



2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent





PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM

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Foreword

Securing the future of the Pacific cannot be left to chance, but requires a long-term vision, strategy and commitment – Pacific Islands Forum Leaders, 2019 Communique

The Blue Pacific Continent is our home, ocean, lands and common heritage.

As Pacific Leaders, we are strongly committed to ensuring the health and wellbeing of our people, and to human rights and equity for all. We place great value on our ocean and land, and celebrate a deep connection to our community, natural environment, resources, livelihoods, faiths, cultural values and traditional knowledge.

We work with our people to deliver on a vision that they will help to nurture. We welcome the support of our national and regional institutions in these efforts. We have often taken on challenges much bigger than ourselves. Many of our nations have gained political independence and have set new paths for their future. Our governance is maturing, and our people have much higher expectations of transparency and accountability. Our public services are supporting a gradual improvement of our wellbeing and quality of life. Much work remains, yet we are confident of success.

The establishment of the Pacific Islands Forum in 1971 strengthened our collective voice and revealed our commitment to political and economic cooperation. The *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* builds on this long history of working together.

In this context, the 2050 Strategy sets out our long-term approach to working together as a region, and as countries and territories, communities, and people of the Pacific. It frames our regional cooperation and broader action around seven key thematic areas which are designed and developed to support the achievement of our vision. These thematic areas include Political Leadership and Regionalism; People-Centred Development; Peace and Security; Resource and Economic Development; Climate Change and Disasters; Ocean and Environment; and Technology and Connectivity. They will require a whole-of-region approach, the inclusion of all key stakeholders in supporting and delivering on our shared priorities, and engaging as the Blue Pacific Continent in strategically beneficial partnerships at the regional, multilateral and global level.

These efforts will require the contribution of all stakeholders, including CROP and other regional agencies; the private sector; civil society; media; academia; community, cultural and faith-based organisations; development partners; and other equally valuable constituencies. Further, we acknowledge the need to listen to and respond to the voices and aspirations of all Pacific peoples, including most importantly, our young people and children as they will inherit what we leave behind.

The success of the 2050 Strategy depends on enhanced cooperation, strong leadership and the continued participation at all levels of society in its implementation. We seek the broadest support possible across our region to ensure full ownership and accountability in delivering on our shared objectives. Through this Strategy we pledge our support to your voices, actions and decisions to build a brighter future for our Blue Pacific. This is our 2050 Strategy, and we will drive and deliver it together for the benefit of all Pacific peoples.



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Leaders' Vision for 2050

All Pacific peoples have an undeniable connection to their natural environment, resources, livelihoods, faiths, cultural values and traditional knowledge. Given our shared stewardship of the Blue Pacific Continent, we have a deep concern for and commitment to the need for urgent, immediate and appropriate action to combat the threat and impacts of climate change; biodiversity and habitat loss; waste and pollution; and other threats. We support our young people to develop their full potential, empower women to be active participants in economic, political and social life and recognise the importance of creating accessible services and infrastructure to enable all Pacific peoples to participate in and benefit from development outcomes. Therefore:



As Pacific Leaders, our vision is for a resilient Pacific Region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion and prosperity, that ensures all Pacific peoples can lead free, healthy and productive lives.



Our Values

As Pacific peoples, our values will guide our collective action in delivering the 2050 Strategy:

- ◇ We recognise **regional cooperation** and our **shared commitment** to work together, as an important platform for achieving the greatest benefits for our people.
- ◇ We value and depend upon our vast ocean and our island resources and the **integrity** of our natural environment.
- ◇ We treasure the **diversity and heritage** of the Pacific and seek an inclusive future in which our faiths, cultural values, and traditional knowledge are respected, honoured and protected.
- ◇ We embrace **good governance**, the full **observance of democratic principles and values**, the rule of law, the defence and promotion of all human rights, gender equality, and commitment to just societies.
- ◇ We ensure **peaceful, safe, and stable communities** and countries, ensuring robust **security and wellbeing** for the peoples of the Pacific.
- ◇ We encourage **innovation and creativity** and respect our **cultural values and traditional knowledge**.
- ◇ We support full **inclusivity, equity and equality** for all peoples of the Pacific.
- ◇ We strive for effective, **open and honest relationships** and **inclusive and enduring partnerships**—based on mutual accountability and respect—with each other, within our sub-regions, within our region, and beyond.
- ◇ We recognise the **importance of a regional architecture** that includes the Pacific Islands Forum at the apex, and that works closely with regional, multilateral, and global partners.

Leaders' Commitments to 2050

Strategic Context: The Influences that Shape Our Region

As large oceanic countries and territories, we are the custodians of nearly 20 percent of the earth's surface, and we place great cultural and spiritual value on our ocean and land, as our common heritage.

We occupy a vitally significant place in global strategic terms. As a consequence, heightened geopolitical competition impacts our Member countries. Further, there is increasing commercial and state-sponsored interest in our region's ecological and natural resources. This is reflected in the global community's present interest in the "Blue Economy" and suggests that there will be growing demand for our resources over the years to come.

Under current trends global temperature rise will exceed 1.5°C before 2040 and 2°C between 2041 and 2060 unless there are rapid, deep and sustained reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions¹. To avert and manage the worst-case scenarios requires urgent, robust and transformative action globally, regionally and nationally. While collective greenhouse gas emissions from the Blue Pacific Continent is just over 1%² of global emissions, we are at the frontline of the adverse impacts of climate change. Harnessing untapped potential for policy interventions to enhance carbon sequestration of the ecosystems and Exclusive Economic Zones of the Blue Pacific Continent could generate substantial climate benefits. The Blue Pacific Continent continues to experience damaging impacts of climate change and requires timely access to scaled-up, effective and sustainable climate finance.

¹ Reference is based on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Sixth Assessment Report as welcomed in the Glasgow Climate Pact[1].

² CSIRO, New Zealand Ministry for the Environment, Casella (2019)



2050 Strategy: The Opportunity to Shape our Future

To leverage this strategic and economic value and at the same time address our most significant threats, including climate change, we are deeply committed to working together whilst ensuring that our regional efforts complement the national interests of our Members. As the Blue Pacific Continent we engage with our partners from a position of strength, unity and solidarity on matters of collective interest.

We will prepare and position ourselves through technology, scientifically-based research, cultural values and traditional knowledge, and equitable partnerships to secure our ocean and derive economic benefits from its resources in a manner that will maintain environmental integrity and drive sustainable economic prosperity and development for all Pacific peoples.

We will continue to collectively support each other in our shared responsibilities through both positive and challenging times. Furthermore, it is vital to our Blue Pacific Identity that we resolve any challenges or disputes in our own unique *Pacific Way* involving consensus-based decision making, whilst respecting sovereignty and the principle of non-interference in national affairs. Above all, our efforts must always lead and contribute to the security, prosperity and wellbeing of our people.

The 2050 Strategy is our opportunity to engage with and shape the most significant dynamics and influences on our region, in order to secure our long-term wellbeing and prosperity. Through the Strategy, we will ensure we are resilient and 'future-ready' by being able to anticipate, prepare for and respond to hazardous climate events, geopolitical and security trends, and other unanticipated shocks.

Leaders' Commitments to 2050

To secure our Blue Pacific Continent by 2050, and building on existing priorities, we commit ourselves as Leaders of the Blue Pacific to do as follows:

- i. **To nurture collective political will and deepen regionalism and solidarity**, we will invest in leadership development, diplomatic capacity and relationship building at all levels and pursue our national interests mindful of our agreed collective regional priorities. We will also endeavour to resolve our challenges and disputes in our own unique *Pacific Way*.
- ii. **To collectively deliver for our people**, we will ensure that the Pacific Islands Forum and wider regional architecture is coherent and effective, and that they deliver on our collective strategic priorities. Further, we will ensure that they allow for the inclusion and engagement of the private sector; civil society; media; academia; community; cultural and faith-based organisations; development partners; and other equally valuable constituencies.
- iii. **To embed our Blue Pacific identity**, we will embrace our cultural diversities, respect our national sovereignties, and protect our collective interests. We will honour and reflect our rich values and traditions by acting as the Blue Pacific Continent to position our region with our partners as well as in global negotiations and processes.
- iv. **To secure the wellbeing of our people**, we will work together to strengthen national and regional efforts to ensure all Pacific peoples benefit from enhanced provision of education, health and other services. To achieve this, we will place emphasis on learning from each other, drawing on scientifically-based research and traditional knowledge as well as promoting human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of all people.
- v. **To protect our people and our place** we will have a more flexible and responsive regional security system that acknowledges the breadth of issues impacting peace and security in our region, and the contribution the region makes in international fora to progressing global peace and security.
- vi. **To accelerate our economic growth aspirations**, we will invest our shared expertise to quantify and determine the full value of our people, oceanic and land-based natural resources. Where appropriate, we will use this value as the basis of our negotiations regarding access to these resources.
- vii. **To guarantee the future of our children**, we will urgently advocate as a collective to reduce and prevent the causes and impacts of climate change and sea level rise; we will call for stronger global commitment to combat climate change; we will continue to pursue innovative measures to address climate change impacts and disaster risk; and with the support of our partners, we commit to ensuring net zero carbon emissions by 2050.
- viii. **To secure a future for our people**, we will deepen our collective responsibility and accountability for the stewardship of the Blue Pacific Continent and protect our sovereignty and jurisdiction over our maritime zones and resources, including in response to climate change induced sea level rise, and strengthen our ownership and management of our resources.
- ix. **To protect our ocean and environment**, we commit to safeguarding the integrity of our natural systems and biodiversity through conservation action and by minimising activities that degrade, pollute, overexploit, or undermine our ocean and natural environment.
- x. **To ensure a well-connected region**, we commit to invest in and strengthen our partnerships and regional regulatory arrangements to support transport and information, communication and technology services and infrastructure.

Strategic Context

The 2050 Strategy emphasises that the Blue Pacific is about Pacific peoples, their faiths, cultural values, and traditional knowledge. People who know their needs and potential; plan and own their development agenda; and act collectively for the good of all.

The global COVID-19 pandemic and global security challenges placed tremendous social and economic stress on the people of the Pacific, who already contend with the impacts of climate change, frequency of disasters and the increasing number of people suffering from non-communicable diseases. While the region continues to face challenges related to the sustainability and security of its ocean and land-based resources, these other issues are creating widening fiscal deficits.

The Strategy is shaped by the region's historical, current and evolving context and identifies where and how the countries and territories of the region will work together as the Blue Pacific Continent and in partnership with all regional stakeholders. It builds on a number of regional agreements and declarations such as the Pacific Plan (2003), Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape (2010), The Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration (2012), The Framework for Pacific Regionalism (2014), The Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Fisheries (2015), The Blue Pacific Narrative (2017), The Boe Declaration (2018), and The Pacific Regional Culture Strategy (2022).

In the current context, there is an increased urgency for the region to act collectively to progress issues of significance, including health epidemics, climate change and disaster risk, gender equality, regional security, ocean governance, and economic and trade development.

The Strategy is a living document which has been developed through comprehensive consultations at both the national and regional level with Members, CROP agencies, Non-State Actors and specialists from within and beyond the region. It is supported by an implementation planning process that recognises unforeseen events. It will be supported by a policy brief and implementation plan which will capture details of sequenced collective actions and a detailed monitoring and reporting framework.

Overarching Approach

The 2050 Strategy features **10 commitments** that Leaders have made to strengthen their collective action and deepen regionalism to realise the vision. In support of these commitments, the Strategy brings together seven interconnected **thematic areas** that are based on comprehensive consultation with Members, CROP and other regional organisations, Non-State Actors, and regional experts.

The thematic areas are:

- » Political Leadership and Regionalism
- » People-Centered Development
- » Peace and Security
- » Resource and Economic Development
- » Climate Change and Disasters
- » Ocean and Environment
- » Technology and Connectivity

Each thematic area contains a **level of ambition** that represents the transformational change that is sought by 2050 in that area. Together, the achievement of all levels of ambition will support the realisation of the vision.

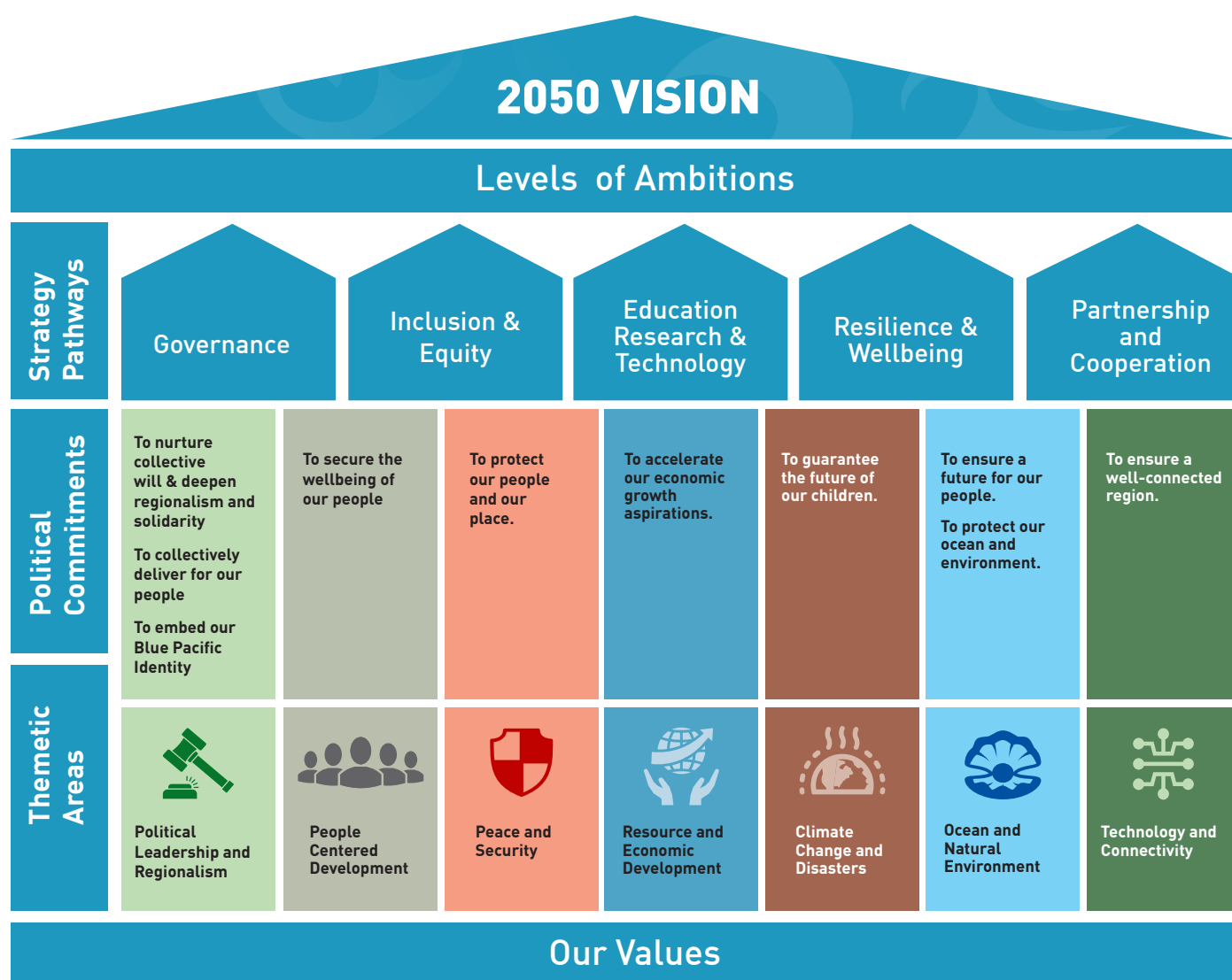
To drive this, each thematic area contains a number of **strategic pathways** which focus on governance; inclusion and equity; education, research and technology; resilience and wellbeing; and partnerships and cooperation. The strategic pathways align to our values and have been developed in a way that reflect the interlinkages that exist across the thematic areas. The strategic pathways, which also align to the Leaders' commitments, will guide the identification and development of collective actions as part of the Strategy's **implementation plan**. An overview of the strategic pathways is as follows:

Strategic Pathway Definitions

- The **Governance Strategic Pathway** emphasises the importance of effective leadership, shared commitment and accountability of the Pacific Islands Forum, together with strong and sustained policies and processes that ensure cooperation, coordination and engagement between the various entities, making up the regional architecture.
- The **Inclusion and Equity Strategic Pathway** recognises the diversity and heritage of Pacific cultural values and ensures that all Pacific peoples are protected and have the right to live in societies in which all can participate and prosper.
- The **Education, Research and Technology Strategic Pathway** is designed to encourage scientifically based research, innovation and creativity while taking account of the best of our traditions and cultural practices.
- The **Resilience and Wellbeing Strategic Pathway** underlines the importance of continuing to strengthen the capacity of the Pacific, her peoples, communities and nations to respond effectively in times of adversity, including in relation to the environment, while building and sustaining free, healthy and productive livelihoods.
- The **Partnership and Cooperation Strategic Pathway** highlights the importance of the region working together, and of working with a wide range of regional and international stakeholders, where all respect the region's faiths, cultural values, and traditional knowledge, and genuine and durable partnerships are based on principles of national and/or regional ownership, mutual trust, transparency and accountability.



Thematic Areas



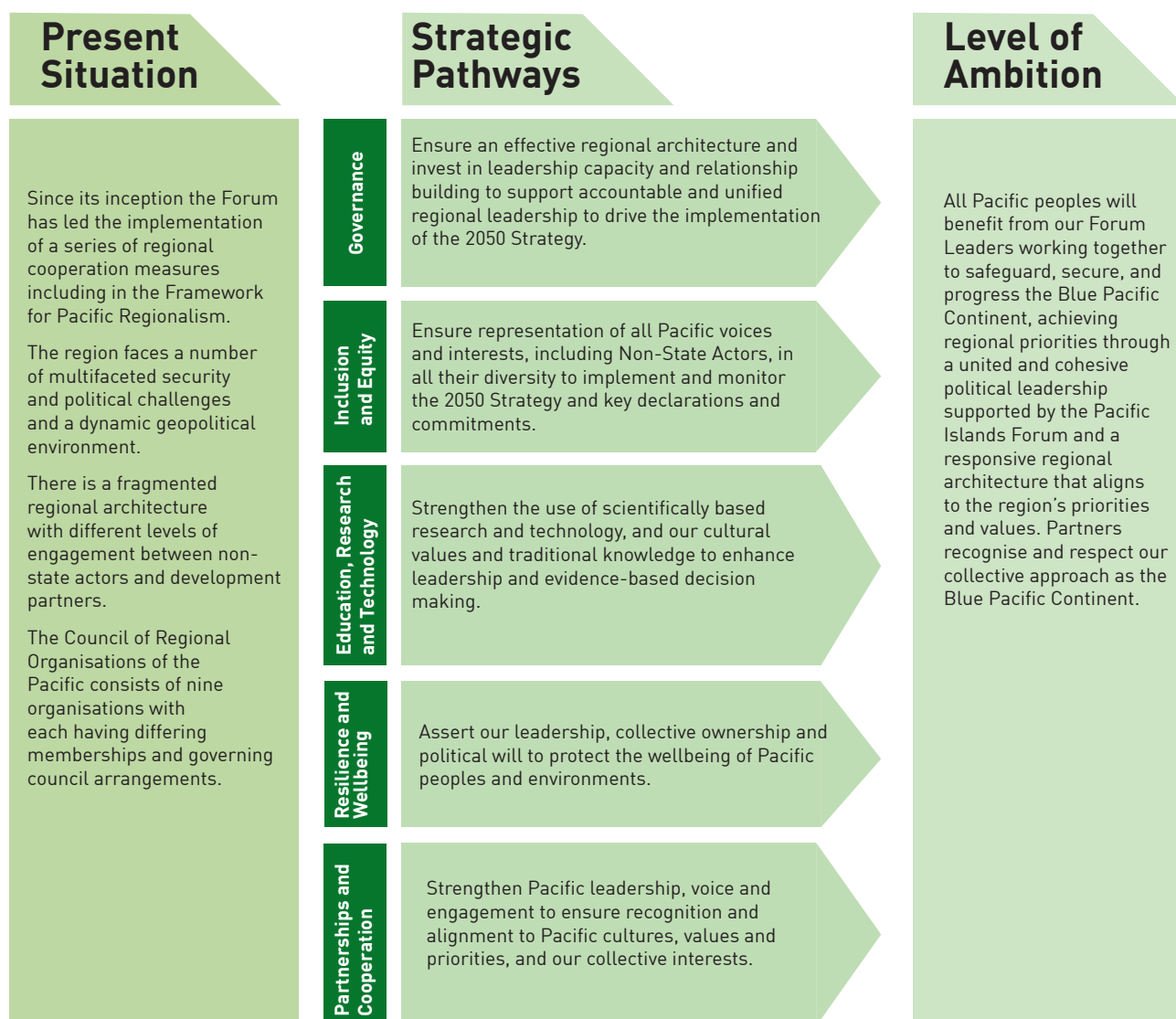




Thematic Area – Political Leadership And Regionalism

The history of Pacific regionalism demonstrates the importance of strong and enduring leadership and political will to address the increasingly complex geopolitical environment and to respond to emerging issues. The delivery of collective actions will be driven by effective governance, inclusivity and ownership that will build leadership and diplomatic capacity and commitment to regionalism.

Success under this thematic area depends on the region working together, including with Non-State Actors, through a regional system that complements national efforts, and drives our joint aspirations and priorities as the Blue Pacific Continent. While respecting national sovereignty and in order to protect our collective interests, the region will act in unity and solidarity in its engagement and advocacy with partners.



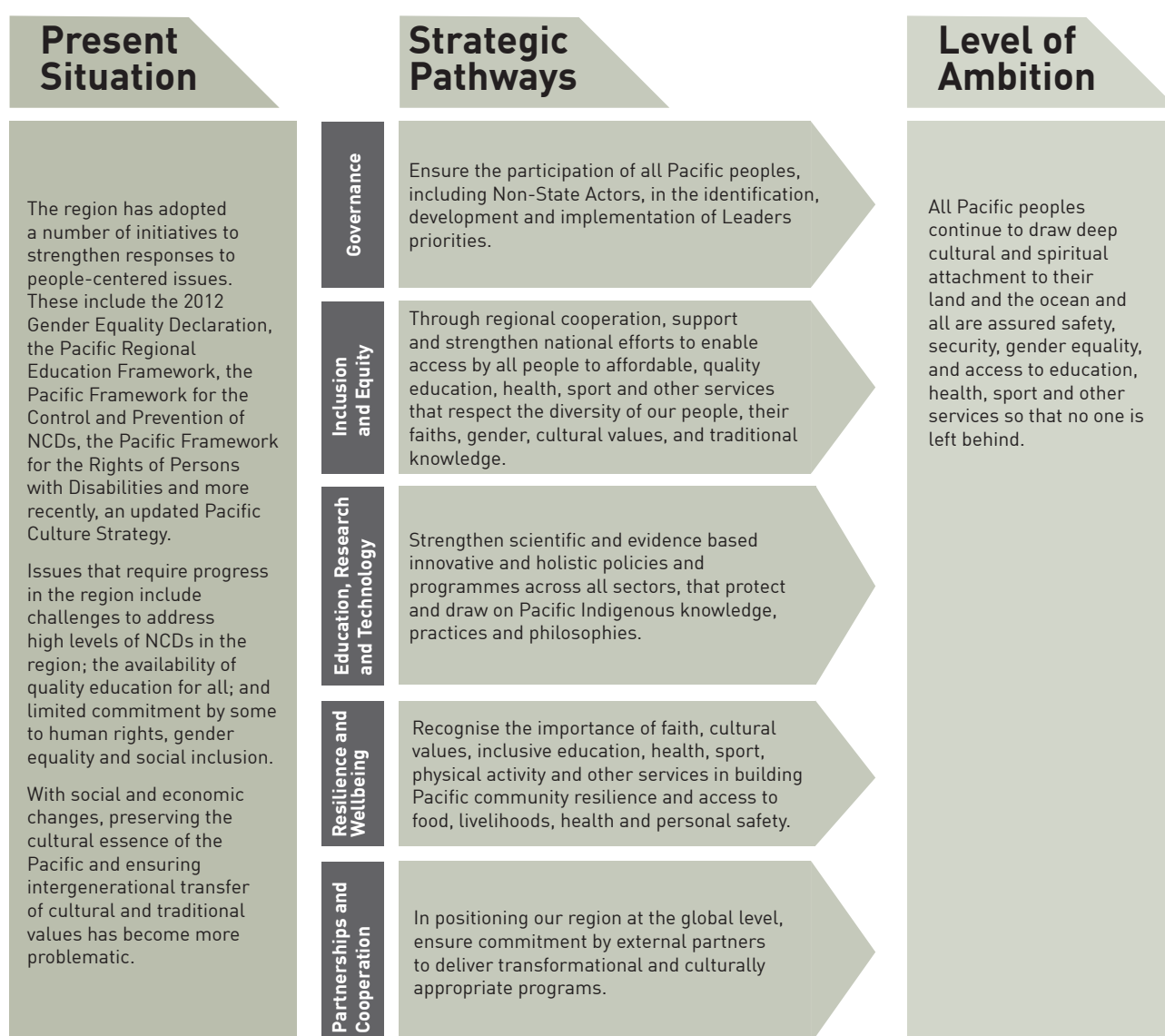




Thematic Area – People-Centered Development

This thematic area recognises that Pacific peoples draw their identity and inspiration from their cultural diversity and deep cultural and spiritual attachments to their land and the ocean. Despite a range of initiatives in the Pacific to promote improved health and education outcomes, much more needs to be done. There is a need to address issues of exclusion and inequality, including gender inequality, marginalised groups, and the importance of protecting human rights and environmental rights.

People-centered development includes youth and cultural development, cultural wellbeing, and participation in sport and physical education. Adaptation and preservation of our indigenous knowledge, social inclusion and social protection are important elements for a people-centered approach to development, and in positioning our region at the global level.



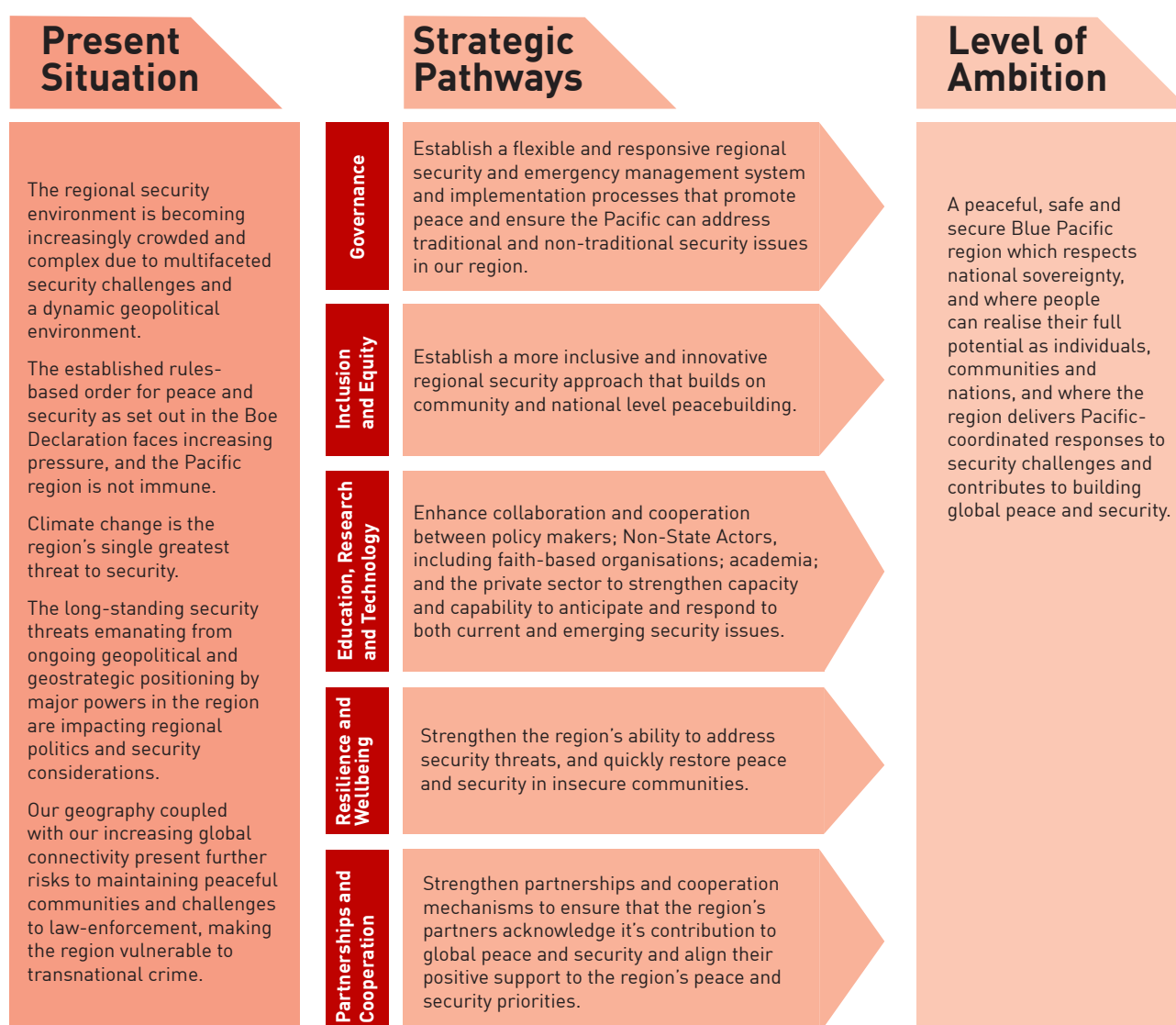




Thematic Area – Peace And Security

This thematic area highlights the central role that peace and security play in ensuring that our countries and territories are able to realise a safe, secure and prosperous region. While recognising the importance to Member countries of collective threats to their peace and security, the Blue Pacific Continent remains committed to principles of democracy, good governance, and non-interference in national affairs.

The region continues to make valuable contributions to the advancement of global peace and security. In doing so, it recognises the expanded concept of security that includes human security, economic security, humanitarian assistance, environmental security, cyber security and transnational crime, and regional cooperation to build resilience to disasters and climate change. Peacebuilding that ensures safety and security at the community level is supported by faith-based and non-governmental organisations. Forum Members continue to work cooperatively to uphold regional peace and security, and support international peace and security efforts, in the face of complex global challenges and relationships.



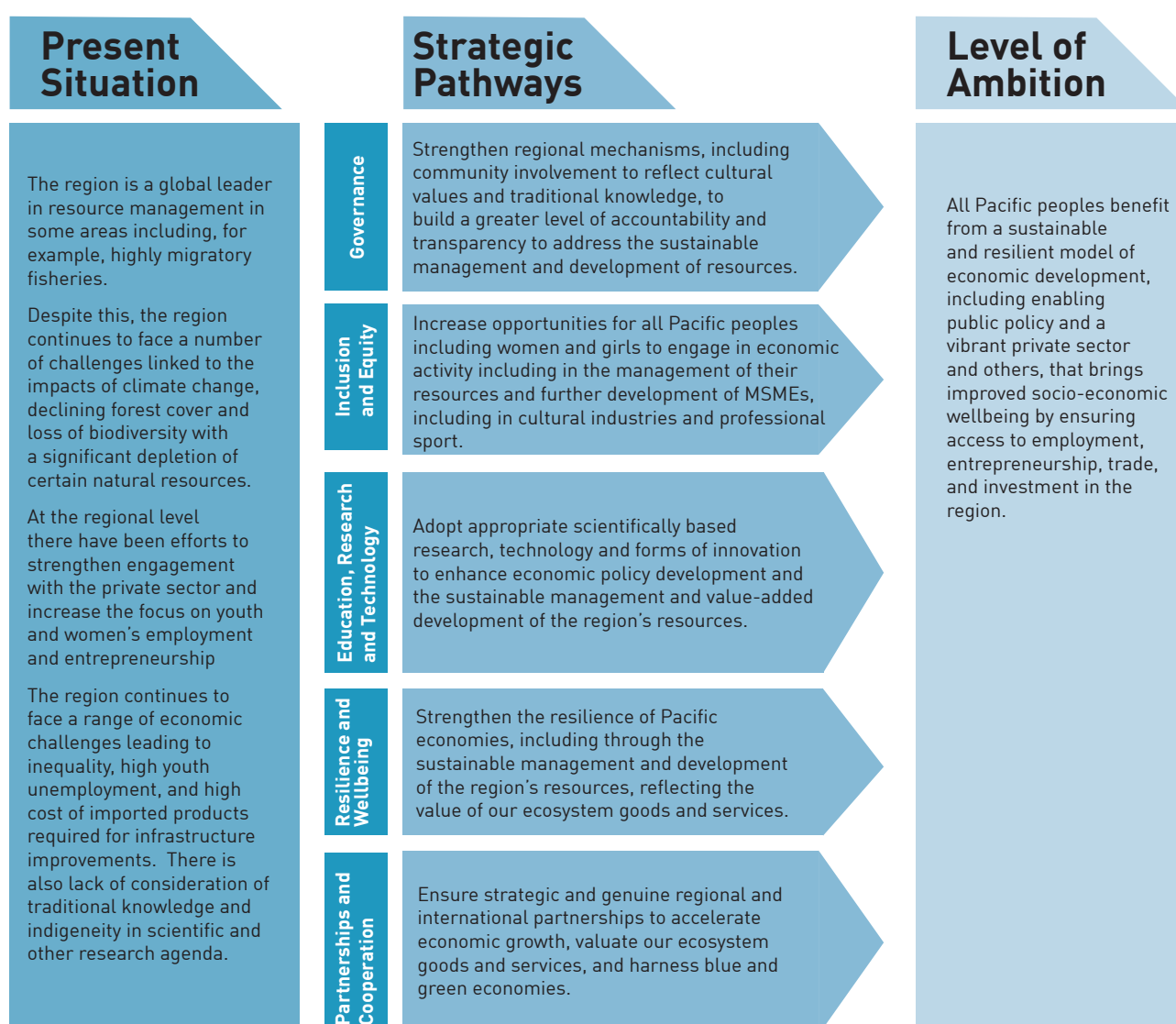




Thematic Area – Resources And Economic Development

This thematic area highlights the importance of accelerating the region's economic growth aspirations through strengthened ownership, and by ensuring the sustainable management and development of the region's natural and human resources. The sustainable management of resources will require the development of control measures; environmental, social and cultural impact assessments; and by identifying and valuing the region's ecosystem goods and services. This is critical for building the region's resilience and ensuring sustained economic development and growth.

The region already faces the dual challenge of fiscal sustainability risks in the short term and financing shortfalls in critical areas, especially in the fight against climate change, increasing the urgency to consider innovative financing instruments and mechanisms. Diversifying our investment portfolios, increasing the role of the private sector in important areas such as fisheries, agriculture, forestry, mining and tourism, and cultural industries and creating employment and entrepreneurial activity in the micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) are vital for improving and expanding wellbeing opportunities for Pacific peoples. The region continues to benefit from labour mobility schemes and professional sport that promotes skills development and remittances.



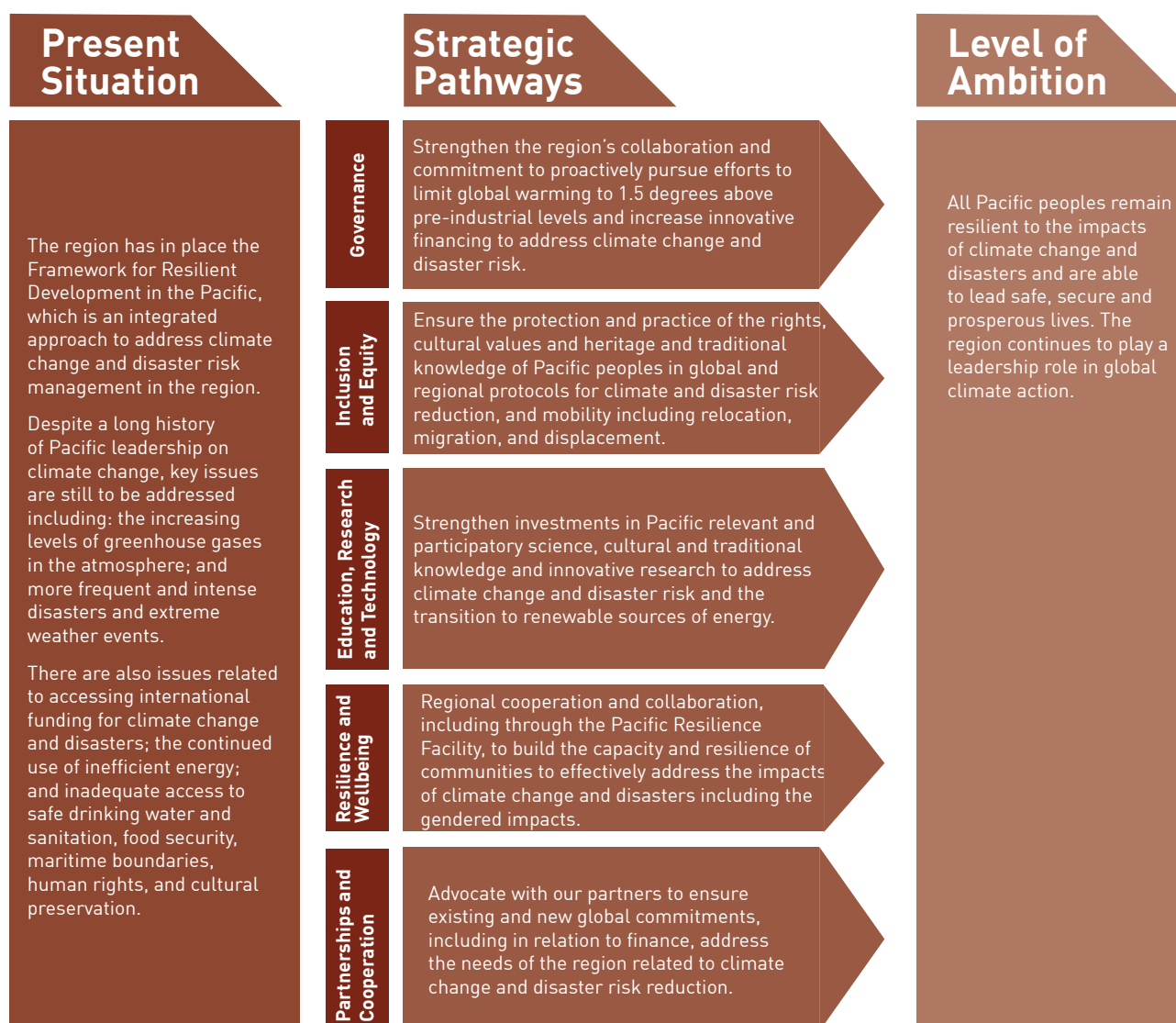




Thematic Area – Climate Change And Disasters

This thematic area highlights the many impacts of climate change and disasters and their threats to the future of the region's people and the statehood of many Pacific nations. It is important to implement agreed measures that proactively, collectively, and in a culturally appropriate manner, address climate change and current and future disaster impacts including extreme weather events, cyclones, drought, flooding and sea level rise and ocean acidification.

Other important issues include climate finance, disaster risk reduction mechanisms, loss and damage, the nexus between climate change and the ocean, maritime boundaries, human rights, the rights of women and girls, the rights of persons affected by climate change, food and water security, disasters as well as climate change and disaster related mobility including relocation, migration, and displacement.



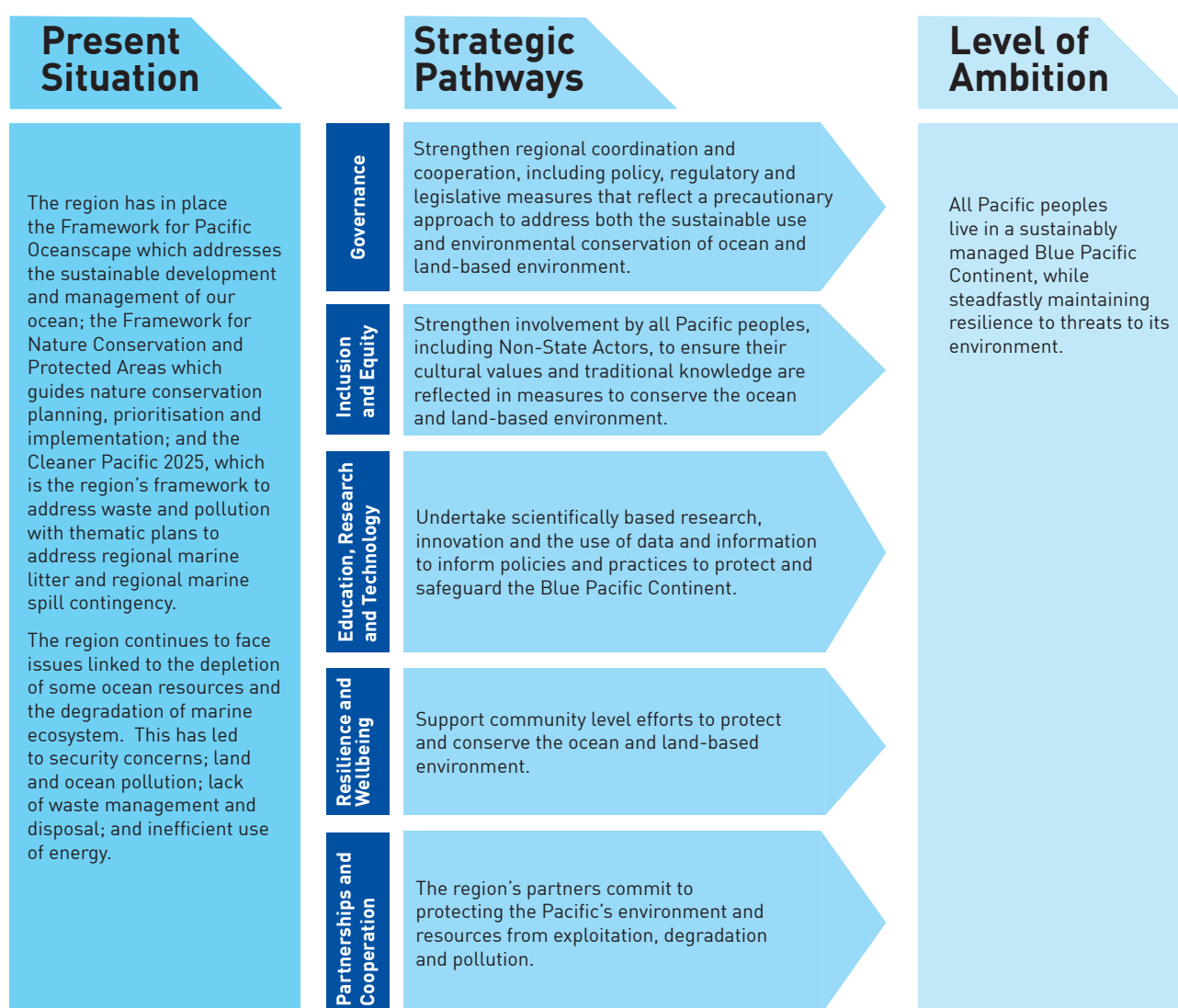




Thematic Area – Ocean And Environment

This thematic area focuses on the region's stewardship of the Blue Pacific Continent through collective responsibility, commitment and investment in its ocean and lands. This includes to invest in the region's sovereignty and sovereign rights over its maritime zones and lands, such as to support its continental shelf claims.

Recognising the significant environmental and ecosystem-based services that the Blue Pacific provides to the planet, the region's ability to benefit from its ocean and environment depends on its capacity to make the right policy choices, partnerships and investments, including by adopting a precautionary and forward looking approach to protect the region's biodiversity, its environment and resources from exploitation, degradation, nuclear contamination, waste, pollution, and health threats.



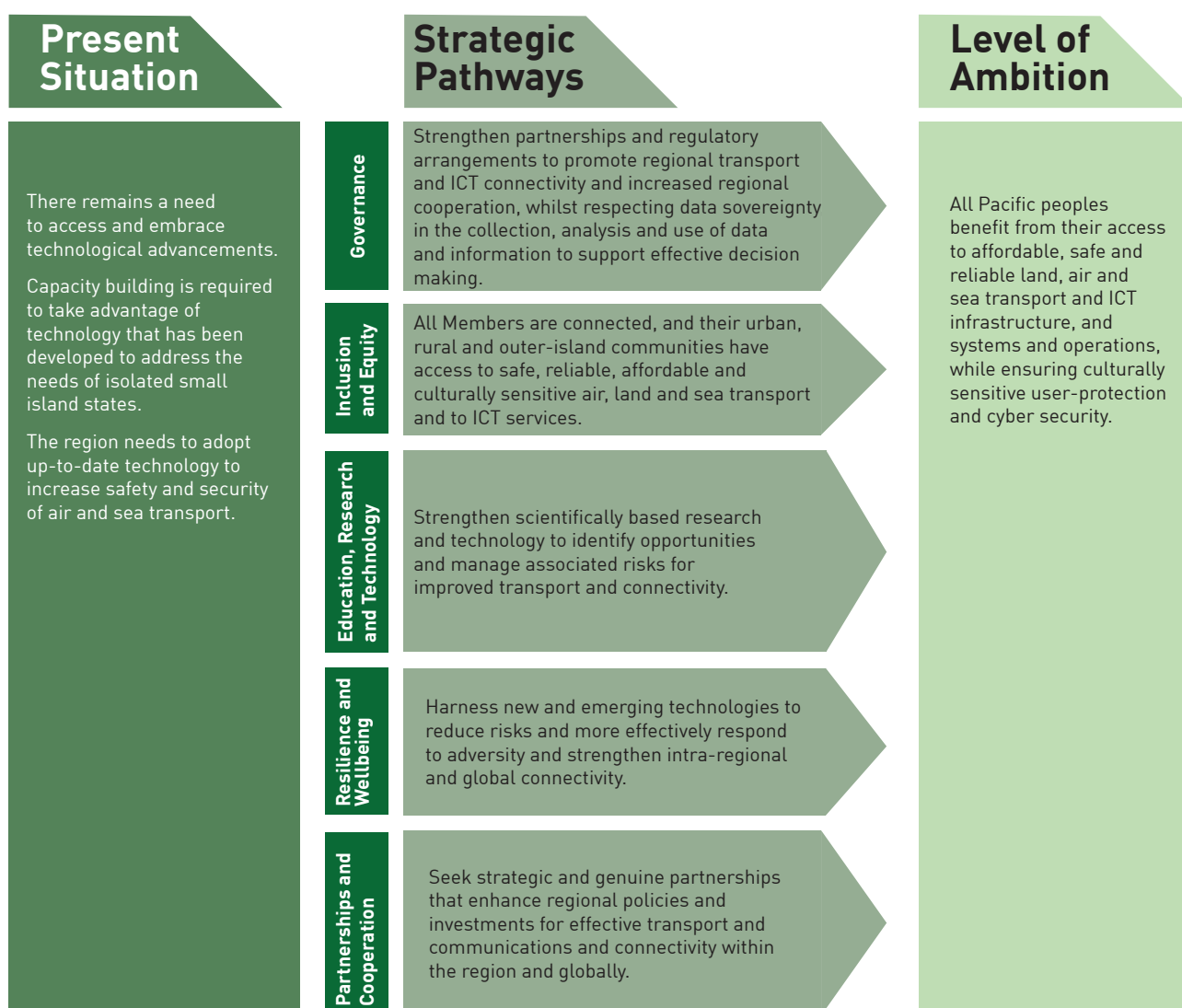




Thematic Area - Technology And Connectivity

This thematic area highlights the need for a well-connected region that ensures inclusive, affordable and accessible air, sea and land transport and ICT technology infrastructure and services. Technology and infrastructure is often unaffordable, inaccessible, and difficult to maintain. The adoption of new and emerging sustainable digital technologies requires effective partnerships and appropriate regional regulatory arrangements that respect the region's shared values.

The thematic area also draws attention to the importance of disaggregated data and data sovereignty and more detailed information for improved decision-making while ensuring safeguard measures are in place.



Implementation Approach

To ensure the effective delivery of the 2050 Strategy and the achievement of the Leaders Vision, a comprehensive implementation and monitoring plan will be developed. It will set out in detail the collective actions required to meet the levels of ambition for each thematic area to support the achievement of the 2050 vision.

The implementation plan will identify the interlinkages across all thematic areas and ensure coordination with timelines, resourcing and involvement of key stakeholders and relevant technical agencies. It will be the basis for monitoring and measuring progress under each thematic area and in doing so, identify risks, implementation issues/constraints that may impede progress. It will draw on the enabling aspects of the region's cultural values and traditional knowledge and reflect how activities will be designed and implemented. It will also highlight the roles and responsibilities of partners in supporting the collective actions.

To ensure accountability and commitment to the implementation of the 2050 Strategy, it will be important to develop a strong monitoring and reporting framework that uses quantifiable data and qualifiable information to monitor the performance and delivery of expected outcomes under each of the Strategic Pathways. As a starting point, the regional SDGs indicator set will be used to monitor the implementation of each of the thematic areas. It will also be important to consider the need for other Pacific-relevant targets and indicators that monitor the success of partnerships as well as progress made to deepen regionalism in the terms defined in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism.

Guiding Principles

The implementation approach will be framed by the following principles:

- **The Implementation approach and collective actions will be developed in a manner which respects national sovereignty and the principle of non-interference in national affairs.**
- **Collective actions developed under the 2050 Strategy should be responsive, aligned and complementary to national actions and policy positions:** The Framework for Pacific Regionalism identifies collective actions which support national priorities and objectives such as those where there is a shared norm, standard or common position on an issue; delivers a public or quasi-public good; overcomes national capacity constraints; realizes economies of scale or facilitates economic or political integration.
- **Builds from existing national and regional policy frameworks, declarations and decisions of Leaders** and collective actions such as the pooling of services, streamlining of policies, resource mobilization, technical assistance, and the creation of public goods in areas such as health, education, trade, and sustainable development leadership in collective diplomacy.
- **Adopts an effective governance and reporting process** that is Member-led and driven, to build accountability for implementation by Member countries and relevant regional agencies in meeting the commitments of Leaders as outlined in the 2050 Strategy. A governance structure for the development of the implementation plan, yet to be developed, will be finalised for Leaders' consideration in due course.
- **Includes an inclusive and integrated approach**, with the full participation of Member states, CROP agencies, Non-State Actor groups, faith-based organisations in the development of the implementation plan and monitoring and reporting framework.
- **Ensure collective actions are developed in a robust and flexible** way based on evidence and including comprehensive risk assessment.



