Assessment of the Enabling Conditions for Rights-Based Management of Fisheries and Coastal Marine Resources
This paper assesses enabling conditions for community-driven, rights-based management approaches to coastal marine resources management in the Solomon Islands. It is part of a series of country reports for six countries in the Western Pacific region. The objective of this assessment is to inform potential interventions that may accelerate the adoption of such management approaches. A full description of the rationale and the methodology used in these assessments can be found in the accompanying document, “Assessment of Enabling Conditions for Rights-Based Management of Fisheries and Coastal Marine Resources in the Western Pacific.” This study represents the best professional judgment of California Environmental Associates and the Community Investment Forum (a project of the Trust for Conservation Innovation) based on our interviews and research. While we benefited enormously from the help of experts within the region, any errors in the report are ours alone. This project was supported by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation as part of an ongoing effort to inform long-term grant making.
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## Acronyms

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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>CBRM+</td>
<td>community-based resource management</td>
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<td>CCA</td>
<td>community conserved area</td>
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<td>CITES</td>
<td>Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna</td>
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<td>ECD</td>
<td>Environment and Conservation Division</td>
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<td>FAC</td>
<td>Fisheries Advisory Council</td>
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<td>GEF</td>
<td>Global Environment Facility</td>
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<td>GNI</td>
<td>gross national income</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISSCAAP</td>
<td>International standard statistical classification of aquatic animals and plants</td>
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<tr>
<td>LALSU</td>
<td>Landowners Advocacy and Legal Support Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>LDCF</td>
<td>Least Developed Countries Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>LMMA</td>
<td>locally managed marine area</td>
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<tr>
<td>MECDM</td>
<td>Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology</td>
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<td>MFMR</td>
<td>Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources</td>
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<td>MMA</td>
<td>marine managed area</td>
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<td>MPA</td>
<td>marine protected area</td>
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<td>NCC</td>
<td>National Coordinating Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>nongovernmental organization</td>
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<td>NPOA</td>
<td>National Plan of Action for the Coral Triangle Initiative</td>
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<td>ODA</td>
<td>official development assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>OPMC</td>
<td>Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>protected area</td>
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<td>PAA</td>
<td>Protected Areas Act of 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCDF</td>
<td>Provincial Capital Development Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>PIC</td>
<td>Pacific island country</td>
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<tr>
<td>PGSP</td>
<td>Provincial Government Strengthening Programme</td>
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<td>RAMSI</td>
<td>Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands</td>
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<tr>
<td>RBM</td>
<td>rights-based management</td>
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<td>SCCF</td>
<td>Special Climate Change Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>SILMMA</td>
<td>Solomon Islands Locally Managed Marine Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBD</td>
<td>Solomon Islands dollars</td>
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<tr>
<td>WPMA</td>
<td>Wildlife Protection Management Act</td>
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</table>
Rights-based Management (RBM) Approaches

An RBM approach provides an entitled entity (e.g., a community or cooperative) with the right to manage its fisheries and coastal marine resources. There are numerous forms of rights-based approaches to fisheries management, but essentially these approaches confer privileges and responsibilities that define the appropriate use of a fisheries resource. RBM approaches effectively replace the system dynamics of open access fisheries with a fundamentally different model.

Several features characterize a rights-based approach:

- Exclusive rights, or access privileges, are assigned to a particular entity or group.
- The term of the access privilege is sufficiently long and secure for the holder to realize long-term benefits.
- The defined privileged access area is sufficiently large such that management actions by the users are not undermined by activities outside the area.
- Management systems control mortality and fishing effort.

Use rights can generally be classified into three different categories:

- Access rights, which authorize access to a fishery (e.g., licenses)
- Effort rights, which authorize the right to a specific amount of fishing effort (e.g., days at sea)
- Output rights, which authorize the right to a specific amount of harvest (e.g., catch share)

Once access privileges are granted, a range of management options may be implemented, including spatial access limitations such as no-take zones, effort restrictions such as a reduction to the overall fishing effort allowed, or output controls such as catch limits. These management tools may be implemented by a range of management bodies—from local communities to government entities to “co-management” bodies.

Executive Summary

Consisting of almost 1,000 islands and stretching between Eastern Papua New Guinea and Northern Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands exhibit stunning biological wealth, including some of the highest coral diversity in the world, half of all known mangrove species, and reefs teeming with fish. While resource health and habitat integrity are not considered to be in an alarming state, clear signs of overexploitation are gradually becoming more manifest and can be directly related to several key anthropogenic factors: population growth, illegal fishing, extractive industries such as logging and mining, and industrial pollution. Considered a failed state by some, the Solomon Islands are slowly recovering from ethnic tensions in the late 1990s and early 2000s. While a number of community and subnational coastal marine resource management pilots have been attempted over the past decade, they have faced legal, political, and institutional obstacles.

Looking forward, there is a need to secure the longevity, sovereign management, and effectiveness of relevant fisheries management and protected area efforts. There is also a need to consider how rights-based fisheries and coastal marine resource management approaches may or may not be relevant and scalable in Solomon Islands.

We reviewed the status of four key “top-down” enabling conditions that would support the use of fisheries and coastal marine RBM approaches to safeguard coastal and marine resources in the Solomon Islands.
Legal Conditions: The national laws governing marine resources in the Solomon Islands are generally good: theoretically, they require fisheries management plans, allocate funds for management, provide legal recognition for protected areas, and regulate export of some species of marine wildlife. In practice, regulation to acknowledge and support RBM through provincial ordinances is possible but seldom used. The Protected Areas Act (PAA, which only came into force in 2012) is also a potential avenue, but it remains untested. In both cases, onerous and complex legal procedures and limited resources have thus far limited use. While customary management systems are acknowledged and are common in most areas, their effectiveness is often undermined by a lack of clarity around landownership and rights. There are currently no national policies to regulate or to moderate access or fishing effort.

Institutional and Implementation Conditions: Natural resource management authority rests with the national government and appointed Ministers. The system is marked by a lack of coordination and little implementation of national laws outside of the capital, Honiara. The exercise of ministerial authority may undermine local and provincial protection efforts, due to national laws that grant to the national government ultimate decision-making authority around land acquisition and resource extraction. While some administrative power has devolved to provincial governments, these subnational authorities lack the resources and capacity to effectively carry out their responsibilities. Little, if any, active management and enforcement of regulations related to the Fisheries Act is currently being implemented at the provincial level. Yet some promising efforts are just getting under way: for example, the National Coordinating Council to implement the National Plan of Action will help coordinate external donor funding, as well as nongovernmental organization and ministerial efforts. Likewise, provincial governments that have struggled to effectively manage coastal and fisheries resources will benefit from a recently launched 15-year strengthening program.

Budgetary Conditions: Marine resource management in the Solomon Islands is underfunded, especially when compared with other ministries. Most of the currently allocated funding is focused on the offshore, revenue-generating tuna fishery, nearshore fishery infrastructure development projects, and fish aggregating devices. Nongovernmental external funding tends to be project-driven, short-term, and poorly coordinated.

Political and Economic Decision-making: The political economy of the Solomon Islands is strongly influenced by two interdependent themes: the huge influence of donor aid and the importance of economic growth through resource extraction. Donor contributions make up an estimated 50% of gross national income and may be complicated with other geopolitical or economic interests. While high-level policy and national plans, on paper, address and give priority to RBM, this does not translate down to lower levels of government or action on the ground.

As with all the countries assessed as part of this effort, resolving and responding to these key findings will require a paradigm shift. But strengthening these enabling conditions is essential to ensure that the conservation community’s investment to date is self-sustaining and that the stage is set for broader adoption of RBM systems for nearshore fisheries and coastal marine resources.
1. Introduction

Consisting of almost 1,000 islands and stretching between Eastern Papua New Guinea and Northern Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands are at the eastern portion of the Coral Triangle (see Figure 1). The country’s waters exhibit stunning biological wealth, including the second highest coral diversity in the world, half of all known mangrove species, and reefs teeming with fish.

The status of this rich biological endowment is hard to measure due to a lack of data. (See Table 1.) There are few places in the world where so little is known about nearshore fisheries resources as in the Solomons.

### Table 1. Solomon Islands Resource Health Status and Outlook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESOURCE</th>
<th>CURRENT STATUS AND TRAJECTORY</th>
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<tr>
<td>FISH AND INVERTEBRATE POPULATIONS</td>
<td>With the exception of one comprehensive biodiversity survey published in 2006, few studies exist on the stock health of target species of coastal fisheries. The Solomon Islands State of Environment (2008) only very generally states that “overexploitation for both subsistence and commercial use has resulted in severe depletion of several important food and commercial species.” One of the only studies that meaningfully surveyed food reef species on a national level estimates fish density and biomass in seven provinces and reports least healthy stocks in Guadalcanal and Malaita, which feature the highest population densities and low reef coverage. Without good baseline data, however, density and biomass estimates are of limited use to judge the health of fish stocks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CORALS</td>
<td>The Solomon Islands host a stunning number of coral species, placing it second in terms of coral diversity globally, after Raja Ampat in Indonesia. Beyond coral species diversity, the islands display many different and interesting types of reefs, from narrow fringing reefs to rare double barrier reefs. In general terms, it is believed that most reefs are in a decent shape: Despite identifying localized, mostly biological (crown of thorns) and geophysical (water temperature) threats, a rapid marine assessment conducted by The Nature Conservancy in 2004 concluded that reef health was good. The World Resource Institute’s comprehensive review on global coral reef cover and health states that the Solomon Islands are the sixth most coral-rich country in the world in terms of total coral cover, and 71% of the reef faces only low or medium threats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MANGROVES</td>
<td>Mangroves are found on most of the Solomon Islands and in considerable diversity: 44% of all mangrove species occur here. Mangrove swamps host a large number of economically important species that many fishers focus and depend on, mainly crustaceans and mollusks. Due to its main use as fuel wood and due to reclamation for development projects, large areas of mangrove swamps suffer from overexploitation.</td>
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b. Ibid.
c. WorldFish Center 2012.
d. Ibid.

While resource health and habitat integrity are not considered to be in an alarming state, signs of overexploitation are gradually manifesting and can be directly related to several key anthropogenic factors:

- **Population growth and cultural diversity.** Together with Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands’ population growth rate—at 2.6%—is the highest of all Pacific island countries (PICs). As 80% of the population is rural, the pressure on nearshore fisheries is expected to increase significantly over coming years. Meaningful external support of fisheries management in the Solomon Islands is often undermined by high degrees of heterogeneity across user groups; the Solomon Islands is among the world’s six most culturally diverse countries.

- **Illegal or ambiguous sources of fisheries pressure.** Although fisheries management regimes exist at the community level, illegal fishing occurs within community no-take zones by both community-members and outside fishers (e.g., small-scale commercial). Poorly defined rights also undermine the effectiveness of fisheries management regimes and have led to conflicts over fishing zones and the bait fishery for the industrial tuna fishery.

- **Industrial runoff.** Runoff from the logging and mining industries threatens coral reefs and thus reef fisheries, although the actual extent of such threat is unclear and the scientific literature has hardly produced any evidence in the field. In addition, waste management is often badly designed, if at all, and sewage and plastic regularly end up in the ocean. For example, within the last 12 months, all rubbish from West Honiara was deposited directly onto a beach in Rove.

“**The last 10 years has seen more than 90 community level (and recently district or region level) resource management experiences piloted by NGOs [nongovernmental organizations] in Solomon Islands.**” At the outset, such efforts had a strongly conservation-focused intent, but NGOs gradually realized how the objectives of communities had to be taken into consideration if these efforts were to translate into meaningful and community-endorsed concepts. As such, NGOs have, for several years, been trying to adapt their community-driven approaches to the main motivators of locals, namely fisheries management and food security.

**These approaches have unfortunately suffered from legal, political, and institutional obstacles.** “There is no such thing as Solomon Islands.” This quote from an interviewee reflects the political and institutional complexity of this relatively small and not densely inhabited island country. Considered a failed state by some, the Solomon Islands are slowly recovering from “ethnic tensions” that arose in the late 1990s and early 2000s and that were only ended when the government requested Australia’s help in 2003. Community-based work has unfortunately been undermined by weak institutional and political

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4. The only published scientific contribution to the ecological impact of algal blooms in the Solomon Islands suggests mass dieoffs in the Marovo lagoon in 2011. Based on this work, the 20 square kilometer double barrier reef lagoon suffered prolonged anoxic conditions due to high concentrations in toxic phytoplankton species. Albert 2012.
5. Interviewee.
The political structures in the islands. Frequently ambiguous legal frameworks for traditional tenure systems, high turnover rates in the parliament, and a disconnected relationship between national- and provincial-level governments still characterize political everyday life, complicating conservation and resource management.

Looking forward, there is a need to secure the longevity and effectiveness of relevant fisheries management and protected area efforts. Community-based resource management, including locally managed marine areas, offer the primary building block for RBM in the Solomon Islands. Developing government support and capacity for RBM is a complex task. It requires certain minimum legal, institutional, budgetary, and political enabling conditions.

This paper provides a brief synthesis of the state of four enabling conditions that need to be in place for RBM to proliferate. There are no doubt many different angles from which these factors can be addressed, and the Packard Foundation’s partners in the conservation community are best positioned to explore and develop those strategies. Thus the authors have intentionally stopped short of program recommendations so that this may serve as a platform for candid dialogue.

**Rights-based Management (RBM) Approaches**

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8. WorldFish Center 2012.

9. See Appendix A for more information about community-based resource management.
2. Status of the Legal Conditions

The national laws governing marine resources in the Solomon Islands are generally good: theoretically, they require fisheries management plans, allocate funds for management, provide legal recognition for protected areas, and regulate export of some species of marine wildlife. In practice, regulation to acknowledge and support RBM through provincial ordinances is possible but seldom used.

The Protected Areas Act (which only came into force in 2012) is also a potential avenue, but it remains untested. In both cases, onerous and complex legal procedures and limited resources have thus far limited use. While customary management systems are acknowledged and are common in most areas, their effectiveness is often undermined by a lack of clarity around landownership and rights.

There are currently no national policies to regulate or to moderate access or fishing effort.

This section is not an in-depth legal analysis but rather a high-level discussion of some of the overarching themes in the Solomon Islands’ legal structure and key legislation.

The Fisheries Act 1998 provides a legal framework for fisheries resource management and conservation at the national and provincial levels, but local communities are not empowered under this framework. Significant provisions include:

- **Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC).** A FAC is constituted under the Fisheries Act. One of FAC’s primary roles is to endorse fisheries management plans. However, it is believed that the FAC is not carrying out its function and has not met for several years.

- **Fisheries Management and Development Fund for the management and development of fisheries in Solomon Islands.** A part of all foreign fishing vessel fees and all penalties under the Fisheries Act are paid into this fund. The fund can be used, for example, for the development of small-scale commercial fisheries, research, and assistance for provincial governments. According to interviewees, this fund exists and application can be made for money for related projects. Actual disbursement, however, is unknown.

- **The Fisheries Act does not include provisions to allow local communities to develop their own community fisheries management plans or fisheries bylaws.** In the absence of explicit language that empowers communities to develop, implement, and enforce management plans or bylaws, efforts to scale up RBM may be piecemeal and lack sufficient legal recognition. However, various provincial ordinances have been used to empower communities.

A revision of the Fisheries Act, the Fisheries Management Bill 2011, includes a provision that empowers communities to create legally recognized fisheries management plans. The revision would give communities an opportunity to pursue illegal fishing offenders in a court of law. It also “provide[s] a legal basis for communities to manage their natural resources.” At the time of writing (April 2013), the bill had not become law.

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Provincial ordinances are one of the regulatory mechanisms for implementation of the Fisheries Act. Several issues, including limited capacity and political will to draft, implement, and enforce ordinances, hinder their potential at this time.

Several complications limit more widespread use of ordinances:

- **Lack of information.** Many provinces are simply not aware that they have these powers under the Fisheries Act due to a lack of access to information and resources and to the concentration of power and information in Honiara.

- **Insufficient capacity to develop clear, effective ordinances.** Because the Attorney General’s Chambers are chronically understaffed, ordinances are generally drafted by overseas legal volunteers or consultants without ministerial involvement, and they are often poorly drafted, leading to issues during implementation and enforcement.11

- **Insufficient consideration of implementation needs and costs.** Ordinances are frequently at the request of NGOs that have not sufficiently factored in the long-term cost and support to secure compliance with an ordinance. This is an important issue, given that the financial obligation to implement and enforce these ordinances falls to the province. While some revenue may be generated through enforcement efforts (e.g., fine collection), these funds must flow to the consolidated account at the national level and rarely are they re-appropriated back to the province to support future enforcement efforts—thereby becoming a disincentive.

- **Unintended consequences and potential leakage effects.** Provincial ordinances do not factor in potential leakage effects; the enactment of an ordinance related to fisheries in one province may simply divert fishing pressure elsewhere, thus transferring the problem but not solving it.

Collectively these factors create a strong disincentive for provinces to enact ordinances. But despite these problems, several provincial ordinances have been drafted and put into place over the last few decades. Examples of existing provincial ordinances related to fisheries and coastal marine resources include:

- Western Province Marine Conservation Ordinance (under development)
- Choiseul Province Fisheries and Marine Environment Ordinance 2011
- Choiseul Province Resource Management Ordinance 1997
- Choiseul Province Preservation of Culture Ordinance 1997
- Isabel Province Marine and Freshwater Ordinance 1993
- Rennell and Bellona Fisheries Ordinance 2012 (under development)
- Guadalcanal Wildlife Management Area Ordinance 199012

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12. See Appendix C for more information about the positives and negatives of resource protection through provincial ordinance versus customary and natural laws.
Provincial ordinances can also be a mechanism to legally recognize customary management systems through “resource orders.” For example, the Western Province Resource Management Ordinance allows the provincial government to make resource orders over areas of land and/or sea. The resource order can document the rules and restrictions that form part of the customary management system. It is an offense to breach a provision of the resource order. Few of these orders have been made, however, for various reasons including those just discussed.

The majority of land is held under customary ownership: around 87% of the land in the Solomons is legally classified as “customary land.” There is a general understanding among Solomon Islanders that customary land extends three miles from the shore outwards. This has resulted in a situation where customary landowners retain an alternative power base, as they control the customary land.13 But protection of local resource rights is complicated by several factors:

* Unclear records. Landownership is not centrally recorded or settled and is frequently disputed, particularly when money is offered for resources. Also, landownership is generally recorded through oral records rather than written records.

* A “patchwork mosaic of ownership and rights.” Within a community area, the sea may have a “patchwork mosaic” of tribal ownership and rights. This means that any large closed areas would require the agreement of several tribes who may have to forfeit their rights over the areas for the benefit of the community at large. In addition, it is not just tenure at stake but also rights: while one community may own an area of sea under customary law, other communities may have rights over that same area, such as the right to fish. This represents one of the major difficulties in designing RBM solutions, especially in overpopulated areas where overlapping claims exist.

* Ability to override landowner rights. The preamble of the Constitution states that the “natural resources of our country are vested in the people and the Government of Solomon Islands.” Resource rights are separated from landownership by some laws; Ministers are empowered to override landowner rights (e.g., through the Mines and Minerals Act or the Land and Titles Act). However, if the Minister does so he or she is required (by that act and the Constitution) to compensate the landowners. Anecdotal evidence suggests that compulsory acquisition is rare in the Solomon Islands.

* Lack of local capacity to exercise rights and the supremacy of the Constitution and Acts of Parliament over customary law. Fragmented and/or small communities often lack capacity to understand how to mobilize their power base, an issue compounded by the complexity caused by the duality of the national legal system and the customary system. The Constitution and the national Parliament are considered superior to the customary system.

* Lack of clear boundaries. Boundaries are generally based on local knowledge rather than on maps with clearly delineated boundaries (e.g., concrete markers), complicating disputes over ownership. Uncertainty over the boundaries of customary land parcels are

13. See Appendix B for more information.
often exploited by some members of landowning communities to allow themselves to enter into agreements with resource companies and reap the benefits of such agreements.

- **Lineage and intermarriage complications.** Each province has its own identity. In some places, land passes through the male line, while in other places it passes through the female line. Disputes may arise in the event of intermarriages (e.g., the tensions that arose when Malaitans married into Guadalcanal families).

The Protected Areas Act 2010 establishes a vehicle for legally designation locally managed marine areas and customary resource management systems, but no protected areas (PAs) have been created since it came into effect in February 2012.

Concerns around the act’s effectiveness include the following:

- **The application process and management requirement may prove too onerous for communities.** As a result, management plans are often written by NGOs, which may or may not engage actively and, in some cases, appropriately with communities.

- **Consent of all landowners must be obtained, but ownership and use rights are largely undocumented in written documents.** The Minister for Environment must be satisfied that all people have consented to the application and that approval has been obtained from persons having rights or interests in the area before making a declaration. This may prove difficult; while 87% of land in Solomon Islands is under customary ownership, only 0.2% of customary land has been registered. The ownership of land below the high water mark is presently unsettled, with conflicting High Court decisions regarding whether the seabed could be classified as customary land.

- **Communities may be disinclined to rule out future commercial resource extraction.** Designation of a PA closes the door to the possibility of logging, mining, and other commercial resource extraction. Most communities rely heavily on their natural assets for livelihoods, and the incentives provided by companies are often significant, including paying for school fees and school uniforms. Given these incentive mechanisms, communities may be inclined to at least leave the option open for resource extraction opportunities in the future. It should also be noted that there is a general misconception that declaration will prevent traditional landowners from utilizing resources. In theory, the PA may be used in accordance with its management plan, which can permit traditional resource use. Designation would ban the issuance of licenses for extractive industries with PAs. This remains untested, as the law is relatively new.

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15. This form of landownership arose because the Solomon Islands was acquired as a protectorate and not a colony, meaning that the British did not automatically acquire any land when the protectorate was established, resulting in most of the land remaining customary.
17. This situation of legal uncertainty regarding ownership of nearshore areas could be resolved if the December 3, 2012, recommendations of the Solomon Islands Law Reform Commission were adopted. The recommendation is made “that land below high water and low water mark is tribal land to the extent of provincial boundaries (generally three nautical miles from low watermark), unless it is registered land. Tribal interests should, however, recognize and be subjected to existing rights of passage and recreation.”
The Wildlife Protection and Management Act (WPMA) regulates the export of listed species or wildlife in compliance with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), but it does not establish a legal regime for wildlife or threatened species protection.\textsuperscript{18} It also does not provide for protection of endangered species in their natural habitats. This is significant, as the Solomon Islands was the seventh largest source of wildlife shipments imported into the United States from 2000 to 2006.\textsuperscript{19}

The sole focus on imports and exports also fails to address domestic capture, consumption, and sale of endangered species. In theory, other laws, including the Environment Act 1998 and the Fisheries Act 1998, may provide adequate protection for endangered species at the domestic level. However, traditional hunting practices for turtles, dolphins, and other species continues. For example, there is a several-decade history of dolphin hunting, particularly in the Province of Malaita. While the cultural significance of dolphin hunting is widely recognized, and traditional methods persist, the sustainability of such practices on the dolphin population is largely unknown.\textsuperscript{20} Existing scientific knowledge of the Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins suggests that this level of removal is unsustainable.\textsuperscript{21} While the WPMA allows for management programs to be developed and implemented for specific species, the purpose of such programs is to satisfy the scientific requirements regarding the impact of trade on species rather than to provide sustainable management measures.\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{18} McDonald 2006.
\textsuperscript{19} Smith et al. 2009; McDonald 2006.
\textsuperscript{20} Oremus et al. 2011.
\textsuperscript{21} Reeves and Brownell Jr. 2009.
\textsuperscript{22} McDonald 2006.
3. Status of Implementation and Institutional Considerations

In addition to understanding the legal enabling conditions, it is equally important to understand their institutional context and how these laws and regulations are implemented. Related to this is the need to analyze the relevant institutional factors in delivery of or support of RBM and other protected area and fisheries management efforts.

The national government has supremacy, and political power rests with Ministers. The Constitution guarantees the supremacy of Parliament to make laws and also creates the High Court. In the resultant system, central control of key government functions rests within ministries or with the individual Minister regardless of the devolution of power to provincial government or the creation of government ministries. The system is characterized by a lack of coordination of government ministries in relation to environmental policy legislation.

The exercise of ministerial authority may undermine provincial or local resource management efforts in the implementation of nearshore fisheries and coastal marine resource management efforts.

- Under the Fisheries Act, the Minister and the Director of Fisheries (appointed by the Minister) are the main decision makers. They are responsible for deciding how funds should be spent, for endorsing licensing guidelines, for approving test fishing operations, for authorizing fisheries research and whether to impose conditions on that research, for determining the level of licensing fees, and for issuing and regulating licenses, etc. Provincial governments and the Fisheries Advisory Council have only very specified roles to play.

- The Mines and Minerals Act allows the Minister for Mining to order that land is compulsorily acquired for the purpose of mining if landowners do not provide consent. The Minister has ultimate discretion on whether to grant mineral rights to an applicant if the Minister is satisfied that the applicant meets the requirements under the act. While landowners

Natural resource management authority rests with the national government and appointed ministers. The system is marked by a lack of coordination and little implementation of national laws outside the capital, Honiara. The exercise of ministerial authority may undermine local and provincial protection efforts, due to national laws that grant to the national government ultimate decision-making authority around land acquisition and resource extraction. While some administrative power has devolved to provincial governments, these subnational authorities lack the resources and capacity to effectively carry out their responsibilities.

Little, if any, active management and enforcement of regulations related to the Fisheries Act is currently being implemented at the provincial level. Yet some promising efforts are just getting under way: for example, the National Coordinating Council to implement the National Plan of Action will help coordinate external donor funding, as well as NGO and ministerial efforts. Likewise, provincial governments that have struggled to manage coastal and fisheries resources effectively will benefit from a recently launched 15-year strengthening program.
have the right to veto prospecting and mining licenses, the Minister also has powers to compulsorily acquire any land.

- The **Land and Titles Act** gives power to the Minister for Lands to acquire land compulsorily when needed for a public purpose.

- Pursuant to the **Environment Act**, the Director of the Environment and Conservation Division (ECD) within the Ministry of Environment decides applications for development consents. The Environment Advisory Committee and ultimately the Minister of Environment decides any appeals in relation to development consent applications. Few appeals have been heard, as the Environment Advisory Committee is not a functioning body.

- Under the **WPMA**, the Director of the ECD decides on applications for permits to trade in CITES species and species listed in the schedules to the act.

Many prospecting licenses have been granted for prospecting on the seabed. The current position of the Ministry of Mines is that seabed prospecting is not covered by the Mines and Minerals Act, and therefore landowner approval is not required before a seabed prospecting license is granted. This means that seabed prospecting (and potentially seabed mining in the future) is occurring without the consent of the customary landowners, despite the fact that they may own the areas being explored pursuant to customary law.

**A notable exception to the retention of exclusive Ministerial power is the Environment and Conservation Division, a department empowered to enact the Environment Act.** Arguably the ECD could direct that Ministers withhold licenses for extractive industries that would not be in accordance with the Environment Act. However, in practice it is thought that such an exercise of power would be difficult to enact or sustain.

**National plans and strategies are useful documents, but implementation has been limited, and inter-agency dialogue and coordination are lacking.** The highly sector-based efforts at the national government level and lack of mechanisms for inter-agency dialogue and coordination have led to overlapping efforts and inefficiency. Creation of the National Coordinating Committee (NCC) in 2009 represents the first real attempt to bring various stakeholders involved in marine and coastal protection together. This entity was formed with the primary purpose of coordinating and promoting country-level implementation of the Solomon Islands National Plan of Action for the Coral Triangle Initiative (NPOA) and includes representatives from NGOs, the private sector, and government. The Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) and the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM) lead the NCC.

The NPOA aims to ensure that 50% of Solomon Islands coastal, watershed, and nearshore areas are under 40% improved management by 2015 through community-based resource management and integrated coastal management approaches. NGO partners are tasked with leading implementation of activities under the NPOA, while all partners, including MFMR and MECDM, engage in some degree of meetings and workshops. In

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23. The cabinet approved 50%, but many documents now include a revised 25% target. The 25% target is not formally recognized, but it is believed to be the guiding target.
practice, however, both the NGOs and many donors seem to ignore it.24 Thus far, the NCC and the NPOA have done little to affect implementation efforts in a meaningful way. A number of other documents are intended to guide implementation of relevant activities in pursuit of nearshore fisheries and other relevant objectives. Despite most being drafted after lengthy consultative processes, they have failed to lead to meaningful and effective implementation, at least as it relates to fisheries and coastal marine resource management. These include The Solomon Islands National Strategy for the Management of Nearshore Fisheries and Marine Resources 2010–2012 and the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources Corporate Plan 2011.

The Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources focuses on offshore and revenue-generating opportunities with limited recognition of nearshore resources or sustainable management. The priority areas outlined by the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (OPMC) Solomon Island Government for Fisheries and Marine Resource have as their main objective the improvement of the sector’s short-term social and economic benefits. As a result, two main areas of focus have crystallized: the offshore tuna fishery and nearshore development projects:

• **Revenues from the tuna fishery are sizable and support infrastructure for commercialization of nearshore fisheries.** The tuna fishery is the only sizable revenue generator of the fisheries sector (mostly through foreign license fees) and has, in the past, been able to provide a solid basis for some local value-added industry and increased foreign currency earnings through exports. At present, there are no domestic processing plants, but the government has give priority to three medium-large scale commercial onshore fisheries projects at Suafa Bay, Ndoma, and Tenaru.

• **Nearshore focus on rural fishery development and food security.** Most of the focus directed toward nearshore fisheries has thus far targeted fisheries centers (e.g., ice factories and landing docks)25 and fish aggregation devices to improve food security. The latter is an attempt to have the communities profit from pelagic species, including tuna, while taking the pressure off of reef-associated species.26 Uncertainty about the impact on reef-associated fish species and the risk of creating high community expectations regarding their income-earning potential make such projects a potential source of conflict.

The provincial government has authority over the three nautical mile zone and, as such, several administrative and legislative functions relating to fisheries and coastal marine resource management have been devolved to those governments. Under the Provincial Government Act 1997, several “local” administrative functions have been devolved to provincial government.

• **The provincial governments’ lack of capacity and funding makes performing these devolved functions challenging.** In particular, each provincial government is responsible for the “proper management and development of the reef, nearshore, and freshwater

26. This effort is coordinated by the WorldFish Center and financed by the New Zealand government.
fisheries within its provincial waters.” The devolution of power to the provincial government level to implement sections of the Fisheries Act is, in theory, positive. However, as provincial governments currently lack sufficient human and infrastructure capacity (e.g., enough staff, adequate training, infrastructure support such as boats), devolution has not led to more-effective government support of fisheries and coastal marine resource management. At present, in most provinces there appears to be minimal if any enforcement of provincial ordinances or other Fisheries Act regulations.

- In addition to the issues that arise from low human and infrastructure capacity, another layer of implementation difficulty arises from the confusion around what specific aspects of service delivery is the responsibility of the provincial government. For example, under Schedule 3 of the Provincial Government Act 1997, each province is responsible for “protection, improvement, and maintenance of fresh-water and reef fisheries.” It does not elaborate on how provinces are expected to do this or whether the national government retains some power or authority to support these areas. Similar confusion exists in other sectors, such as health and education, where little information or clarity exists regarding which specific aspects of health and education service delivery are the responsibility of the provincial government.

- Area councils, the tertiary level of government sitting underneath the provincial government, were abolished in 1999, removing the national government’s closest link to rural communities. The area councilors were elected by ward voters into the council and served to link communities with government. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the area councilors were well respected and served a useful and necessary function.

There is a long history of nonapplication of relevant laws, primarily due to limited public and government awareness of laws as well as minimal human and infrastructure capacity to implement and enforce them, particularly at the provincial level. The reality is that in the Solomon Islands, resource extraction companies and communities either ignore most laws and/or provincial governments do not have the ability or will to enforce its own legislation. Enforcement is virtually non-existent. As one interviewee put it: “If the executive level of government doesn’t function, why would one expect the next level to do any better?”

The Provincial Government Strengthening Programme (PGSP) may help build much-needed capacity. An institutional strengthening program with an expected duration of 15 years (divided into three phases), PGSP aims to develop the capacity of the Ministry of Provincial Government and Institutional Strengthening and the nine Provincial Governments to fulfill their mandates in service delivery. The first five-year phase has a budget of $18.1 million, thanks to contributions from the Government of the Solomon Islands, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the European Union, and the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI). This phase focuses on public expenditure management with the goal of ensuring that all nine provinces have the ability to program, produce, and execute credible

28. Interviewee.
29. UNCDF 2012b.
Budgets through participatory and transparent procedures. In addition to improved capacity, the PGSP set up the Provincial Capital Development Fund (PCDF), a provincial budget support facility for discretionary development spending. The PCDF is reviewed further in the next chapter.

Despite generally weak national and provincial support for nearshore fisheries and coastal marine resource management, the presence of community-driven protected areas is widespread despite lack of formal legal recognition. For centuries, Solomon Islands’ communities have practiced traditional methods of environmental management, including the establishment of informal protected areas and the use of sacred sites and social prohibitions. As of 2009, there were 127 marine managed areas (MMAs) in the Solomon Islands, of which 22 were listed in the World Database of Protected Areas. Of the total MMAs, 113 show signs of being “active.” And of those, 109 MMAs can be classified as Community Conserved Areas (CCAs), while the remaining 4 are co-managed with strong community involvement. The oldest functioning MMAs date to the mid-1990s. Since 2000, the number of CCAs appears to be increasing exponentially, with major increases between 2007 and 2009 owing to district approaches undertaken in Isabel and Western Province. The majority of protected areas are created at the local scale through customary tenure systems, although some are created at the provincial level.

The Protected Areas Act provides a process for national designation of marine protected areas by Ministers, but it has yet to be tested.

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31. Those before the mid-1990s are all essentially paper parks.
32. Ibid.
33. A customary (i.e., non-legally-based) protected area is generally established by a community or landowner, in accordance with their traditional decision-making processes, to use or manage an area in a particular way.
Marine resource management in the Solomon Islands is underfunded, especially when compared with other ministries. Most of the currently allocated funding is focused on the offshore, revenue-generating tuna fishery, nearshore fishery infrastructure development projects, and fish aggregating devices. Nongovernmental external funding tends to be project-driven, short-term, and poorly coordinated.

The MFMR Development Budget is quite small, particularly in comparison to other ministries. MFMR’s development budget34 for 2012 totaled Solomon Islands dollars (SBD) 10.2 million ($1.4 million),35 a small budget considering that the Solomon Islands is spread over 1.34 million square kilometers of ocean. (See Table 2.) The 2012 development budgets for other terrestrial ministries were significantly larger:16

- Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock: SBD 54.9 million
- Ministry of Culture and Tourism: SBD 64.5 million
- Ministry of Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification: SBD 28.5 million
- Ministry of Infrastructure Development: SBD 101 million

It should be noted that in addition to the SBD 10.2 million from Solomon Islands Government Consolidated Funds, the MFMR also receives development funding from New Zealand Aid via an Organizational Strengthening Project, amounting to SBD 18.5 million.37 The total MFMR development budget is therefore SBD 29.7 million (approximately $4 million). Separately, some funding to the MECDM is relevant to fisheries and coastal marine resource management. In particular, the Coral Initiative for Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security Program has dedicated SBD 1 million to help the Solomon Islands government live up to its obligation for conservation of marine life.18

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Guiding Questions

- Is there a clear system to allocate budgets in support of fisheries management laws?
- Are public funding streams allocated to coastal marine resource management?
- Can enforcement and management authorities collect and retain revenues?
- Do the appropriate authorities have the capacity to request, absorb, and use funds?

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34. Each Ministry has two budgets. A recurrent budget includes salaries, rent, and other ongoing expenses, while the development budget focuses on ongoing or one-off capital investments and projects. The recurrent budget does not vary much from year-to-year, and it is largely understood that provincial governments are allowed a 5% per year increase. Development budgets, however, can vary from year to year and rely heavily on nonappropriated funds (i.e., official development assistance) in addition to the national consolidated account. The development budget is overseen by the Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination. See Appendix E for more information on the budgeting process.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
MFMR’s Development Budget focuses on capital investment and infrastructure development, with very little funding going toward the management of coastal fisheries. Development Budget bids must align with Solomon Island government priorities, outlined annually by the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. While the 2012 priority areas are broad enough to support RBM, there has been little focus on RBM to date. It is generally understood that the bulk of provincial fisheries budgets provide maintenance for the fisheries centers.

Table 2. 2012 MFMR Development Budget*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT TITLE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>BUDGET (SBD)</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TUNA LOIN FACTORY PROJECT — SUAVA &amp; TENARU</strong></td>
<td>Funding is provided to the ministry to build tuna loin factories in Suava and Tenaru</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FISH AGGREGATE DEVICE PROGRAM</strong></td>
<td>Funding is provided to the ministry to purchase fish aggregating devices to be positioned in provinces to aid local fishers</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>One-off (approved for 2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MFMR SEAFRONT RECLAMATION PROJECT</strong></td>
<td>Funding is provided to the ministry to reclaim seafront area to avoid erosion, which is currently a threat to the ministry’s office complex</td>
<td>700,000</td>
<td>One-off (approved for 2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROVINCIAL FISHERIES HOUSING PROJECT</strong></td>
<td>Funding is provided to the ministry to build staff houses for provincial officers</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
<td>One-off (approved for 2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COASTAL FISHERIES PROGRAM</strong></td>
<td>Funding for coastal fisheries program</td>
<td>5,000,000</td>
<td>New (as of 2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WANTOK PROJECT</strong></td>
<td>Funding to facilitate the establishment of internal fisheries port in Doma, West Guadalcanal</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>10,200,000</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Solomon Islands government-approved 2012 development estimates.
The 2012 MFMR recurrent budget highlights the strong bias toward offshore over nearshore fisheries management, even when assuming that some of the provincial fisheries budgets will go to nearshore management efforts. (See Table 3.)

**Table 3. 2012 MFMR Recurrent Budget**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>PAYROLL BUDGET (SBD)</th>
<th>OTHER CHARGES (SBD)</th>
<th>DEPARTMENT TOTALS (SBD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HQ/ADMINISTRATION</td>
<td>1,414,837</td>
<td>3,961,958</td>
<td>5,376,795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FISHERIES MANAGEMENT POLICY</td>
<td>113,072</td>
<td>88,611</td>
<td>201,683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATISTIC AND INFORMATION</td>
<td>250,792</td>
<td>289,986</td>
<td>540,778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AQUACULTURE</td>
<td>262,053</td>
<td>424,823</td>
<td>686,876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROVINCIAL FISHERIES</td>
<td>1,247,918</td>
<td>841,211</td>
<td>2,089,129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEARSHORE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT</td>
<td>274,269</td>
<td>205,971</td>
<td>480,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFFSHORE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT</td>
<td>689,221</td>
<td>2,693,905</td>
<td>3,383,126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARKET &amp; BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>134,800</td>
<td>226,255</td>
<td>361,055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL*</td>
<td>4,327,301</td>
<td>8,732,720</td>
<td>13,060,021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In addition to the above, approximately SBD 900,000 was allocated to utilities (i.e. electricity/gas, water, and telephone/fax).

**The Provincial Capital Development Fund could, in theory, fund nearshore fisheries projects.** The Solomon Islands government allocated, through the PCDF, $4.1 million more to the provincial governments in 2012 than in 2011. Those provinces able to meet certain minimum conditions and performance measures can have access to these funds. The larger PGSP in which the PCDF sits has the primary goal of poverty reduction and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, some of which support local development that improves natural resource protection. Capital investment for nearshore fisheries and coastal marine resource management has not yet been the focus of these funds, but it is within the realm of possibility that a portion of the funds could be allocated to these pursuits. Several factors complicate this outcome, however:

- **Most of the capital investment projects funded by the PCDF target education and health infrastructure in the form of schools, health centers, and administrative buildings.**

The funding for rural service delivery, particularly these small infrastructure projects,

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40. The Millennium Development Goals include promoting local development, that is improvement in coverage and quality of local infrastructure and services; better managed natural resources and environmental protection; and an increase in local economic activity, employment, and revenues.
is fragmented and highly politicized. Furthermore, given its current minimal level of funding for anything except basic health and education, provincial government serves more as a facilitator of transfers rather than a provider of services.41

- **Capital investments in fisheries infrastructure may increase fishing pressure.** Given the capital investment focus of these funds, fisheries and coastal marine resource management investments may come in the form of fisheries centers, which may result in increased fishing pressure around surrounding reefs. Efforts will need to be made to ensure that the provinces seeking PCDF money allocate it to environmentally sustainable pursuits. Also, it is unclear where these funds could be used to strengthen staffing and operations-driven aspects of service delivery.

**External funding is significant, but project-driven and poorly coordinated.** Several foreign entities are involved in funding marine and coastal resource conservation, as well as related issues like climate change adaptation. Unfortunately, the large amount of official development assistance (ODA) channeling to the Solomon Islands does not offset the lack of government funding to fisheries and coastal marine resource management. Most of this financing is disbursed via one- to five-year grants to a range of local and international NGOs in the Solomon Islands. The time-constrained nature of project delivery often results in the loss of short-term gains due to a lack of government or community capacity to carry efforts forward once the project ends; while noticeable successes arise during project implementation, projects often lack a clear “exit strategy.” And as a result, proper institutional development and longevity planning are not embedded within projects.42 In addition, in certain instances where NGOs implement aspects of national policy (e.g., in the case of the NPOA), what is delivered on the ground is often hard to relate to the original policy intent.

A separate but related issue is that much of the external funding is not coordinated effectively, resulting in projects with similar or even conflicting objectives. This is particularly true within the climate change space. As one interviewee put it, “communities have climate change fatigue.”

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41. World Bank 2012.
42. See Appendix E for an overview of foreign entity involvement in the Solomons.
The political economy of the Solomon Islands is strongly influenced by two interdependent themes: the huge influence of donor aid and the importance of economic growth through resource extraction. Donor contributions make up an estimated 50% of gross national income (GNI) and may be complicated with other geopolitical or economic interests. While high-level policy and national plans, on paper, address and give priority to RBM, this does not translate down to lower levels of government or action on the ground.

Among the countries reviewed in this study, the political economy of the Solomon Islands presents one of the most difficult to understand and yet most interesting case studies. Formerly a focal point in the history of European colonization, the Solomon Islands remained an important strategic country for western governments throughout the Second World War and into the present. The Solomon Islands gained independence in 1978 but kept close diplomatic and government ties to the United Kingdom. It today is a constitutional monarchy, with Elizabeth II as the Queen of the Solomon Islands. Ethnic tensions in the late 1990s led to a complete breakdown in law and order and a large rise in extortion and violent crime.

External governments have provided much-needed security and financial support to the unstable government of the Solomon Islands but they wield significant influence.

- **Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands.** After a first call for help was rejected by Australia in 1999, the dire situation culminated in a formal request for direct assistance from outside the Solomon Islands. This second, formal request for help in 2003 resulted in the immediate mobilization of over 2,000 Australian police and troops, led by the Australian government but supported by other PICs. RAMSI has the aim of restoring law and order to the Solomon Islands and the longer-term objective of strengthening good governance in the country. It is the only armed force in the islands.43 Beginning in 2013, RAMSI is scaling down its operations, though to what extent is unclear.

- **As an institutionally unstable country, Solomon Islands is largely donor-run.** This is may be best exemplified by the mere existence of the Solomon Islands’ Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination, which is said to be one of the most powerful ministries in the country.44 This ministry plans and negotiates with donors about where and how to allocate funding. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the total amount of funding provided to the Solomon Islands via ODA amounted to $334 million in 2011.45 This equates to 50% of the GNI. The RAMSI payments, which support standing troops and pay very high salaries, may

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44. Interviewee.
45. OECD, undated.
not fall into the category of aid money. As such, the portion associated, at least indirectly, with aid is likely greater than 50% of total GNI.

**The strategic and diplomatic donor interest in the Solomon Islands cannot be overstated.** The potential for extractive industry in the Solomons (mainly minerals and fossil carbon) is an attractive asset that international donors and investors may seek. In addition, the South Pacific remains a geopolitically important region in which different governments hope to gain influence. Finally, China’s influence is almost zero in Solomon Islands, as the nation had recognized Taiwan as a country by accepting donations; this provoked China’s retreat from the scene. Taiwan, for its part, “sees diplomatic recognition by Pacific Island states as an important political weapon in its difficult relationship with China.” Only 24 countries in the world recognize Taiwan as a country, including 6 PICs, among which the Solomon Islands is the largest. Although the authors cannot substantiate this argument, one interviewee suggested that due to partly conflicting diplomatic interests with China, the absence of Chinese influence in the Solomon Islands makes it ideal for Western governments’ aid allocations. As a result, a high number of Western governments have chimed in to support the Solomon Islands, including, most recently, the United States.

**Economic growth has been largely driven by extractive industry.** The gross domestic product of the Solomon Islands grew by 9.3% in 2011, the fastest of the PICs. It has largely relied upon resource extractive industries, primarily logging, for economic development. As logging opportunities decline, the government is increasingly looking to mining and offshore fisheries to serve as economic growth drivers. Between 2004 and 2010, a total of 25 mining prospecting licenses were issued for onshore exploration and 33 prospecting licenses were issued for offshore seabed mining exploration.

**Several national planning documents acknowledge the importance of sustainable coastal and nearshore fisheries management, but few put the concept into operation.** In practice, plans have not been implemented or have given priority to short-term social and economic development.

- **The Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet sets the government’s priorities, and the ministries then aim to align their budget bids with these priority areas.** For 2012, the Fisheries and Marine Resource priorities included:
  - Improve market access for rural fishers
  - Grow livelihoods through sustainable aquaculture development
  - Improve health of our fisheries and marine resources
  - Grow the economy through sustainable fisheries investments
  - Enforce fisheries laws effectively
  - Increase skills and knowledge of partners in fisheries development

It is unlikely that project proposals falling outside of these priority areas would be approved. Current priority areas are broad (and vague) enough that a Minister of

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47. Uniquest Pty Ltd. 2010.
Fisheries and Marine Resources could make the case for why, for example, development of RBM is important for achieving not only one but several of these priorities.

- The NPOA, as discussed in Chapter 2, aims to ensure improved coastal marine resource management through community-based approaches. While it clearly outlines responsibilities for NGOs and government partners under the Coral Triangle Initiative funding, it is largely ignored.

Similarly, the Solomon Islands National Strategy for the Management of Nearshore Fisheries and Marine Resources 2010–2012 ostensibly includes many of the enabling conditions needed for effective RBM, but it remains unfunded and therefore has yet to be implemented.

- Two of the five main pillars of the report are Community-Based Resource Management and Multi-Scale, Multi-Sectoral Governance. This establishment of priorities represents an important recognition by MFMR. As stated in the report: “This strategy provides the direction and path MFMR believes it needs to take to achieve a sustainable and secure nearshore fisheries sector. This recognition requires the role of MFMR to shift from prescriptive management and compliance to one of facilitation that supports local community management and its adaptation to meet modern threats and opportunities. MFMR also recognizes the need for clear and agreed roles across local, provincial, and national management. MFMR further recognizes that effective daily management of fisheries and marine resources by traditional owners can only be possible if coastal communities’ traditional rights, experiences, and knowledge are respected in legal and regulatory frameworks.”

- But insufficient budget allocation has stalled implementation. Sufficient budget and wherewithal have not been allocated; where budget allocations have been made, they have not been disbursed. Therefore, many of the activities listed in the document have not taken place.

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6. Conclusion

The Solomon Islands undoubtedly presents a complex and challenging context for conservation work, though the relatively unspoiled condition of coastal marine resources and only recent acceleration of stressors makes the country an attractive target. Despite the lasting presence of customary management systems, as well as some strong fisheries management and protected area laws, few efforts for sustainable coastal marine resource management have gained traction. Legal expertise and decision-making authority is consolidated in Honiara. While administrative functions have devolved to the provinces, capacity for service delivery outside of the capital is extremely limited. As one interviewee put it: “If the executive level of government doesn’t function, why would one expect the next level to do any better?”

There is a long history of non-application of relevant laws, primarily due to limited public and government awareness of laws and minimal human and infrastructure capacity to implement and enforce them, particularly at the provincial level. Outside donors provide approximately half of GNI and have a strong influence at many levels of government. Economic development, social welfare, and development of governance systems are much higher priorities than fisheries and coastal marine resource management. The combination of these factors makes the scaling of RBM approaches unlikely in the short term.

This assessment was geared toward evaluating the state of the main “top-down” enabling conditions that would support the use of RBM to safeguard coastal and marine resources in the Solomon Islands. The key findings are included in Table 4.
Table 4. Summary of Key Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENABLING CONDITION</th>
<th>GUIDING QUESTIONS</th>
<th>KEY FINDINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LEGAL</td>
<td>• Are fisheries management laws in place?</td>
<td>While much of the national legal framework in the Solomon Islands is generally supportive of community use rights and RBM, effectiveness is limited by lack of clarity around landownership/rights and lack of subnational regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do customary management systems exist, and are they legally recognized?</td>
<td>• The PAA provides a solid paper framework for implementing RBM, but it remains untested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do existing laws/systems secure exclusive use rights?</td>
<td>• The National Fisheries Act does not provide any overarching regulations to moderate access and effort and does not allow for community-driven fisheries management plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Are there regulations moderating access and effort?</td>
<td>• Regulation of the Fisheries Act through provincial ordinances has occurred to a small degree in some places, but widespread adoption is limited by lack of capacity to develop regulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Does legislation exist to designate protected areas?</td>
<td>• 87% of land is customarily owned; in many places, customary systems still exist but are eroding as the country transitions to a cash economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Unclear/disputed landownership and use rights in coastal and nearshore areas as well as strong state rights to appropriate land hamper provincial and local management efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTITUTIONAL AND IMPLEMENTATION</td>
<td>• Are enforcement and management authorities clearly delineated?</td>
<td>Governance and institutional capacity is very weak, and enforcement is essentially non-existent, with the exception of some remaining customary systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do enforcement authorities have enough skilled staff and equipment?</td>
<td>• The highly sector-based efforts at the national government level and lack of mechanisms for interagency dialogue and coordination have led to overlapping efforts and inefficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do management authorities have skilled staff and equipment?</td>
<td>• Implementation of state laws outside of Honiara is very limited; provinces have the authority to implement aspects of the Fisheries Act and are tasked with providing overall government service delivery, but generally do not have the capacity, skilled staff, or equipment/infrastructure to do so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Are relevant laws being enforced?</td>
<td>• Some provinces (e.g., Choiseul and Isabel) are more advanced than others in terms of developing natural resource management provincial ordinances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The Provincial Government Strengthening Programme aims to improve overall capacity for service delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• There is limited overall enforcement of laws due to lack of personnel, capacity, and financial and physical resources at both national and provincial levels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE CONTINUES ON PAGE 23
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENABLING CONDITION</th>
<th>GUIDING QUESTIONS</th>
<th>KEY FINDINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| BUDGETARY                    | • Is there a clear system to allocate budgets in support of fisheries management laws?  
• Are public funding streams allocated to coastal marine resource management?  
• Can enforcement and management authorities collect and retain revenues?  
• Do the appropriate authorities have the capacity to request, absorb, and use funds? | While the system for requesting and securing funds is well understood, the benefits of coastal fisheries management are unclear, and funding traditionally goes to economic development projects  
• The MFMR development budget includes allocation to the coastal fisheries program, but this goes primarily to ice docking stations, livelihoods, and infrastructure development; relative to other development budgets, MFMR’s is quite small  
• At the provincial level budgets are small and are primarily used to maintain fisheries centers; the Provincial Capital Development Fund could potentially allow provinces to secure fisheries management funding, though this funding has generally gone toward infrastructural investments  
• The 2010 PAA stipulates the development of a funding mechanism for protected areas, but this has yet to be developed  
• Enforcement entities are currently not able to retain revenues  
• External funding is significant but project-driven and poorly coordinated |
| POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DECISION-MAKING | • Is there a long-term national development plan that puts priority on sustainable use of natural resources?  
• Does the government currently give priority to sustainable fisheries and coastal management? | At both the regional and the national level, marine resource management takes a back seat to social needs like health care and education  
• Conservation organizations have not adequately linked sustainable coastal marine resource management with priority issues such as food security  
• But national policy is largely supportive of customary rights and resource management |
## Appendix A. Country Snapshot

### Profile

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>POPULATION</strong></td>
<td>552,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GDP</strong></td>
<td>$838 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GDP GROWTH</strong></td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INFLATION</strong></td>
<td>7.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INCOME STATUS</strong></td>
<td>Lower-Middle Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POVERTY RATE AT $2 A DAY</strong></td>
<td>N.A., ranks 142nd on the U.N. Human Development Index</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Fisheries Statistics, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Volume* (Tons)</th>
<th>Global Rank*</th>
<th>Share of Global Production*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MARINE FISHERIES LANDINGS</strong></td>
<td>35,197</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>0.05%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value* (Million Dollars)</th>
<th>Share of GDP*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MARINE FISHERIES LANDINGS</strong></td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Volume (Tons)</th>
<th>Value (Dollars)</th>
<th>Share of Total Exports/Imports by Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>IMPORTS</strong></td>
<td>1,955</td>
<td>3,008</td>
<td>0.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXPORTS</strong></td>
<td>12,434</td>
<td>20,113</td>
<td>0.06%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Role of Fish and Fishing in Society

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NUMBER OF FISHERS</strong></td>
<td>5,114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SEAFOOD CONSUMPTION, 2009</strong></td>
<td>93 grams per person per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SHARE OF ANIMAL PROTEIN FROM MARINE FISH</strong></td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. Derived from FAO FISHSTAT. Calculations exclude higher order ISSCAAP groups and seaweeds for marine and inland wild capture landings.
d. Derived from FAO FISHSTAT.
e. FAO, undated.
### MPAs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marine Protected Areas (Mostly Informally Designated)</th>
<th>Area (Hectares)</th>
<th>Share of Exclusive Economic Zone Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>138,100</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: MPA Global, undated.*

### Marine Habitats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marine Habitats</th>
<th>Area (Hectares)</th>
<th>Share of Global Total</th>
<th>Global Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coral Reefs</td>
<td>674,300</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mangroves</td>
<td>50,572</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Reefs from Burke et al. 2011; mangroves from Giri et al. 2011 and from FAO 2010.*
Appendix B.
Status of Rights-based Management Building Blocks

Communities in the Solomon Islands have practiced traditional methods of environmental management for centuries. These methods are grounded in customary systems that vest considerable resource use decision making in the subsistence village communities. For these communities, which account for more than 70% of the population, natural resources represent the primary source of food as well as capital (i.e., livelihoods). These materially poor communities are driven to trade their natural assets—timber and fish—for cash or other goods. Domestic consumption of locally caught fish increases whenever fish-transporting ferries do not travel and the fish would turn bad if not consumed immediately. Fish caught in remote areas may often not be consumed locally but sold to sporadically travelling friends, relatives, or even strangers, who can ship simple seafood-filled ice boxes to Honiara or other more-urban centers and bring back cash or food in return. The tendency of rural fishers to make short-term, cash-driven decisions must be viewed in the proper context. These communities lack sufficient access to information (legal, financial, and ecological) when making resource use decisions, an issue further compounded by limited government support and assistance.

In recognition of the biological importance of the Solomons in terms of species diversity and food security, for example, as well as the increasing threats to the resource base (e.g., population growth and the transition from a subsistence to a cash economy), nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have spent considerable time and money in support of community-level resource management. In the last 10 years alone, more than 90 community-level, and recently district- or provincial-level, resource management experiences have been piloted with support from NGOs. The people-centered approach is referred to nationally as community-based resource management (CBRM+). CBRM+ “designates an approach to community based adaptive management that incorporates food security, ecosystem approaches to resource management, vulnerability and adaptation planning and protection of key species and habitats.” This term is also referenced within the Solomon Islands National Plan of Action for the Coral Triangle Initiative.

One of the components of CBRM+ is the creation and management of locally managed marine areas (LMMAs)—areas of sea that are designated by local communities for management of marine resources. Established in 2003, the Solomon Islands Locally Managed Marine Area (SILMMA) network is a group of projects and practitioners from NGOs, government, and communities working toward a common vision: “To be a well-resourced network for information sharing to ensure well-informed decision making by members on sustainable resource management and conservation on biological diversity.”

The mission of SILMMA is to help communities manage and conserve marine resources

49. Ibid.
50. Lane 2006.
51. Govan et al. 2011, p. 16.
53. Ibid.
54. Solomon Sea Sustainables, undated.
through a range of technical assistance and support mechanisms: by sourcing funding, providing information, and building capacity and empowering partners through traditional and scientific approaches. SILMMA is an independent organization but is housed within the Solomon Islands Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources. According to interviewees, the SILMMA has an important role to play in supporting the creation and management of LMMAs but is currently not functional. Despite lacking fully functional network oversight and support, there are approximately 113 active LMMAs in the Solomon Islands.\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{55} Govan 2009.
Appendix C.

Background on Key Institutional Structures

It is important to set rights-based management within a basic understanding of the key institutional structures of the Solomon Islands.

The Solomon Islands is a constitutional democracy within the Commonwealth. Its democratic system is based on the Westminster system, with executive power vested in the government and legislative power in both the government and Parliament. The judiciary is created by the Constitution and is independent. The Constitution is the supreme law of the Solomon Islands and guarantees fundamental human rights.

Structure of Ministries

In accordance with the Westminster system of representative government, the Prime Minister is in theory elected by Parliament and then chooses his ministerial team. In practice, however, following elections there is frequently disagreement and negotiation before a Prime Minister is chosen; this raises serious questions regarding the transparency of the political system. The result is that the voter has no way of determining the identity of the Prime Minister. This is a significant issue because of the Prime Minister’s role in choosing Ministers, and these decisions are also influenced by the negotiations prior to the choice of Prime Minister. Each Minister heads up a ministry and is assisted by a Permanent Secretary, who is a career public servant and who acts as the Accounting Officer for the respective ministry. The Constitution guarantees the supremacy of Parliament to make laws and also creates the High Court, a Magistrates Court, and a Customary Land Court. It results in a system where central control of key government functions rests within ministries or with the individual Minister, regardless of the devolution of power to provincial governments or the creation of government departments.

Structure of Provincial Government

The Solomon Islands also operates a two-tier government system. The provincial system of government is a mirror image of the national system. The provincial governments were established in 1981, following independence. The Solomon Islands has nine Provinces: Central, Choiseul, Guadalcanal, Isabel, Makira-Ulawa, Malaita, Rennell–Bellona, Temotu, and Western. The main legislation relating to their governance is the Provincial Government Act 1997. Provincial ordinances are laws made for a province by ordinance of the Provincial Assembly that is established under the Provincial Government Act.

Some administrative “local” functions for areas related to local licensing of businesses, cultural and environmental matters, agriculture and fishing, land and land use, and rivers and waters to provincial government have been devolved to the provincial level. Provincial governments are also given specific responsibilities under the Fisheries Act. In particular, each provincial government is responsible for the “proper management and development of the reef, nearshore and freshwater fisheries within its provincial waters.”56 Additionally,

the Provincial Government Act requires provincial governments to legislate with respect to “protection, improvement and maintenance of fresh-water and reef fisheries.” In reality, however, the provincial government’s lack of capacity and funding makes performing these devolved functions challenging. The business license function is a notable exception because that process results in a direct revenue stream to the provincial government, together with basic rates and property rates.

Customary Landownership

The majority of Solomon Islands land (over 87%) is customary owned, and landownership itself is reserved for Solomon Islander nationals. This form of landownership arose because the country was acquired as a protectorate and not a colony, meaning that the British did not automatically acquire any land when the protectorate was established, resulting in most of the land remaining under customary ownership.

Landowning (and therefore resource ownership) is poorly understood by nongovernmental organizations and outsiders and poorly documented nationally, which contributes to frequent disputes that largely involve who should be paid for resources removed by foreign companies.

Appendix D.

Protected Areas Act 2010 and Other Methods to Support Rights-based Management

The Protected Areas Act (PAA) 2010

The PAA was passed in March 2010 following a short consultative process. Regulations were approved in February 2012, and pursuant to the PAA the Minister of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM) is empowered to declare an area of land or sea as “a protected area of biological diversity significance.”

Protected Area Act Basics

An application for an area to be declared a protected area (PA) is made by submitting the following to the Director of the Environment and Conservation Division:

1) Application form (Form A in Schedule 2 of the Regulations)
2) A copy of the management plan
3) A copy of the resolution of the communities who have rights and interests in the proposed protected area (the applicant communities)
4) An agreement between the applicant communities and any neighboring communities, in which they agree on the boundary of the proposed protected area
5) A copy of the resolution of the neighboring community endorsing the boundary agreement
6) A map of the proposed protected area, signed by the leaders of the applicant communities and the neighboring communities

The application can be submitted by either the owner of the area or by a nongovernmental organization (NGO) that manages the area, and it can be made for areas that are protected under any other legislation or are under customary protection.

Approval of PAs is granted by the MECDM if certain requirements and criteria are met:

- The area must meet one of the criteria in section 10(1) of the act—something must be unique about it (i.e., it possesses significant biological resources or constitutes the habitat of species of national or international importance).
- People with rights and interests in the area must provide their consent to the application.

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58. Solomon Islands Protected Areas Act 2010, § 10(1).
59. Solomon Islands Protected Areas Regulations, regulation 12(1).
60. Solomon Islands Protected Areas Act 2010, § 10(4).
• The application must be made by a landowning unit (or by an NGO responsible for managing the area); information must be provided to all surrounding landowners, and the surrounding landowners must agree on the proposed boundary of the area.

• Consensus reached among the applicant communities regarding the management plan.

• The management plan must include activities that are prohibited in the protected area or zones of the protected area, the species or habitat that need special controls, management objectives, and implementation and enforcement program details.

The Minister must be satisfied that all people have consented to the application and that approval has been obtained from persons having rights or interests in the area before making a declaration.

Once an area is declared, it is entered onto a register of protected areas.61 The Minister must issue a Certificate of Registration for the area, setting out matters such as its name, category, and location.62 There are five potential classes of protected area with different purposes: resource management areas, nature reserves, national parks, natural monuments, and closed areas.

Regulations prescribe activities that are prohibited or restricted in a protected area. In particular, industrial or commercial-scale logging and mining are prohibited.63 Other rules are contained the area’s management plan, which must be prepared before the area is declared a protected area.64

Protected Area Act Benefits

More positive points that may be made in relation to a declaration of a protected area include, but are not limited to the following:

• Certain activities (for instance, logging and mining) are prohibited under the regulations and cannot be authorized through the management plan. All activities that are designated as “allowed” in the management plan must be consistent with the purposes of the protected area.

• Under the Regulations, it is an offense to carry out certain activities within a protected area:
  • Regulation 61 makes it an offense to carry out “industrial or commercial” extraction of timber, round logs, non-timber forest products, or minerals in a protected area or within a buffer zone up to 1 kilometer wide from the boundaries of the protected area.
  • It is an offense to take any organism from a protected area unless it is authorized by the Management Committee (which is appointed to manage the area).
  • Within marine PAs (MPAs), particular rules apply that include restrictions on vessels, the extraction of marine resources, pollution, and other related things.

61. Ibid., § 11(1).
62. Solomon Islands Protected Areas Regulations, regulation 20, Form B, Schedule 2.
63. Ibid., regulation 61.
64. Solomon Islands Protected Areas Act 2010, § 10(7).
The regulations also contain provisions about land-based activities that could affect MPAs and require the Director to serve a notice on any person who pollutes an MPA via a land-based activity.

Inspectors and rangers can be appointed to enforce the act and regulations.

**Provincial Ordinance Process**

The creation of provincial ordinances is a process that is intended to commence via the identification of a need at the provincial executive level that is then passed to the Attorney General’s chambers for drafting. Once drafted, the Attorney General’s chambers works with respective ministries until the ordinance is passed by the provincial assembly and assented to by the Minister before being “gazetted.”

**Summary of Various Methods to Implement Rights-based Management (RBM)**

The Table provides a summary of the factors that influence the adoption of RBM at the national and provincial levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPLEMENTATION METHOD</th>
<th>POSITIVE FACTORS</th>
<th>NEGATIVE FACTORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| PROTECTED AREAS ACT 2010 | - A declared protected area has the backing of national law  
- Breaches of a protected area declared under PAA will become offenses under national law, and substantial fines potentially apply  
- The Minister can appoint inspectors to help enforce the rules  
- Local community members can be appointed as rangers to assist with enforcement  
- The rules relating to the protected area can be included in the management plan, which is prepared in consultation with the landowners and may therefore engender local participation  
- A declared protected area results, per the regulations, in a total ban on certain activities within the area, including commercial and industrial extraction of trees and minerals; in other words, it would be prima facie unlawful to issue a license for these activities within a declared protected area and if such a license were issued it could be challenged in court  
- It seems to be an area of the law where Ministers are not able to exercise a “state’s right” argument over local resources  
- It allows a number of different protected areas to be established that have different purposes, including resource management areas, national parks, nature reserves, natural monuments, and closed areas | - The process relies on the government to take action to process applications  
- Ultimately the decision whether to declare a protected area rests with the MECDM and not the community  
- The application process itself is involved and may be complicated or difficult for landowning groups to understand  
- Gaining consensus from all landowners may be difficult, especially because of the lack of central registration of customary land  
- Enforcement and management responsibilities may fall outside of the capacity of communities  
- It is not appropriate for every area that needs protecting, as it is intended to be for objectively “special” areas  
- There may be general misconceptions regarding the effect of a protected area held by customary landowners |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPLEMENTATION METHOD</th>
<th>POSITIVE FACTORS</th>
<th>NEGATIVE FACTORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **PROVINCIAL ORDINANCES** | • Provincial governments have the power (via the Provincial Government Act) to make ordinances for the “Protection, improvement and maintenance of fresh-water and reef fisheries”  
• Ordinances are made as a result of a “local” identification of a need to protect something | • Even where an ordinance is declared, it can be overridden by government either by granting an extractive mineral license or by compulsorily acquiring the land.  
• Customary law may take precedence over a provincial government ordinance.  
• The process is not straightforward; based on information provided by the Landowners Advocacy and Legal Support Unit (LALSU), only three provincial ordinances have been passed in relation to fisheries: the MakiraUlawa Province Fisheries Ordinance 2009, the Choiseul Province Fisheries and Marine Environment Ordinance 2011, and the Western Province Fisheries Ordinance 2011  
• Information relating to provincial ordinances is not easy to obtain and there does not appear to be any central register—for example, LALSU notes that the three identified ordinances may not be in force yet  
• The process relies on provincial government, which is under resourced and has very limited capacity | |
| **CUSTOMARY TENURE SYSTEMS** | • Many already in place  
• Easy to set up  
• Given the complexities with other methods, there are likely to be many more informal protected areas  
• Community responsive  
• Better understanding of enforcement  
• Underpinned by customary law | • No national legal framework  
• Can be opened at will  
• Can be overruled by government, which via reserved ministerial decision-making powers retains overall rights to grant licenses to companies interesting in exploitation of resources in all areas |
Appendix E.

External Funding for Fisheries and Coastal Marine Resource Management

There are several foreign entities involved in funding fisheries and coastal marine resource conservation, as well as related issues like climate change adaptation.

Global Environment Facility

Six national projects, including two in biodiversity conservation, have been implemented in the Solomon Islands with support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The six GEF grants totaled $8.3 million and leveraged an additional $42.3 million in cofinancing resources. During GEF-5 (July 2010–June 2014), the Solomon Islands received an indicative allocation to formulate and execute projects in the amount of $6.25 million. The three components of focus were biodiversity ($3.6 million), climate change ($2 million), and land degradation ($650,000).

One project that the Solomon Islands is participating in is Strengthening Coastal and Marine Resources Management in the Coral Triangle of the Pacific. This project includes three subcomponents:

- Strengthening of national and local institutions for sustainable coastal and marine resources management
- Applying best management practices in ecosystem-based management
- Increasing resilience of marine resources and communities to climate change impacts

In addition to the above money and projects channeling from the GEF Trust Fund, the Solomon Islands also receives funding from two other GEF mechanisms: the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total LDCF/SCCF-financing in the Solomon Islands (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NUMBER OF PROJECTS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDCF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCCF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a. Amount represents the total project financing and co-financing for the regional project Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change.*

Source: GEF 2012.
Official Development Assistance

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the total amount of funding provided to the Solomon Islands via official development assistance (ODA) amounted to $334 million in 2011. This is a significant amount of money by any standard, and certainly when compared when the gross national income (GNI). For comparative purposes, the Table shows the 2011 ODA, GNI and GNI/ODA for each of the countries supported by the Packard Western Pacific Program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>NET ODA RECEIPTS (MILLION DOLLARS)</th>
<th>GNI (MILLION DOLLARS)</th>
<th>ODA / GNI (PERCENT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOLOMON ISLANDS</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIJI</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3,654</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAPUA NEW GUINEA</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>12,426</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PALAU</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEDERATED STATE OF MICRONESIA</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDONESIA</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>822,696</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While these bilateral agreement packages generally target environmentally sustainable projects, only a small amount of funding goes directly to conservation (terrestrial or marine) efforts. This should not be interpreted as meaning that these countries do not view conservation as important; bilateral programs align with government priorities and objectives, which generally only peripherally include conservation (e.g., as an element within poverty eradication).

65. OECD, undated. Of this, approximately $250 million came from Australia via AusAID RAMSI development programs and other government departments, including support from the Australian Federal Police for the RAMSI Participating Police Force.
References


Solomon Islands Protected Areas Act 2010.

Solomon Islands Protected Areas Regulations.

Solomon Islands Provincial Government Act.


