



# Ocean Country Partnership Programme

# Solomon Islands

## Achievement Report

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## Programme:

The Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCP) is a 5 year (2021-2026) technical assistance and capacity building programme that provides tailored support to countries to manage the marine environment more sustainably, including by strengthening marine science expertise, developing science-based policy, management tools and creating educational resources for coastal communities. The OCP delivers work under three thematic areas: biodiversity, marine pollution, and sustainable seafood. OCP was delivered by three British Government Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs): the Centre for the Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO). Other components of OCP were delivered by the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP) and the Friends of Ocean Action (FOA) and those elements are not covered in this report. More information on OCP can be found at: [DevTracker Programme GB-GOV-7-BPFOCPP Documents](#)

## Document Purpose:

This Achievement Report presents a summary of the activities undertaken and the achievements obtained as a result of cooperation between countries for this partnership. This document does not cover the multilateral components of the programme and this report only covers achievements by the end of the programme. A range of further achievements are expected as recommendations from the OCP are adopted by partner countries in the preceding period post-programme closure.

All OCP Achievement Reports have been authored by the ALBs and therefore key achievements and impacts of collaboration reflects individuals own perspectives. Independent evaluation by the OCP MEL provider verifies outputs and outcomes against the programme logframe, the findings of which can be viewed in the programme's annual reviews and closure report on Dev Tracker.

## Funding Acknowledgement:

Funding for OCP was provided through the overarching Blue Planet Fund (BPF) by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The authors would like to thank and acknowledge Defra on behalf of the UK Government for the funding: project number GB-GOV-7-BPFOCPP has funded this work.

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## Acronyms

ABD	Asian Development Bank
ACU	Association of Commonwealth Universities
BPF	Blue Planet Fund
Cefas	Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
FFA	Forum Fisheries Agency
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
GEDSI	Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
ICS	Incident Command Centre
IMO	International Maritime Organisation
IUU	Illegal, Unreported & Unregulated (fishing)
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
MECDM	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Disaster Management
MFMR	Ministry of Fisheries, and Marine Resources
NCP	National Contingency Plan
ND-GAIN	Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
OCP	Ocean Country Partnership Programme
QGIS	Quantum Geographic Information System
RCP	Regional Contingency Plan
SEAH	Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment
SIDS	Small Island Developing State
SIMA	Solomon Islands Maritime Authority
SINU	Solomon Islands National University
SOMER	State of the Marine Environment Report
SPC	The South Pacific Community
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
USP	University of the South Pacific
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society

# Context

## Coastal and Marine Pressures

The Solomon Islands is a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) in the Pacific, made up of nearly 1,000 islands and surrounded by a vast and ecologically rich ocean territory within the Coral Triangle, one of the most biodiverse marine regions on Earth. Its coral reefs, mangroves, and seagrass ecosystems support vital fisheries, food security, and livelihoods for local communities.

These natural assets are, however, under increasing pressure. Pollution, particularly from inadequate waste and sewage infrastructure, risks degrading coastal waters and posing risks to both human and ecosystem health. Unsustainable fishing practices and growing demand for seafood threaten fish stocks, while land-based activities such as logging contribute to sedimentation that damages sensitive marine habitats. At the same time, the Solomon Islands faces significant biodiversity loss driven by climate change, including coral bleaching, ocean acidification, and habitat degradation.

Solomon Islands sits in the Pacific 'Ring of Fire' and is highly vulnerable to both seismic and volcanic activity, as well as climate-related natural hazards such as typhoons. The country is therefore at a particularly high risk of high-impact natural disasters.

Together, these challenges highlight the urgent need for integrated, community-led approaches to sustainable seafood management, pollution reduction, and biodiversity conservation. The Solomon Islands also faces environmental risks from numerous World War II shipwrecks scattered across its waters, which can leak oil and hazardous materials over time, posing a serious threat to marine ecosystems, coastal livelihoods, and water quality.

## Poverty, Development and Climate Change

Solomon Islands' economy is largely based on the services sector, which accounts for approximately 60% of GDP, followed by agriculture, forestry and fisheries (around 30%), and industry (around 10%). A high proportion of the population relies on subsistence agriculture and coastal fisheries, with an estimated 75% of Solomon Islanders living in rural areas and drawing livelihoods from natural resources, making the economy and household welfare highly sensitive to environmental change ([Climate Risk Country Profile: Solomon Islands \(2021\): The World Bank Group](#)).

Poverty remains widespread in Solomon Islands. Using international poverty measures, the poverty rate is estimated to be between 26–30%, with significantly higher rates in rural and remote island communities. Economic shocks, food price inflation, and frequent natural hazards have continued to undermine household food security, employment and incomes, particularly since 2020 ([World Bank Poverty & Equity Brief: Solomon Islands, 2025](#)). Rapid population growth and urbanisation, especially in Honiara, have put increasing pressure on health, education and basic services, while access to quality schooling in rural areas remains limited, constraining long-term employment opportunities for young people ([Asian Development Bank, 2025](#)).

Solomon Islands is extremely vulnerable to climate change, with high exposure to cyclones, flooding, sea-level rise and coastal erosion, all of which pose growing risks to infrastructure, food systems and livelihoods. It is ranked 156th out of 182 countries in the 2020 ND-GAIN Index, reflecting very high climate vulnerability and limited adaptive capacity ([ND-GAIN Country Index: Solomon Islands; Climate Risk Country Profile: Solomon Islands \(2021\): The World Bank Group](#)).

## OCPP in Solomon Islands

Figure 1 provides an illustrative timeline of OCPP's activity in Solomon Islands. The programme undertook an initial scoping and engagement visit in November 2022, which formed the basis of the priorities and work packages that were developed and agreed in financial year 2023/24.

During the scoping visit, Solomon Islands Government flagged provision of support for monitoring water quality and pollution ahead of hosting the 2023 Pacific Games in Honiara as being particularly important. As a result, this was prioritised in early 2023/24, with other packages of work agreed, developed and implemented over the remainder of the financial year. A detailed breakdown of the work delivered in Solomon Islands over 2023/24 to 2024/25 is included in the subsequent sections.



**Figure 1:** Timeline of OCPP’s delivery in Solomon Islands

Bilateral delivery in Solomon Islands and Vanuatu concluded slightly earlier than the other partnerships (2024/25, as opposed to 2025/26), with work in the latter stages of the 2024/25 financial year focussing on programme closure in-country and the associated transition.

## Stakeholders

OCPD worked with several national and regional partners in the Solomon Islands, and the detail of the work delivered under each workstream are captured in the following section.

The **Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM)** is the Solomon Islands government ministry responsible for sustainable environmental management, climate change adaptation and mitigation, disaster risk management, and the provision of meteorological services, and OCPD worked with them extensively across a broad suite of activities within the Pollution theme. Again, under the Pollution theme, OCPD collaborated with **Solomon Islands Maritime Authority (SIMA)**, who is responsible for regulating the national maritime sector, including vessel inspection, maritime safety, search and rescue coordination, and preventing and responding to ship-sourced pollution.

OCPD worked with the **Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)** and **Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR)** to deliver GIS/remote sensing training to strengthen fisheries monitoring and surveillance, including integration with regional fisheries enforcement systems. OCPD also worked with MFMR completed a Fisheries Supply Chain Analysis also working closely with the **Solomon Islands National University (SINU)**.

OCPD's Biodiversity work involved a strong collaboration with the **Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)**, which is an international conservation organisation with an active presence in the Solomon Islands.

Finally, the **Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)** is the key intergovernmental organisation providing environmental leadership, technical support, and regional coordination across the Pacific. SPREP assists Pacific Island countries in addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, and environmental governance. In addition to direct collaborations on marine pollution emergency response, OCPD worked closely with SPREP in a more general sense, whereby they provided ongoing advisory input across programme activities.

# Impact

## Workstreams & Impact

Although bilateral delivery was undertaken only undertaken over two years (2023/24 to 2024/25), significant impact was achieved across all OCPP workstreams in this relatively short timeframe.

### Sustainable Seafood

A **supply chain analysis** for the proposed development of a new fish market was undertaken to underpin both the economic and environmental case for investment and was delivered in partnership with the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) and Solomon Islands National University (SINU). This work provided a comprehensive mapping of the Solomon Islands' seafood value chains to support sustainable economic development and marine resource management. The report combined desk-based research and fieldwork to analyse key products, such as tuna, reef fish, seaweed, and others highlighting their roles in livelihoods, nutrition, and exports. The study identified significant gaps in data availability, particularly across informal and intermediate stages of the sector, and offers targeted recommendations to strengthen data systems, improve policy design, and enhance coordination among stakeholders, ultimately supporting OCPP's goals of sustainable oceans and poverty reduction.

In addition, a **vessel traffic analysis** study around Honiara and surrounding areas to build a clearer picture of vessel types and activity, while also supporting marine pollution emergency response planning. Findings from this study have been shared through engagement with the Fisheries Department to present results and identify next steps for the proposed fish market development.

OCPP also delivered **fisheries monitoring and analysis capacity building**, particularly for the Solomon Islands and, through the Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), more regionally across the Pacific. The support delivered included GIS (QGIS) training, both at a regional workshop and bilaterally with Solomon Islands colleagues, using practical exercises and a train-the-trainer approach to ensure long-term sustainability. It also strengthened partnerships with key stakeholders, shared insights from ongoing satellite surveillance analysis for monitoring fisheries compliance and supported the use of data to inform fisheries management and enforcement. The work enhanced regional capability to monitor fishing activity, combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, and support sustainable fisheries and livelihoods in marine-dependent communities.

## Pollution

Under the pollution theme, OCPP supported a **water quality and pollution** assessment programme, which was conducted along the Honiara coastline in July and September 2023. OCPP delivered a comprehensive dataset based on water and sediment sampling across 13 sites, assessing nutrients, oceanographic parameters, metals, microbial contamination, and toxicity. The results supported decisions on the suitability of swimming sites for the Pacific Games, which were held in Honiara in November 2023. The project identified key pollution hotspots, particularly at Ranadi, Mataniko River, Central Market, and Kukum Fish Market, where results indicated anthropogenic impacts and poorer water quality. While most metal concentrations were within safe limits, some exceedances were observed. Microbial analysis highlighted several sites with unacceptable water quality, posing potential health risks. The work delivered a baseline understanding of coastal water quality, identified priority areas for further monitoring, and supported capacity building with local partners. OCPP also supported the Ministry of Environment with marine litter equipment for beach clean-up, before the Pacific games.

OCPP also supported the Ministry of Environment in the development of **educational resources**, including booklets tailored for primary and secondary school students. These resources were designed to raise awareness of the Solomon Islands' single-use plastic ban, which was formally gazetted and came into effect on 1 September 2023. As part of this initiative, the OCPP team collaborated closely with the Ministry of Environment to deliver educational packs across six schools, reinforcing key messages on waste reduction and sustainable practices. In addition, OCPP supported the procurement and design of 12 recycling units, which were distributed to the same six schools to further promote behavioural change and compliance with the single-use plastic ban.

OCPP supported JICA-led **waste management** workshops in the Solomon Islands by contributing coordination support. This included helping to facilitate stakeholder engagement, sharing best practices on waste reduction and recycling, and strengthening local capacity for sustainable waste management. Through this collaboration, OCPP helped enhance knowledge exchange and supported the development of practical approaches to improve waste management systems across participating communities.

## Emergency Response

OCPP supported with a comprehensive technical report that assesses the risks posed by World War II shipwrecks in the Solomon Islands. The report identifies **high-risk wrecks**, evaluates their potential to release oil pollution, and analyses impacts on marine ecosystems, livelihoods, and communities. The report also outlined challenges (e.g. limited capacity, funding, and coordination) and provides a structured action plan to improve monitoring, preparedness, and response. Alongside this, OCPP delivered a concise summary of the main findings and recommendations from the full report. It highlighted key risks, identifies the 15 highest-risk wrecks, and presents a three-tiered response strategy focused on assessment, monitoring, and long-term capacity building.

In respect of marine pollution emergency response, OCPP delivered a targeted programme to strengthen **preparedness and response capability** in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. OCPP designed and delivered a four-day regional workshop in

Honiara, bringing together 45 stakeholders from 27 organisations to build capacity, enhance coordination, and share best practice on contingency planning, pollution risk assessment, spill response, and community engagement. The workshop combined technical training with practical exercises, including a multi-stakeholder tabletop simulation. OCPP supported stakeholders to identify key gaps in national response systems, such as limited capacity, unclear roles, and insufficient resources, and defined priority actions to improve readiness. Alongside this, OCPP delivered bilateral engagement with national agencies to support contingency planning, future training, and technical assistance, and contributed to community outreach through the distribution of marine pollution education materials. OCPP has also facilitated contractor-led upskilling and capacity building in priority areas such as International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and Incident Command Systems training alongside stakeholder engagement tabletop exercise. The outputs from this activity include two workshops, each with 20 attendees.

Finally, the **Regional Pacific Symposium** on Marine Pollution Emergency Response held in Fiji 2025 brought together governments, regional organisations, and technical experts to strengthen preparedness and response to pollution incidents across the Pacific. Through practical training, knowledge sharing, and collaborative exercises, the programme built critical skills in oil spill response, monitoring, and community engagement, while also improving coordination between countries and agencies. This directly supports the Solomon Islands by enhancing national and regional capacity to respond to marine pollution incidents, such as oil spills from shipwrecks, protecting its rich marine biodiversity, fisheries, and coastal communities. It also helps address gaps in resources, planning, and technical expertise, ensuring the country is better equipped to manage environmental risks and build long-term resilience

## Biodiversity

Funding was delivered to maintain essential **leatherback turtle conservation activities** in the Solomon Islands, which includes regular beach patrols, nest monitoring, tagging, and relocation of eggs to hatcheries on Tetepare and Rendova, with strong community involvement. Support also enabled site visits and essential repairs to ranger shelters and hatcheries, ensuring facilities remained operational. In addition, the first National Turtle Working Committee meeting was convened, strengthening coordination and implementation of the National Plan of Action.

The biodiversity theme also supported collection of State of Marine Environment Report (SOMER) global data to feed into the next iteration of the Solomon Islands SOMER. OCPP sourced new global data sources to feed into the indicators for the following:

- Catch of identified indicator species
- Threatened, endemic and migratory species
- Live coral cover
- Marine protected areas % of EEZ of formally protected for conservation
- Status of inshore fisheries
- Lagoon water quality Enterococci levels across lagoon monitoring sites

## Education

OCPP awarded thirteen OCPP scholars at the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Fiji from the ACU OCPP Pilot Cohort, with three scholars undertaking PhDs and ten studying for Master's degrees. In the second-round of applications, a further four scholars were awarded. The USP pilot was the only scheme where PhDs were offered due to the timing of the OCPP Business case allowing guaranteed funding until the end of the 3 -4 year study timeline. Applicants were open to the wider South Pacific region as well as Vanuatu and Solomon Islands, with one scholar was awarded in Fiji with six from Vanuatu and ten from Solomon Islands.

Scholars studied for MSc's and PhD's under the following subject areas. A full list of the specific research areas is included in the accompanying Annex.

- MSc Environmental Science
- MSc Climate Change
- Geography
- MSc Environmental Science
- MA Environmental Management
- PhD Biology
- PhD Environmental Management
- MA Marine Management

## Conclusion

The Solomon Islands faces mounting coastal and marine pressures driven by pollution, unsustainable fishing, habitat degradation, and climate-related impacts on its globally significant marine ecosystems, underscoring the need for coordinated, community-led solutions. Across the country, OCPP has worked closely with national ministries, regional agencies, and conservation partners to strengthen sustainable fisheries management, improve pollution monitoring and emergency response capability, support biodiversity conservation—including critical leatherback turtle protection—and advance environmental education. Through targeted technical assistance, capacity building, analytical studies, and multistakeholder training, the programme has enhanced data systems, strengthened institutional partnerships, improved waste and water quality management, and boosted readiness for marine pollution incidents. Complementing this, OCPP's scholarship and education initiatives have helped build long-term national expertise in environmental science, climate resilience, and marine management. Collectively, these efforts support stronger environmental governance, healthier marine ecosystems, and more resilient, sustainable livelihoods for Solomon Islands communities.

# Annex 1: Scholar research titles in the South Pacific

## Fiji

1. Strengthening Ciguatera Poisoning Detection Tools to Reduce Human Health Risks, Build Climate Change Resilience & Improve International Economic Trade for Seafood (PhD)

## Vanuatu

2. Holistic and sustainable management approach for land-sea ecosystems: a case study on ciguatera fish poisoning in Vanuatu (PhD)
3. Assessing Feeds and Culture Methods for Growth and Survival of the Mud Crab (*Scylla serrata*) for aquaculture in Vanuatu.
4. Integrating traditional Knowledge into Climate Adaptation Strategies for the Fishing communities in Vanuatu
5. Investigating the potential of farming land crab, *Cardisoma* spp, in Vanuatu using simple methods and low-cost local feed
6. Distribution patterns and breeding phenology of collared petrel (*Pterodroma brevipes*) on Tanna Island.
7. Assessing the condition and community knowledge of seagrass beds in Vanuatu – A case study in Eratap village and Nguna Island, Efate

## Solomon Islands

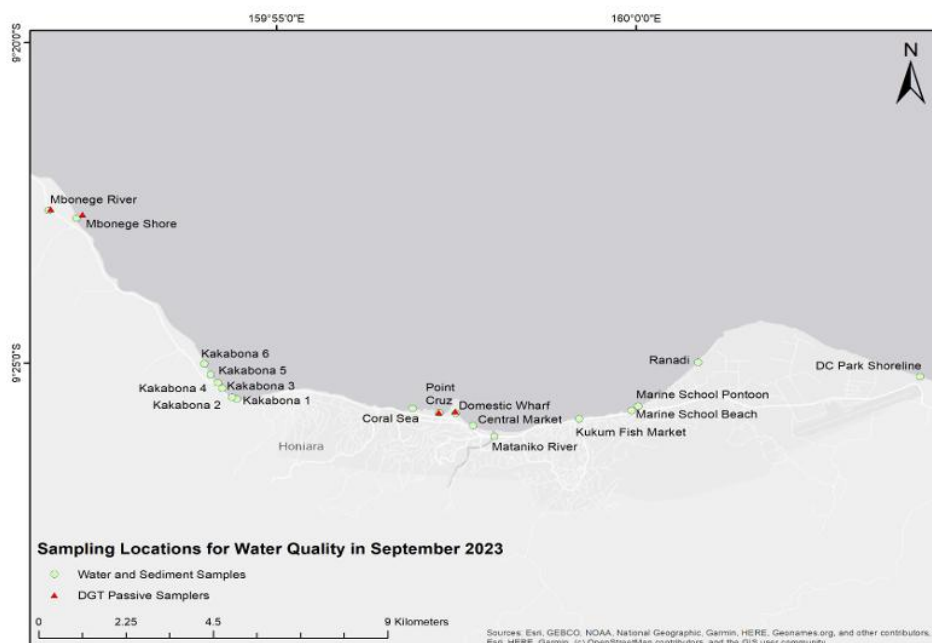
8. Microplastic contamination in coastal water and coastal reef fish in Malaita province, Solomon Islands.
9. Effectiveness of Community-based Resource Management (CBRM) by examining the biophysical and socio-economic aspects in two marine managed areas in Solomon Islands.
10. Mangrove flora, ecosystem services and carbon sequestration potential of Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands (PhD)
11. Cooking fuel choices in the Solomon Islands – an environmental health analysis.
12. The Presence and Abundance of Microplastics in two food fish, the *A. lineatus* and *P. barberinus*, in the Solomon Islands
13. Research Title: Assessing Seagrass: Community Insights and Ecosystem Services in Ngongosila and Kwai Islands, Solomon Islands.
14. Microplastic occurrence and its implications for small-scale tilapia aquaculture systems in Malaita, Solomon Islands
15. Adaptive capacity of small-scale fisheries to climate change in Malaita, Solomon Islands.
16. Evaluating Waste Management Strategies for Reducing Land-Based Pollution and Protecting Marine Ecosystems: A Case study of Honiara City, Solomon Islands.
17. Trend analysis of temperature and precipitation, and its impact on root crop cultivation in Solomon Islands

# Case Study Pages

## Case Study: Water Quality & Pollution Assessment: Comprehensive baseline for Honiara coastline (13 sites).

Coastal water quality in the Solomon Islands is increasingly under pressure from urbanisation, inadequate waste management, and land-based pollution sources. Around 80% of marine pollution originates from land, posing risks to ecosystems, public health, and livelihoods. In response, the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM) prioritised water quality monitoring, particularly along the Honiara coastline, where population density and economic activity are highest.

Through the Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCP) a comprehensive water quality and pollution assessment was conducted in September 2023. The programme worked in close collaboration with MECDM to co-design and implement a monitoring strategy across 13 priority sites, including riverine inputs, markets, ports, and recreational areas.



The study applied a multi-parameter approach, combining:

- Oceanographic measurements (nutrients, turbidity, dissolved oxygen);
- Chemical analysis (trace metals in water and sediments);
- Microbial testing (E. coli, Enterococci, AMR indicators);
- Rapid toxicity screening (Microtox).

This integrated methodology provided a holistic understanding of environmental and human health risks.

The assessment identified clear spatial differences in water quality:

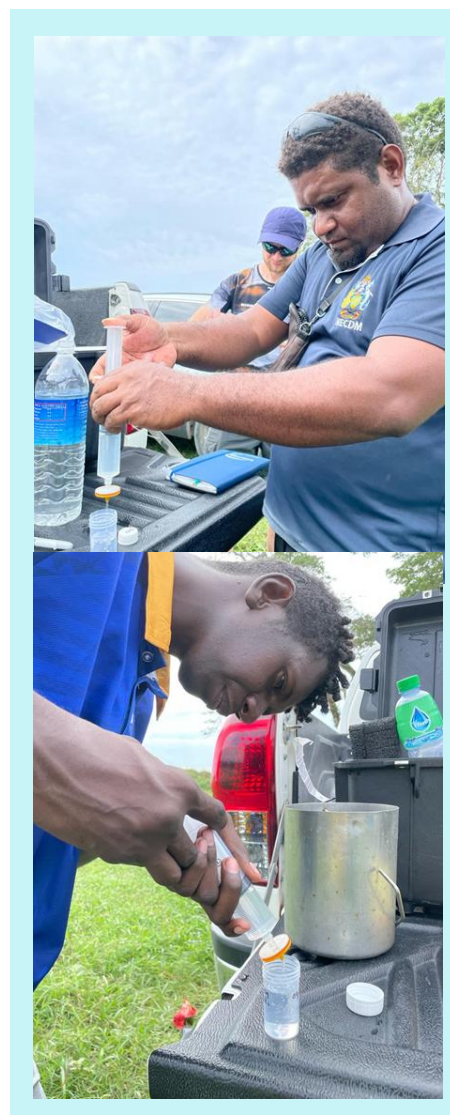
- **Pollution hotspots** such as Ranadi, Mataniko River, and Central Market showed elevated nutrients, microbial contamination, and indicators of anthropogenic pollution, with some sites exceeding multiple international thresholds.
- **Moderate concern areas** like Kukum Fish Market and Point Cruz exhibited high turbidity and nutrient enrichment, indicating potential ongoing pollution pressures.
- **Good quality sites** including Kakabona and DC Park met international recreational water standards, demonstrating areas of lower impact and potential conservation value.

Sampling Location	Date	NH <sub>3</sub>	Nox	PO <sub>4</sub>	TDN	TDP	TN	TP	DIN:DIP	TSS	Chl a	Sum of parameters exceeding threshold criteria
Mataniko River	12/09/2023	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	9
Central Market	12/09/2023	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	9
Ranadi Shore	14/09/2023	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	9
Marine School Pontoon	14/09/2023	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	9
Point Cruz West	16/09/2023	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	9
Mbonege River	12/09/2023	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	8
Domestic Wharf	12/09/2023	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	8
Kakabona 1	13/09/2023	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	8
Kukum Fish Market	14/09/2023	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	8
DC Park	18/09/2023	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	7
Kakabona 3	13/09/2023	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	6
Kakabona 4	13/09/2023	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	6
Coral Sea Hotel	16/09/2023	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	6
Mbonege Shore	12/09/2023	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	5
Marine School Beach	14/09/2023	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	5
Mbonege Shore	18/09/2023										1	1
DC Park	18/09/2023										0	0
Mbonege River	18/09/2023										0	0
Domestic Wharf	18/09/2023											0
<b>Threshold</b>		<b>0.07</b>	<b>0.14</b>	<b>0.16</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>0.35</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>0.7</b>	

The results also highlighted specific risks such as elevated faecal contamination at several urban sites posed public health concerns. Localised metal exceedances (notably zinc) suggested point-source pollution was noted. And finally, toxicity screening indicated increased contaminant effects at certain high-pressure locations.

OCPD played a critical role beyond data collection, delivering tangible and lasting impact:

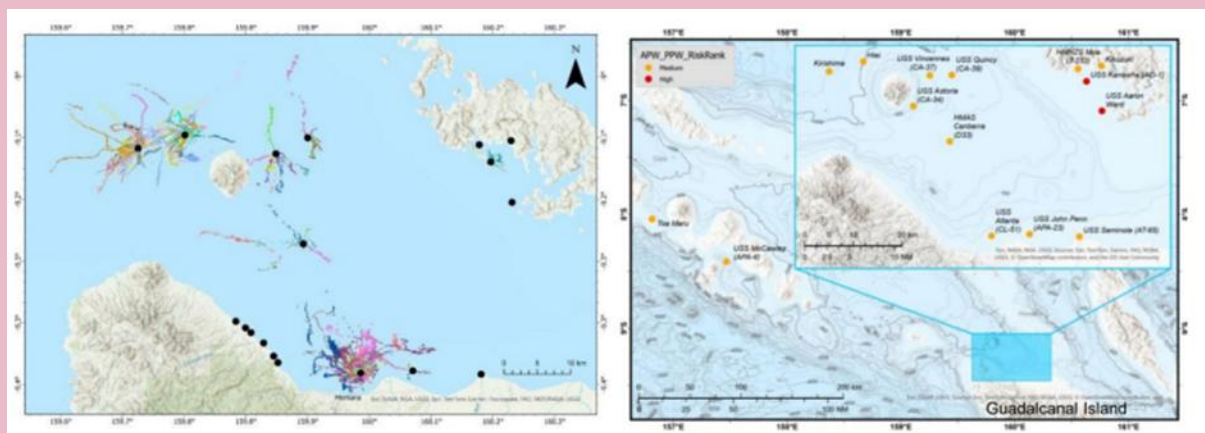
- 1. Capacity Building and Skills Transfer**  
MECDM staff were directly involved in field sampling and laboratory techniques, receiving hands-on training in water quality monitoring, microbiology, and analytical methods. This has strengthened in-country capability to conduct ongoing assessments independently.
- 2. Establishing a Baseline for Decision-Making**  
The programme generated one of the most comprehensive baseline datasets for Honiara's coastal waters. This enables future trend analysis, supports evidence-based policymaking, and helps prioritise pollution mitigation efforts.
- 3. Co-development of Monitoring Frameworks**  
OCPD worked collaboratively with MECDM to design monitoring strategies tailored to local priorities, ensuring relevance, ownership, and long-term sustainability.
- 4. Strengthening Institutional and Regional Collaboration**  
The programme facilitated partnerships between Solomon Islands institutions and international laboratories (e.g., Cefas, James Cook University, AIMS), opening pathways for continued technical support and knowledge exchange.
- 5. Informing Practical Action and Policy**  
The findings directly informed recommendations for targeted monitoring at high-risk sites, improved waste management, and development of long-term environmental monitoring programmes.



This case study demonstrates how OCPD has moved beyond short-term assessment to create sustained impact in the Solomon Islands. By combining scientific expertise, local collaboration, and capacity building, the programme has strengthened national ability to monitor, understand, and respond to marine pollution challenges, supporting both environmental protection and community wellbeing.

## Case Study: WWII Shipwreck Risk Assessment: Identified top 15 high-risk wrecks threatening marine environments.

The Solomon Islands face a significant environmental threat from Actively and Potentially Polluting Wrecks (APWs/PPWs), many of which date back to World War II. Of approximately 210 wrecks identified within the country's Exclusive Economic Zone, 118 are considered potentially polluting, with 15 classified as high-risk. These wrecks pose serious risks to marine biodiversity, food security, and the livelihoods of coastal communities that depend heavily on marine resources. Satellite monitoring has revealed that at least eight of these high-risk wrecks are already leaking oil, often in remote areas with limited infrastructure and response capacity. This situation is compounded by gaps in national response systems, limited funding, and the complexity of coordinating multiple stakeholders.



The Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCP) has played a critical role in supporting the Solomon Islands to better understand and manage the risks posed by APWs/PPWs. Through technical advice and capacity-building workshops, OCP has enabled the development of a structured, evidence-based approach to marine pollution risk management.

A key contribution of OCP has been the design and implementation of a three-tiered response strategy, which provides a systematic framework for addressing pollution risks:

- Assessment of wreck conditions and likelihood of oil release
- Identification of environmental and socio-economic impact pathways
- Development of targeted risk management strategies

This approach has helped prioritise interventions, ensuring that resources are directed towards the highest-risk wrecks, such as the USS Kanawha, which poses the greatest potential threat due to its remaining oil volume and proximity to sensitive ecosystems.

OCPP's support has enabled the Solomon Islands to move from a fragmented understanding of wreck-related risks to a coordinated, strategic framework for action. Key outcomes include:

## Priority actions



- Improved identification and prioritisation of high-risk wrecks
- Enhanced monitoring using satellite data and community observations
- Strengthened stakeholder coordination and national planning processes
- Increased awareness of the socio-economic and cultural impacts of marine pollution

Importantly, this work lays the foundation for sustainable marine environmental stewardship, helping to protect vital ecosystems and the communities that depend on them.



Through technical expertise, stakeholder engagement, and capacity building, OCPP has been instrumental in supporting the Solomon Islands to address the complex challenge of potentially polluting wrecks. By enabling a structured, risk-based approach and strengthening national systems, OCPP is helping to safeguard marine resources and build long-term resilience against pollution threats in the region.

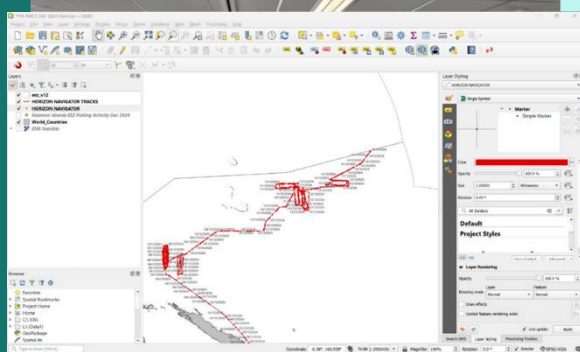
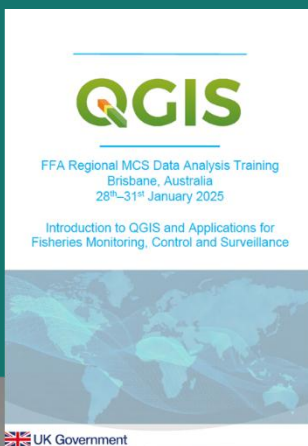
## Case Study: Strengthening Fisheries Monitoring and Surveillance in the Pacific Through OCPP–FFA Collaboration



The Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCPP) has played a pivotal role in enhancing fisheries monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) capacity across the Pacific, following scoping deployments in 2022 and 2024. Building on established partnerships with the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) and the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), OCPP identified a key opportunity to strengthen geospatial analysis capabilities within the FFA Regional Fisheries Surveillance Centre (RFSC). The RFSC routinely analyses AIS, VMS, and satellite imagery to generate intelligence for fisheries oversight, and OCPP’s support focused on improving analysts’ ability to process and interpret these complex data sources using open-source Geographic Information Systems (GIS) tools.

In January 2024, OCPP was invited to deliver GIS training at the FFA Regional MCS Data Analysis workshop in Brisbane, a multi-country event designed to enhance intelligence-led fisheries enforcement. Through hands-on exercises and foundational instruction, OCPP equipped analysts from nine Pacific Island nations—including the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu—with practical skills in geospatial analysis for identifying potential illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing activity. This contribution aligned directly with the FFA Regional MCS Strategy 2024–29, which emphasises improved data analysis, information systems, and capability development to strengthen national and regional MCS responses.

To ensure long-term sustainability of this training, OCPP conducted follow-up sessions in Honiara using a train-the-trainer model, enabling FFA staff to independently deliver similar modules in future regional workshops. The deployment also provided an opportunity to deepen collaboration with MFMR, including joint review of ongoing satellite surveillance analysis to map inshore vessel activity and inform more targeted patrol planning. Alongside technical engagement, the visit strengthened relationships with the British High Commission and facilitated discussions on emerging regional priorities and future UK support.



## Pacific Emergency Response Symposium

In September 2025, representatives from across the Pacific gathered in Suva, Fiji, for a five-day Regional Symposium on Marine Pollution Emergency Response. The event brought together governments, maritime authorities, international organisations, and technical experts to address one of the region's most pressing environmental challenges, the growing risk of marine pollution from oil and chemical spills.

Pacific Island nations are uniquely vulnerable to marine pollution due to their vast maritime zones, dependence on ocean-based livelihoods, and increasing exposure to climate-related risks. Many countries face limitations in resources, infrastructure, and technical capacity, making coordinated preparedness and response essential. The symposium aimed to strengthen regional cooperation, improve national readiness, and promote a unified approach to pollution prevention and response.



The programme combined technical training, policy discussions, and practical exercises. Key themes included contingency planning, spill behaviour and response strategies, legal frameworks for liability and compensation, and the critical role of community engagement. Participants explored tools such as modelling, incident management systems, and the RETOS assessment framework, while tabletop and field exercises provided hands-on experience in responding to simulated incidents.



A central focus was the operationalisation of the regional PACPLAN framework, which supports coordinated responses and access to international assistance. Discussions highlighted the need for stronger alignment between regional and national contingency plans, clearer communication protocols, and improved data sharing. The symposium also emphasised the importance of ratifying and implementing international conventions to enable effective response and access to compensation mechanisms.



Community involvement emerged as a critical component of effective response. Delegates stressed the importance of incorporating local knowledge, cultural priorities, and inclusive practices into preparedness planning. Initiatives such as the Pacific Women in Maritime Association (PacWIMA) highlighted the need to strengthen gender inclusion and ensure equitable participation in response efforts.

Despite progress, significant challenges remain. These include limited resources, coordination difficulties across agencies, gaps in legislation, and uneven levels of preparedness between countries. The symposium underscored that many nations are still developing or refining their national contingency plans, requiring tailored support and sustained capacity-building.

Key recommendations focused on improving national planning, strengthening regional collaboration, and prioritising shoreline response, which is often more critical than offshore containment in island contexts. Countries were encouraged to identify resource gaps, enhance training and exercises, and build partnerships with industry and international organisations. The importance of regular drills, data collection, and integration of environmental and climate information into response planning was also emphasised.

The symposium demonstrated the value of regional collaboration in addressing shared environmental risks. By supporting knowledge exchange, strengthening partnerships, and promoting practical capacity-building, the event marked an important step toward enhancing resilience and protecting the marine environments and communities of the Pacific.

