept such that this approach can be replicated elsewhere

- Fostering similar efforts regionally and internationally and providing leadership on a conservation and climate compatible future.

#### 3c. Cross-generational education and training in marine conservation and cultural traditions

To ensure the continued appreciation and protection of Niue's oceans for the next thousand years, the NOW team aims to educate community members and the next generation of Niuean children and leaders in the value of our oceans and its deep ties to Niue's cultural traditions and practices, including through investments and activities such as:

- Increasing marine conservation and sustainable development education and resources for local primary and high schools and funding related scholarships to build the next generation of Niuean conservation leaders to protect our oceans for the long-term.
- Preserving and fostering traditional ocean practices, customs, and vernacular, such as the construction of traditional canoes for fishing, the link between harvesting of certain marine species and the moon phases, traditional names of ocean species, and other traditional practices.

### 4 Opportunity cost mitigation

Alleviate both anticipated and unforeseen revenue losses due to opportunity costs associated with conservation efforts. Potential support and activities include:

- Conservation incentives
- Supporting the adoption of alternative or more sustainable livelihoods to reduce pressure on the marine and coastal ecosystems
- Adapt as necessary to unforeseen changes in opportunity cost pressures. For example, following a natural disaster or other unpredictable catastrophic event, such as a cyclone or global pandemic, there may be increased pressure to create economic opportunities and increase access to subsistence fishing for those who have lost their livelihoods. To relieve such pressures and ensure the ongoing maintenance of the MPA and MSMP framework, efforts could include providing direct aid to affected people. If support or relief is not provided during these times then the ocean conservation efforts could well be compromised by communities in need

Opportunity cost mitigation will not include direct cash payments to government on the basis of lost revenue as a result of existing conservation policies.

To note, this support may not be necessary in any given year if there are no opportunity costs or no unforeseen losses for local business operators and communities (e.g., no natural disasters or other unpredictable catastrophic events). In this instance, any associated unused annual budget would either be put back into the endowment, or a portion into the risk reduction fund, as decided by the board. How any unused annual budget is used will be reported on annually.

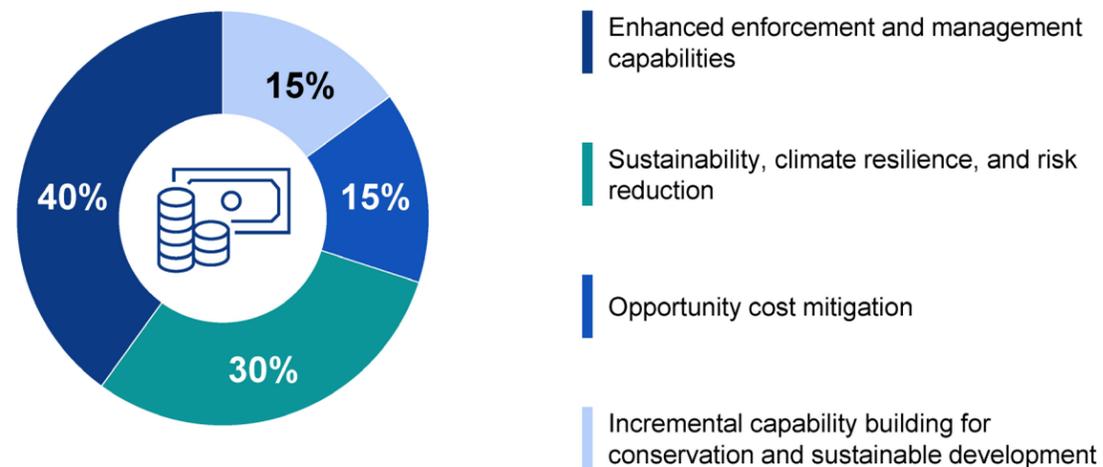


## Allocation of NOW Trust Funding Priorities

While the NOW Trust, as guided by its trustees, will be flexible in the distribution of funds across the activities outlined above from year to year, we have fully defined areas and specific investments we plan to distribute funds to as outlined in the broad categories below. Once fully capitalized, the NOW Trust does not expect the proportion of funds allocated to any of these areas to deviate significantly in any given year, subject to the NOW Trust’s spending policies and approval by the NOW Trust Board.<sup>11</sup> As outlined in the “Reporting to OCC Sponsors and NOW Trust Contributors” section below, we will report on the use of funds each year and provide an explanation for any major deviations.

Exhibit 5: INDICATIVE ALLOCATION OF NOW TRUST FUNDING PRIORITIES, % OF FUNDING

### High-level Funding Areas



11. We anticipate that the first three years of operations will help test and calibrate the optimal distribution of funding, taking into account the potential for positive conservation impact and Niue’s ability to effectively absorb and use funds.

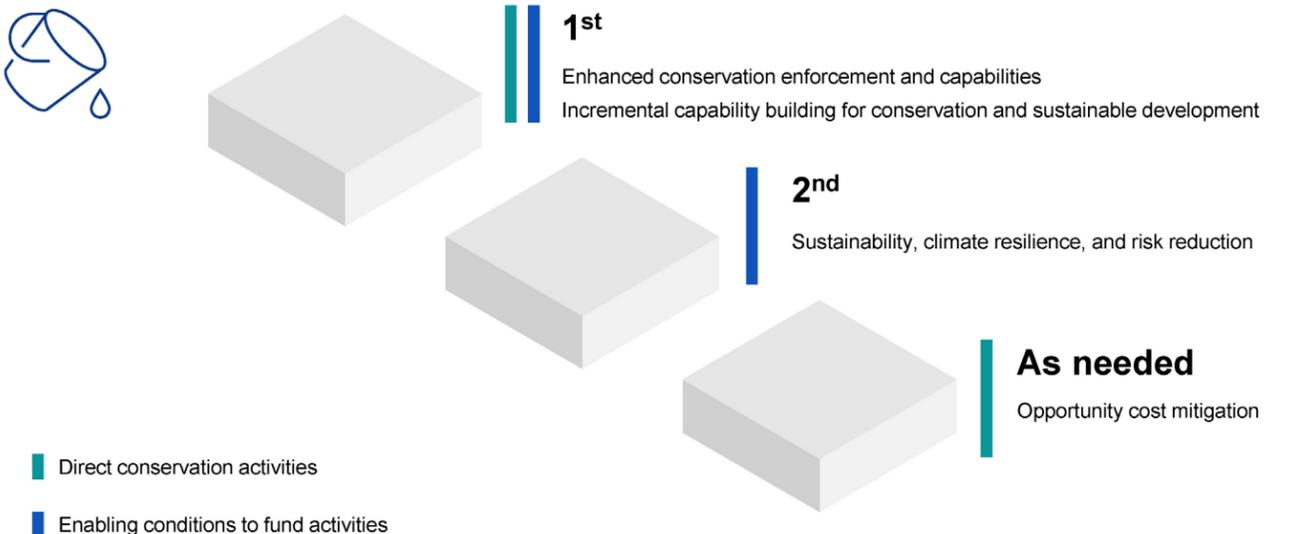
Overall, the NOW Trust will fund activities based on the prioritization framework outlined below. This will govern both which activities the NOW Trust prioritizes for early efforts as well as which efforts will be funded first in the absence of full funding availability.

Exhibit 6: PRIORITIZATION OF NOW TRUST FUNDING BEFORE FULL CAPITALIZATION OF THE TRUST

### Niue Sustainable NOW Trust Fund



#### Funding prioritization rank



Direct conservation activities

Enabling conditions to fund activities

# 10 Year Goals Framework Niue & Ocean Wide Trust (NOW Trust)

## Longer Term Goal (10+ years)

Niue has a thriving ocean ecosystem, blue economy, and culture that is reinforcing of long-term ocean protection, climate resilience, and sustainable development for current and future generations.

## Longer Term goals (5-10 years)

Niue has a thriving ocean ecosystem, blue economy, and culture that is reinforcing of long-term ocean protection, climate resilience, and sustainable development for current and future generations.

Effective management of Niue's EEZ wide Multipurpose Marine Park, Niue Moana, and related policies and plans

Niue and its Ocean is thriving with increased benefits and sustainable funding secured and being reinvented in its healthy ecosystems, resilient sustainable ocean resources, blue economy, livelihoods and the protection of natural and cultural assets

Niuean people, communities and businesses are thriving, and responsible managers, beneficiaries, and custodians of their own resources and future.

## Medium Term goals (3-5 years)

NOW Trust is fully operational, and capitalization of the Trust Endowment is at least 75% secured

Ecosystems are improving and enhanced enforcement, compliance, conservation and sustainable development capability operational

Village RMCAs are well established and implementing their sustainable resource management plans and actions empowering communities in their conservation compatible development efforts

Local climate resilient sustainable development activates are being implemented in an incremental and sustainable way

Youth are more aware and empowered and effectively participating in sustainable ocean management, development, and protection efforts

Niuean culture, heritage, and natural assets are a cherished part of Niue's blue economy journey—cherished by all Niuean and visitors

Niue's private sector is scaling up its sustainable practice and leveraging higher returns on sustainable products and services

## Short term goals and associated activities (1-3 years)

- |  |  |  |   |   |  |  |
|--|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| <p><b>1</b></p> <p><b>NOW Trust is established and rolling out operations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trust Deed completed and registered under NZ Charitable Trusts Act</li> <li>Trustees appointed</li> <li>Trust launched</li> <li>Advisory Committee established</li> <li>Investment Manager secured</li> <li>Key operations policies completed</li> <li>Training of Trustees and Committees</li> </ul> | <p><b>2</b></p> <p><b>Capitalisation of Trust is underway and innovative funding progressed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update capitalisation strategy</li> <li>Complete and launch NOW Trust website and fundraising platforms</li> <li>Secure anchor contributors and sponsors</li> <li>Socialisation and outreach</li> <li>Communications materials refined</li> <li>Branding and marketing progressed</li> <li>Business systems are established (File storage, project management, financial management, HR)</li> </ul> | <p><b>3</b></p> <p><b>Capacity is being recruited and strengthened</b></p> <p>Recruit key positions NOW Trust</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manager of NOW Trust</li> <li>Programming and Grants Management</li> <li>Finance Officer</li> <li>Communications and Outreach</li> <li>Fisheries Compliance Officer</li> <li>Tourism Accreditation and Business Officer (NTO &amp; COC)</li> <li>Biostatistician/data manager Recruited</li> <li>Training being provided</li> </ul> | <p><b>4</b></p> <p><b>Funding and implementation of key activities is underway</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement SOP and templates for SO and climate resilience project</li> <li>Develop programmatic funding framework for School 'Sustainable oceans' programme</li> <li>Identify key ocean related Niue initiatives for funding</li> <li>Refine RMAC Resource Use develop programmatic funding frameworks</li> </ul> | <p><b>5</b></p> <p><b>Partnerships are being built and strengthened</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen and build clear partnership with Government and key entities and stakeholders (COC, NTO, RMACs, Schools, dive, Fishing Associations, and tourism operators)</li> <li>Strengthen partnerships with key external BNA Nat Geo PS</li> <li>Secure donors, sponsors and contributors through outreach</li> <li>Engage with regional agencies to secure necessary regional goods and services</li> <li>Partnership with other similar trusts and arrangements are being made</li> </ul> | <p><b>6</b></p> <p><b>Results and reporting is being developed and rolled out</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow up and science and information gathering</li> <li>Impact stories are being captured and shared through website and social media</li> <li>MEL system for reporting on projects is established</li> <li>Annual reports are being developed and refined</li> <li>Audit reports are being completed</li> </ul> | <p><b>7</b></p> <p><b>MRV of Moana Mabu is developed and baselines and data being gathered and reported</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment and refinement of MRV database</li> <li>Engage with SPC, SPREP and other key information providers to explore support</li> <li>Undertake baseline surveys and follow ups where necessary</li> </ul> |
|--|--|--|---|---|--|--|





# Niue's Vision for Ocean Conservation Commitments (OCCs)



## Niue's OCC Concept in Brief

Niue's innovative Ocean Conservation Commitments (OCC) are designed to fund a holistic approach to support Niue's ecological, economic, and cultural prosperity for the benefit of both future generations and the global commons. An OCC facilitates the co-funding for 1km<sup>2</sup> of sustainable protection of Niue's ocean with a structure that provides that the funding will strictly be used for the range of initiatives discussed in the section 'What the NOW Trust will Fund'. All of these initiatives provide both the necessary capacity and capability for legitimately implementing the MSMP and protecting Moana Mahu, as well as leveraging the intended benefits to support long term ocean conservation – a resilient sustainable blue economy.

The OCC concept has been developed and championed by local leaders in Niue, along with a host of partner organizations. The concept and technical underpinnings of the NOW Trust and OCCs have been socialized and presented to various regional and international fora and stakeholders through the course of 2022 and 2023. This has garnered a groundswell of regional and international interest, constructive feedback and indicative support indicating not only potential for Niue but potential for other countries as well.

The earlier concept of OCCs was called an ocean conservation unit, then ocean conservation credit. Based on legal advice, given the complexity in current global regulatory systems and financial instruments, it was deemed necessary to change the name to Ocean Conservation Commitments to avoid any misconception that sponsors of OCCs would receive any direct financial return. Rather, the return is the satisfaction of

contributing to legitimate ocean conservation for the long term, leveraging a range of holistic values associated with that ocean space and the country and community who are its custodians.

The OCCs present a useful vector to facilitate holistic and transparent mobilization of resources from a range of different sources for a specific purpose of enabling long term ocean protection whilst leveraging the range of benefits associated with its holistic value. This aligns well with key messaging called for through recent important global meetings such as COP15 of the CBD and COP27 of the UNFCCC – the scale of the challenge of addressing the climate change and biodiversity loss challenge, requires the mobilization of significant resources from a range of different sources and delivered in a way that is most accessible by the most affected countries, in particular small island developing states (SIDS).

Conventional funding options like project grants and ad hoc donations are helpful but often can't sustain the long-term nature of conservation commitments – and they require constant fundraising efforts which are challenging for small administrations and community groups. OCCs are calculated against the long-term 20-year period in which Niue wants to maintain Moana Mahu and to leverage the associated benefits and outcomes of resilience and sustainable development. Providing a transparent approach to leveraging upfront the necessary funds to ensure this long-term effort, with a reduced requirement for resource mobilization on an ongoing basis which is also not guaranteed.

OCCs are meant to serve the specific needs of small island developing states (SIDS) like Niue. SIDS have relatively limited resources and competing funding needs such as health care, education, and economic development, all of which make the need for long-term conservation funding more critical. SIDS also take on a disproportionate cost burden in protecting the ocean from stressors created largely by other actors.<sup>12</sup> Niue aims to be a leader among SIDS, and this approach can set a foundation for SIDS to fully incorporate local values and local leadership in conservation efforts and raise supporting funding from everyone who benefits from our pristine blue ocean and its important ecosystem services.

Proceeds raised by OCC sponsorships and other direct contributions will fund both ongoing efforts and the capitalization of the NOW Trust. Rather than funding discrete grant-based projects, which can raise challenges regarding local capacity, continuity of activities beyond project term and fragmented strategies, OCC Sponsors will support our long-term commitment to fund the full range of efforts required to effectively and sustainably conserve our oceans and support sustainable development initiatives for a period of 20 years. OCC Sponsors and NOW Trust Contributors will support a range of conservation and sustainable development outcomes summarized in a comprehensive report outlining how the NOW Trust has used

those funds. All will receive the same report, reducing costs and overheads related to the often extensive and unique reporting demands of project-based efforts. Not all donors or contributors will be able to fund OCCs given their policies or given the minimum amount, and this is why direct donations are also welcomed. Direct contributions are also available to be used for a greater number of purposes (they are not restricted to being used for ocean-related activities in the way that OCC sponsorships are).

OCCs are calculated on the basis of securing the assured funding level to maintain the minimum capability to maintain Niue's MSMP and Moana Mahu and leverage a range of desired benefits. Any donations received that push the endowment over the NZD32m capitalization target, may allow the Trust to upscale activities or expand to other areas indicated in the Trust Deed and as decided by the Trustees.

The following section is meant to provide an overview of the OCC concept and how it relates to our vision for the future.

OCCs capture the value of our commitment to undertake specific ocean conservation and related resilience and sustainable development actions. We are only just at the beginning. We are excited to invite you to be part of our journey.

12. There is an element of "climate justice" in our approach: while ocean ecosystems have sustained SIDS for our entire history, those ecosystems are becoming more vulnerable due to global warming and pollution.

# OCC Design Principles

Rather than a narrowly tailored, project-bound approach to conservation, our vision is to develop a non-financial market mechanism, inclusive of a trust that can sustainably fund a broad set of efforts going forward. In relation to ocean conservation, and supporting resilience and blue economy development, our vision embraces the following design principles:

- 1 All parties that benefit from ocean conservation activities – whether locally, regionally, or globally – should help contribute to the success of those activities.
- 2 The total value of ocean conservation must consider the whole range of values provided across ecological, socioeconomic, cultural, and climate resilience-related dimensions, rather than just those values that are easy to quantify.
- 3 Permanence of protection, enabled by long-term funding, provides greater benefits than narrower efforts supported by piecemeal project-based funding.
- 4 Conservation – supported by a holistic approach that considers sustainable development in addition to conservation actions – is more durable and impactful than narrower approaches.
- 5 Upfront funding of conservation – backed by a clear theory of change – enables immediate funding flows for conservation actions that will support future outcomes.
- 6 Fundraising mechanisms should allow implementing partners to maximize time spent on conservation actions and minimize the often burdensome time and costs associated with project-based development and reporting.
- 7 The OCC concept and methodology could be replicated and built on for other SIDS and developing countries seeking to raise funds from and in support of maintaining large ocean conservation efforts without this coming as a disproportionate burden.

NOW is looking to OCCs to assist marine protection and conservation as well as broader sustainable initiatives on land that directly impact on the integrity and longevity of ocean protection. Niue's efforts include having already established legal protection for the Niue Moana Mahu MPA and sustainable management plans for Niue's entire ocean space. It also includes sustainable tourism and business policies, and village resource use plans that reinforce Niue-wide support for protecting its natural ocean assets.

Niue is actively working on the policies and partnerships needed to durably maintain these standards – the NOW Trust being one of these critical partnerships.

## Detailed Overview of OCC Characteristics

The amount of an OCC sponsorship is calculated based on a per km<sup>2</sup> area of ocean conservation per annum basis. In other words, a single OCC is valued at \$250/km<sup>2</sup> over a 20-year period by calculating part of the cost of conserving one square kilometer of ocean as well as building the necessary resilient and sustainable blue economy that reinforces ocean conservation for the long term. OCCs cannot be onsold. They can be gifted, but do not generate financial returns. The benefits of the OCCs are in the satisfaction of contributing to the uplift of ecosystem services and resilient sustainable development as a whole.

The amount of an OCC sponsorship is based on the annual cost of the activities that the NOW Trust seeks to undertake once the NOW Trust is fully capitalized. To calculate the amount of an OCC sponsorship, we assessed the annual cost of activities outlined above, and then divided these costs by the area of Niue's no-take marine protected area (127,000 km<sup>2</sup> of Niue Moana Mahu MPA), because protected areas drive the majority of the activity costs outlined above. The integrity of the entire area is critical to the conservation outcomes the NOW Trust aims to generate. In addition to monitoring and compliance of the Niue Moana Mahu MPA, funding from OCC contributions will be used to support activities beyond the Niue Moana Mahu MPA, including, for example, community resilience, sustainable resource management plans, and the broader implementation of the marine spatial management plan in the Nukutuluea Marine Park which encompasses 100% of Niue's EEZ.

- Sponsorship amount per Ocean Conservation Commitment per year: The amount of an OCC sponsorship is \$NZD12.50 /km<sup>2</sup> / year based on the annual cost of conservation and associated sustainable development for 1km<sup>2</sup> of Niue's waters, as outlined in Exhibit 8 below.
- Period: OCCs must be sponsored in 20-year increments, so the minimum sponsorship amount per OCC is \$NZD250.
- Total OCCs for sponsorship: A total of 127,000 20-year OCCs will be created based on the size of the Niue Moana Mahu MPA (127,000 km<sup>2</sup>), although additional OCCs may be generated through future expansion of Niue's marine protected areas and/or to fund activities in Niue's marine spatial management plan area (outside of the MPA). At this stage it is anticipated that up to 100,000 OCCs will be made available at first opportunity for sponsorship to enable capitalization of the NOW Trust.
- Management & Accounting: The NOW Trust, once established, will issue and manage the OCCs funded by each OCC Sponsor.
- Use of funds: OCC funds will be used to support the activities outlined in the "What the NOW Trust Will Fund" section above.
- Management of funds: As described in the "Implementing Niue's Sustainable Financing Strategy" section above, initial OCC sponsored funds and other general contributions made by NOW Trust Contributors will go to capitalize the Operational Fund in order to provide minimum operating funds of approximately NZ \$1.5 million per year, or up to \$4.5 million over a three-year period, for direct and short-term expenditure. After the minimum operating funds have been raised, additional OCC sponsored funds will go towards fully capitalizing the endowment with OCC funds held in an ocean-

specific sub-account (as detailed in "Governance Structure and the NOW Team" and "Exhibit 4"). Given the projected NOW Trust capitalization target of \$32 million, it is anticipated that the vast majority of OCC funds will be deposited in the endowment fund. Subject to the NOW Trust's spending policies and approval by the NOW Trust Board, the endowment fund will be invested and subject to annual withdrawals to the Operational Fund to fund ongoing operational costs and activities.

- Status of protection: The Government of Niue has legally designated Niue Moana Mahu as a marine protected area.
- Emergencies: In the case of a natural disaster, as declared by the Government of Niue, the NOW Trust will reserve the right to adjust funding priorities accordingly to address immediate needs, all subject to the NOW Trust's spending policies and approval by the NOW Trust Board. In these rare and exceptional cases, OCC sponsorship monies may be used for habitat restoration, recovery efforts and community needs, which may not all be directly connected with ocean conservation.
- An OCC is not a financial instrument nor an investment product: It is important to note that OCCs are a non-financial market instrument to assist in ocean conservancy and other sustainability initiatives through the contributions raised by sponsorship of the OCCs. OCC Sponsors do not receive repayment of the contributions or any financial return.
- Expressions of support and indicative pledges: The NOW Trust is in the process of establishing administrative and legal procedures to accept financial contributions from all contributors. Expressions of support and indicative pledges are welcomed.

Exhibit 8: BREAKDOWN OF COSTS PER YEAR USED TO DERIVE OCC SPONSORSHIP AMOUNT



# Ocean Conservation Commitment (OCC): definition and objectives

## An Ocean Conservation Commitment is...

-  **A commitment that facilitates co-funding the protection** of 1km<sup>2</sup> of ocean
-  **An innovative mechanism** valuing Niue's existing contribution to and continued investments into the **appreciation of global natural capital**, enhancing ecological, socioeconomic and cultural values
-  **Funds will be used for ocean protection**, marine conservation, climate resilience, and related sustainable development
-  **An enabler of increased, standardized monitoring & reporting** Niue's conservation activity & impact
-  **A democratization of conservation financing** providing a wide range of persons the opportunity to directly support conservation projects
-  **A catalyst that lays foundation for other SIDs** to establish independent, long-term, holistic, country and community-driven conservation strategies

## An Ocean Conservation Commitment is not...

-  **A financial product** that will provide financial value or returns to the sponsor
-  **A tradeable product** that can be purchased and resold to another sponsor
-  **A legal document** that represents ownership or claims over 1km<sup>2</sup> of ocean real estate in Niue
-  **An offset** to be used like carbon credits, enabling a net zero target or requiring a verification process following international standards
-  **A guarantee** of specific impacts (beyond conservation action as described by the brochure)





# Reporting to OCC Sponsors and NOW Trust Contributors

As outlined above, the NOW Trust aims to capture the value of our commitment to undertake specific conservation, and related resilience, and sustainable development actions. In the future, as we monitor and track outcomes, the NOW Trust and OCCs may evolve to capture the value of the specific outcomes, potentially expanding Niue's ability to effectively manage our oceans and generate benefits to support resilient and sustainable livelihoods for our people. Given our goal to minimize overhead and reporting efforts and maximize funds to support conservation, resilience building, and sustainable development, we are committed to reporting on those efforts in a standardized format to all OCC Sponsors and other NOW Trust Contributors.

# Reporting Content

Each year, OCC Sponsors and NOW Trust Contributors will receive information on the range of important outcomes generated by their funding across conservation, resilience and sustainable development objectives of the NOW Trust through the following main avenues:

- (1) Annual report on the use of funds against the funding areas and activities outlined above
- (2) The development of a comprehensive monitoring reporting and verification (MRV) regime for the Niue Moana Mahu Area, inclusive of a set of metrics accounting for ecological and socioeconomic outcomes and trends (outlined below)
- (3) Impact stories made real and possible by your support

This section outlines what will be included in these materials, while the next section outlines the methodology used to gather inputs for these materials.

## 1. Annual report on the use of funds

The annual report to OCC Sponsors and NOW Trust Contributors will include a description and theory of change for each funding area outlined in the ‘What the NOW Trust Will Fund’ section above, a report on the use of funds across all areas for the previous year (including a percentage breakdown of how much funding went to each of the four areas outlined above), and an initial list of priorities for the coming year. A high-level summary of the NOW Trust financials will also be included.

## 2. Metrics for tracking ecological and socioeconomic outcomes

Annual materials provided will also include details on specific ecological and socioeconomic outcome metrics. Where possible, we will report the outcome metrics as compared to a defined baseline, although in some cases there is not readily available baseline data in Niue. In the future, we aim to establish additional scientific and traditional knowledge baselines to improve our ability to report on specific outcome and impact-oriented metrics. While we aim to include a wide variety of metrics, we have been inspired in part by metrics against which progress on the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other conservation commitments might be tracked. Please see “How OCC and NOW Trust Contributions will support global commitments” section below for more detail.

## 3. Impact Stories

Annual materials provided will also highlight specific stories on how efforts supported by NOW Trust donations and sponsorship of OCCs are impacting both community members and native marine life. We recognize that the true value of your funding cannot always be reflected in numbers, and we therefore want to highlight the real impact of contributing through an OCC or direct donation. We also hope these stories will bring interested parties together to create a community of like-minded individuals and organizations who value these efforts and their lasting impacts for Niueans and the global commons.



# Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification Process

To produce the inputs for the annual report, we will follow a set of rigorous processes outlined below:

## 1. Annual Report on the use of funds

To verify that the funds provided are used to support the priorities and activities enumerated above, the NOW Trust will go through an annual auditing process in adherence with the legal requirements of the territory in which the NOW Trust is established. As mentioned above, a high-level summary of the NOW Trust's financials will be included in the annual report to OCC Sponsors and NOW Trust Contributors, with the full audit financial statements available later in the year once they are completed.<sup>13</sup>

## 2. Metrics for ecological and socioeconomic outcomes

The NOW Trust will build a comprehensive MRV system over time supporting the holistic monitoring and reporting on specific ecological and socioeconomic metrics amongst others, as indicated in the diagram below. By providing these metrics, we hope to demonstrate the impact of the actions we have taken, many of which have different timeframes of practical measurability. Ongoing monitoring will help to strengthen and build a robust system over time and may also provide an opportunity, in the future, to work with a third-party verification partner to verify the impact of our efforts and monetize specific outcomes, e.g., carbon sequestration or biodiversity uplift associated with Niue's protected areas.

To the best of our ability, the NOW Trust will pull from a variety of sources to report on the metrics listed below on an annual basis. In the visual below, we have identified the initial set of metrics we expect to be able to report on. In the future, we expect to report on an increasing number of outcome metrics, including biodiversity-specific data points. However, reporting of such metrics will be limited at first due to the need to build capacity and capability to conduct on-the-water research, lab tests, and community surveys, as well as develop the necessary partnerships.

## Personal Impact Stories

We will work with community members and local actors to document relevant stories to include in the annual report to sponsors and donors. We may also publish stories more frequently through social media and other avenues and will update OCC Sponsors and NOW Trust Contributors through our website when such stories are available.

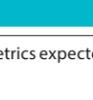
<sup>13</sup> An official financial audit will be available on the NOW SMOCT website later in the year once completed, generally late March or April.

Exhibit 9

### Initial outcome metrics to be reported <sup>1</sup>

Value drivers against which annual reporting will evolve

- Reported year 1
- Clear-path to reporting in near term
- Required meaningful capability building to measure
- No clear path to measurement at present

		Category	Examples	Traceability through MRV		
Ocean Conservation Credit Value		Threatened	# of impacted	Vulnerable and endangered species based on global data sites	●	
				Protection of only habitat of the Katuali, or flat-tail snake	●	
				Conservation of potential grey shark breeding area	●	
				Preservation of Humpback whale breeding and birthing ground	●	
		Unique	Qualitative	Continuation of conservation actions across 6 bioregions	●	
				Continued habitat protection across 15 seamounts	●	
	Ecosystem	Index	Quantification of biodiversity	Number of species / km <sup>2</sup> (species abundance)	●	
			Tons/km <sup>2</sup> biomass (stabilization or increase)	●		
		Regional	Sequestration &	Niue specific tCO <sub>2</sub> e	Ocean acidification, warming, and/or deoxygenation	●
					tCO <sub>2</sub> sequestered estimate blue carbon	●
					tCO <sub>2</sub> emissions avoided from reduced maritime traffic in Moana Mahu (e.g., historic commercial fishing fleets)	●
		Climate	Quantification of resilience efforts	Benefits of nature-based solutions (e.g., reduced pressure on reef systems, fish stocks, avoided runoff)	●	
#, area, species protection of food security hot spots (Beveridge Reef)				●		
Sustainable fishing indicators				# Marine days/events applying sustainable practice guidelines	●	
	Revenue	Sustainable	Area under	Area protected to ensure access rights for small-scale fishers	●	
				Comparative value return on fish to Niue through sustainable versus industrial commercial fishing (NZ\$/kg fish)	●	
	Socio-	Education and cultural practice &	Area under	Km <sup>2</sup>	Direct contribution of tourists to conservation (e.g., effort & \$)	●
					# businesses accredited to sustainable business standards	●
					# employed by sustainable tourism	●
					# of people trained/educated in ocean conservation & cultural value	●
	Area under	Km <sup>2</sup>	Portion protected or managed	# of knowledge products unique to Niue developed & shared	●	
				\$ value of contribution to 30by30 goal	●	
	Govern-	Monitoring, control,	Years of protection	Dedicated resources to MCS	127,000 km <sup>2</sup> LSMPA	●
					318,018 km <sup>2</sup> Niue Nukutuluea Multiple-use Marine Park	●
					20 years	●
					100% of EEZ marine park protected	●
	Monitoring, control,	Years of protection	Dedicated resources to MCS	40% of EEZ in protected no-take zone	●	
				\$ value of contribution to 30by30 goal	●	
				# of reported IUU incidents	●	
				# efforts to combat IUU	●	
	Monitoring, control,	Years of protection	Dedicated resources to MCS	# of air and sea surveillance missions	●	
				# and type of other methods deployed – e.g. remote sensing	●	
				Expenditure for MSC activities (NZ\$)	●	
				# of air and sea surveillance missions	●	

1. Outcome metrics expected to evolve over time

## How the NOW Trust can support nature-related targets and commitments (e.g., UN SDGs)

Through sponsoring OCCs or donating directly to the NOW Trust, bilaterals, philanthropies, corporates, and individuals will be able to access NOW Trust annual materials and metrics that can directly and concretely support sustainable commitments, climate finance goals and policy objectives. Examples of such include UN SDGs, 30x30 targets, SBTNS and other social or biodiversity-related commitments. The section below deep dives into how the NOW Trust activities support UN SDGs as an example.

### NOW Trust and UN SDGs

While the NOW Trust supports many critical Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the NOW Trust directly address SDGs 8, 12, 13, 14, and 17 by funding marine conservation, climate and economic resilience and sustainable development actions.

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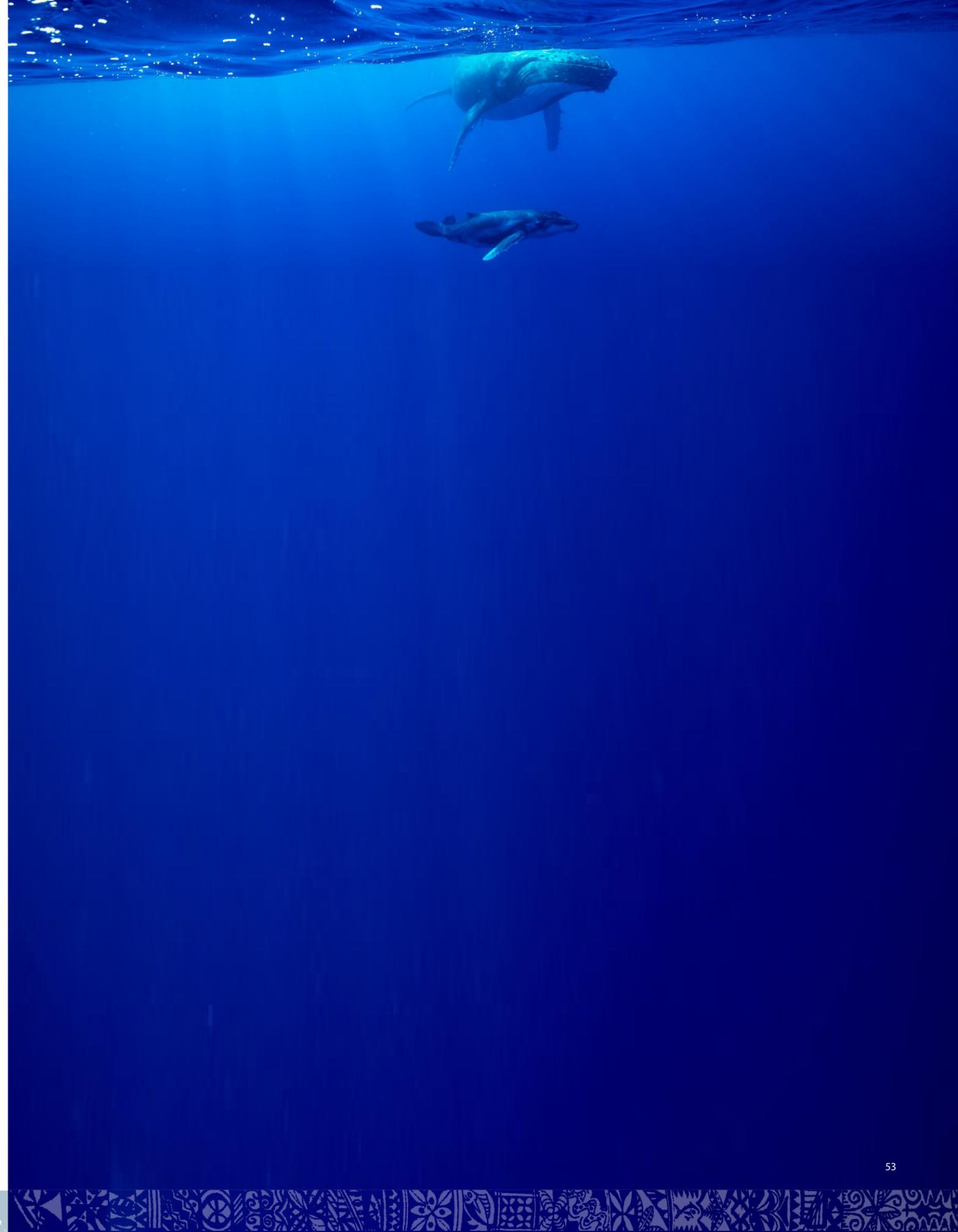
SDG 8 covers “Decent Work and Economic Growth” which is defined as promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. The NOW Trust will support SDG 8 through actions to promote sustainable tourism, enabling jobs while promoting local culture and products.

SDG 12 covers “Sustainable Production and Consumption”. The NOW Trust will support critical aspects of this target, including the development of sustainable tourism monitoring, reduction in material footprints such as plastics, and reducing waste generation.

SDG 13 covers “Climate Action,” which is defined as taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. This includes the development of finance flows from developed countries to developing nations for mitigation actions, as well as improved education on climate change mitigation, adaptation, and sustainable development. The NOW Trust will help support climate change adaptation efforts and related capacity building, as well as provide educational awareness regarding climate change mitigation and adaptation. As a SIDS, Niue finds it very difficult to access climate finance and this allows a tailored solution to harness climate funding in way that supports country level disbursement.

SDG 14 covers “Life Below Water,” which is defined as conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development. For SDG 14, the NOW Trust will support efforts to uphold and improve water quality, conserve, manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems, address impacts of ocean acidification, regulate fish and seafood harvests and work to end IUU, promote sustainable use of marine resources, as well as increase scientific knowledge and monitoring of ocean health and its indicators.

SDG 17 covers, “Partnerships for sustainable development”, which is defined as strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development. It includes partnership development, mobilizing sufficient funding and capacity building, which the NOW Trust will support through the development of international partnerships and funding flows.



## In the Event of Dissolution of the Trust

If, for whatever reason, the NOW Trust is dissolved, funds raised by the NOW Trust, including OCC sponsorships, would go to similar conservation efforts insofar as possible, subject to the parameters outlined in the NOW Trust's dissolution clause.

## Government of Niue

The Government of Niue is a co-settlor of the Trust and proponent of this initiative. On certain matters under the Trust Deed, the approval of Government of Niue is required, and major or exceptional initiatives of national significance are to be undertaken on a collaborative basis with Government of Niue.

Contributions to the NOW Trust are governed by New Zealand law and subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the New Zealand courts. An OCC Sponsor's and NOW Trust Contributor's relationship is solely with the NOW Trust, and not Tofia Niue, the Government of Niue or any other entity. No commitments or obligations, whether contractual or otherwise, are given or entered into by the Government of Niue, Tofia Niue or any other entity, to, or with, any OCC Sponsor or NOW Trust Contributor. While the NOW Trust will use revenue from OCC sponsorships in furtherance of its charitable purposes, with particular regard for those relating to marine conservation and sustainable stewardship of Niue's ocean resources, OCC Sponsors and NOW Trust Contributors acknowledge that the NOW Trust is not responsible for any future policy or legislative changes made by the Government of Niue or the Niue Assembly, including in relation to the size or scope of any current marine protected areas. In this regard, OCC Sponsors and NOW Trust Contributors recognise they do so at their own risk, and agree that they have no recourse to the NOW Trust, Tofia Niue or the Government of Niue for any changes in the Government of Niue's policies, or changes to any legislation.

## Potential for Future OCC Adjustments

A portion of NOW Trust funding will be used to establish a set of ecological and socioeconomic baselines by which to measure specific outcomes over time. The NOW Trust plans to embed the value of these outcomes in future releases of OCCs. While not possible at present, the potential economic valuation of these outcomes as part of future OCCs would increase the cost of OCCs, providing additional funding to the NOW Trust.

As outlined above, in the initial launch the NOW Trust will issue OCCs the sponsorship amounts of which are calculated to approximately cover the costs associated with the actions we will take. While only 127,000 OCCs will be made available in total (in line with the area under full no take protection), any OCCs not sponsored in the initial launch will be held in reserve for the future. We anticipate that OCCs sponsored in the future will require a greater minimum contribution as ecological and socioeconomic outcome metrics (e.g., ecosystem services, biodiversity uplift, carbon sequestration, ocean acidification, etc.) can be measured, reported, and verified and therefore the NOW Trust's need for funds will increase. Additional OCCs could be created if Niue's area of protection expands.

We anticipate that certain outcomes are more likely to be more easily monetized than others, including biodiversity uplift, specific species' biomass uplift as well as specific species' population uplift. However, given the speed with which new nature-based and socioeconomic outcomes are given tangible economic values, there may be other benefits that we have not yet anticipated that could be valued by society. The NOW Trust reserves the right to adapt and monetize new sources of value in future OCC sponsorship opportunities or through innovative funding mechanisms. This will be done in a transparent way to ensure no double counting of the same Ocean Conservation Commitments.

# APPENDIX / GLOSSARY

- BNA – Blue Nature Alliance
- COC – Chamber of Commerce
- DAFF – Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
- MEL – Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
- MRV – Monitoring, Reporting and Verification
- Nat Geo PS – National Geographic Pristine Seas
- NDB – Niue Development Bank
- NHS – Niue High School
- NIFA – Niue Island Fishing Association
- NPS – Niue Primary School
- NTO – Niue Tourism Office
- ODA – Official Development Assistance
- RMAC – Resource Management Advisory Committees
- SOP – Standard Operating Procedure
- SPC – Pacific Community
- SPREP – South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
- USP – University of South Pacific

## Meet the full NOW Project advisory team

### Niue Ocean Wide



**Brendon Pasisi**  
NOW Project Manager



**Carmen Fuhiniu**  
NOW Project Officer

### Tofia Niue



**Coral Pasisi**  
President of Tofia Niue



**Avi Rubin**  
VP, Private Sector



**Catherine Papani**  
Chamber of Commerce



**Laga Lavini**  
Executive Member

### Government of Niue



**Dr. Josie Tamate**  
Director General, Ministry of Natural Resources



**Doreen Siataga**  
Financial Secretary GON



**Poi Okesene**  
Director, Agriculture and Fisheries GON

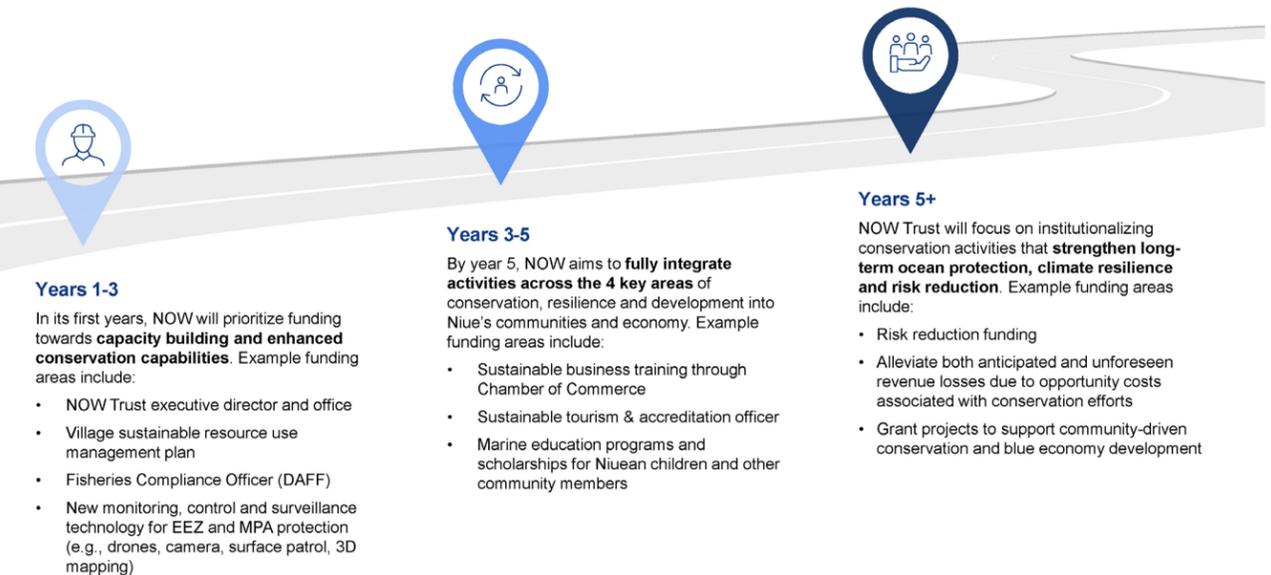


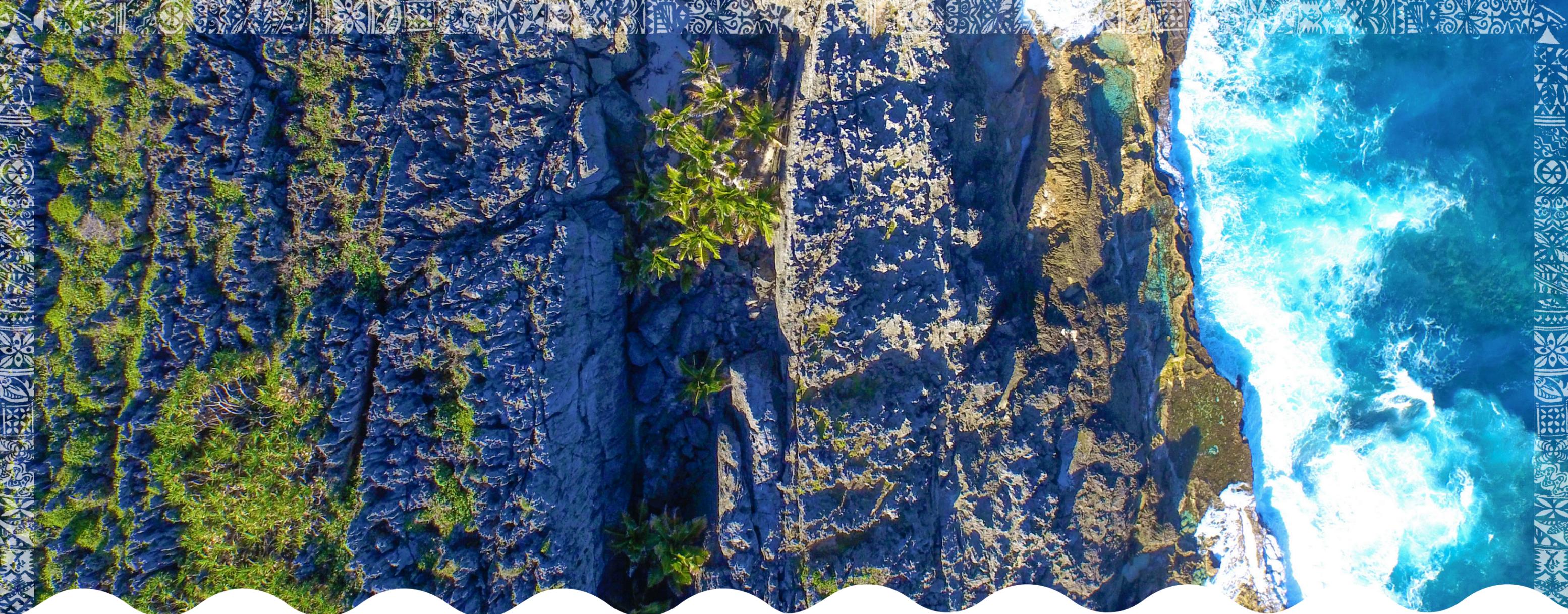
**Richard Siataga**  
GIS expert, Department of Lands and Survey



**Micah Fuhiniu-Viviani**  
Acting CEO, Niue Tourism

## NOW Trust plans to allocate funding to prioritize and immediately support conservation activities and capacity building





Public- Private Partnership  
Government of Niue & Tofia Niue

For more information contact:

Brendon Pasisi email: [niueoceanwide01@gmail.com](mailto:niueoceanwide01@gmail.com) or visit <https://www.niueoceanwide.com>