

Record of Proceedings
SPIP16 Meeting
(Thursday 23 October 2025, FFA Secretariat, Honiara)

Introduction

1. The Chair welcomed PIPs to the meeting and invited Tonga (Dr. Siolaa Malimali) to deliver the Opening prayer.
2. The Chair then provided opening remarks noting the purpose of the meeting, which was to formally adopt the proposed amendments to the PIP Internal Agreement. He also referred to the proposed amendment which was to amend Schedule 1 of the Agreement. The current Schedule 1 provides for the distribution of \$21 million payment; and should be replaced with the distribution of \$60 million. The Chair highlighted that the agreed approach for the distribution of \$60 million was made by FFCMIN 22 held on 5 September 2023 in PNG and SPIP11 meeting on 14 November 2023.
3. The Director-General delivered brief opening remarks outlining the decisions of the PIPs, including at ministerial level, which led to the agreed approach for the distribution of the new funding of \$60 million per annum under the new Economic Assistance Agreement (EAA) with the United States. He recalled the challenges faced by the PIPs when they discussed the different components for allocation of the funds and the willingness to work collaboratively to maintain regional solidarity in the implementation of the Treaty. He thanked the Pacific Island Parties for their continued support of the Treaty and looked forward to a positive outcome of the meeting.

Adoption of Agenda

4. The Chair referred the Parties to the draft agenda for discussion. The agenda, as provided in **Attachment A**, was adopted.
5. The list of participants is provided in **Attachment B**.

Proposed Amendments to the PIPs Internal Agreement

6. The Chair introduced the paper, noting that the proposed amendment is provided in Attachment 1 of the paper. The amendment proposed to replace the current Schedule 1. Attachment 2 provided the allocation of shares from the \$60 million annual package and Attachment 3 provided the current status of ratification of the 2024 and 2016 amendments to the Treaty.
7. The Secretariat presented the paper and highlighted that an administrative matter is proposed in the paper to require the ratification of the amendments to the Internal Agreement and the Treaty amendments that had earlier been adopted as a prerequisite to the distribution of the shares to the individual parties. The objective of this proposal was to encourage the parties to ratify the adopted amendments as early as possible. The Secretariat noted that it will be helpful if this proposal can be agreed by the parties.
8. Samoa noted that the 2024 fund had been distributed and inquired if this was in order, given that ratification of the proposed amendment had yet to be done by all the PIPs. Further, Samoa thanked Australia, PNG and Fiji for the voluntary contribution of their equal shares to the Exploratory Pool members and asked if such contributions will continue for the duration of the new EAA.
9. The Secretariat advised that, whilst recognising the need to satisfy legal requirements for treaty implementation, the 2024 payment was distributed ahead of the ratification based on past practice that took into account the long delay for the Parties to ratify the required

amendments to the Treaty. But more importantly, in this particular situation, the demand for early distribution of the funds had been received from high level leadership of the FFA Members, including some Leaders and Ministers. Notwithstanding the approach taken for the distribution of the 2024 payment, it was critical that the amendments were brought into force through the ratification of such amendments by all the Parties before the funds could be distributed.

10. Australia, in response to the question raised by Samoa, stated that its voluntary contribution to the Exploratory Pool members was made with the intention to secure the future of the Treaty and the expectation that such a contribution would be for the duration of the new EAA unless there were substantive changes to the structure and implementation of the Treaty. Australia further advised that a formal communication will be made soon to the Secretariat of this position, including confirmation of the redistribution of Australia's share from the \$10 million additional payment by the United States government in 2023 of which \$5 million was for climate change related activities.

11. Australia subsequently proposed to amend the Agreement by deleting the first sentence in Paragraph 4, as illustrated below. This was because the agreement of Australia to provide the payment of \$250,000 to the Exploratory Pool members from its Equal share had already been documented and did not need to be repeated in this Agreement. The second sentence remained unchanged.

4. ~~For the Pacific Island Parties named in paragraph 7(d) of Annex II of the Principal Agreement, the payment of \$250,000 shall be made from Australia's Equal share in accordance with the agreement of Australia and shall be distributed in the proportion advised by these Parties.~~ Any additional payment of \$6,000 per day from the Industry shall be paid to that Party in whose waters the fish was caught.

12. The Agreement, as revised, is provided in **Attachment C**. A cleaned version of the Agreement will be provided for signing by the Parties.

13. The Deputy Director-General added that it was important for the Secretariat to adhere closely to treaty requirements, including the ratification of the amendments to this Agreement by all the Parties before such amendments could be put into force, as a good practice. He further advised that the Secretariat remained committed to assisting the Parties in the ratification of these amendments, if needed.

14. In response to Tokelau's question on the impact of the ongoing shutdown of the US Government on the EAA payment, the Secretariat advised that the major implication would be a delay in the 2025 payment, which would not be paid before the end of 2025, as earlier expected.

15. Cook Islands supported the recommendation that ratification of the amendments, including the Treaty amendments that had been adopted, should be the prerequisite for the distribution of each Party's share from the Treaty funds. Cook Islands recalled that many Parties have still not ratified the outstanding amendments to the Treaty (2024 amendments and 2016 amendments) which continued to be a concern. The integrity of the FFA legal instruments, such as this Agreement and the Treaty on Fisheries, relied on the commitments of the Parties to the terms of such instruments, including full implementation of the adopted amendments through the ratification process. In this regard, the Parties should prioritise the task of ratifying the adopted amendments. The proposed recommendation, if supported, would encourage each Party to ratify such amendments as early as possible. Cook Islands further suggested that the Secretariat continued to provide an update on the status of ratification of all the amendments that had been adopted and assist any Party which needed assistance in this task.

16. Tuvalu also supported the recommendation of requiring ratification of the amendments as a prerequisite for the distribution of each Party's financial share. It further sought advice on the payment of the 2025 funds.

17. Kiribati joined Cook Islands and Tuvalu in supporting the same recommendation that required each Party to ratify the amendments first before that Party's financial share could be distributed. It further advised that a new legal officer within the Ministry of Fisheries had been appointed who will be able to progress the ratification task faster. Kiribati also noted the continuing concern for the delay in the 2025 payment.

18. Cook Islands commented on para 2(b) of the proposed amendment in Attachment 1 of the paper, recalling concerns from a certain Party about impediments to access the PDF funds administered by the Secretariat for each Party. It noted that this was an issue that should be easily addressed by the Secretariat through practical measures. It further highlighted that Cook Islands did not support the application of the FFA financial regulations and procedures in the management of the PDF by the Secretariat as these funds were intended to be set aside for each Party. Subjecting the PDF as such would be an obstacle to accessing the funds for national development purposes. The only substantive condition for the funds was that by the United States which required the funds to be used for economic purposes and not for military or para-military purposes. It further recalled that in previous PIP meetings, the Cook Islands had raised the need to review the "FFA Procedure for PDF Request and Payment" as provided in the FFA Circular Ref: 2013/20. Under the current situation, it would be timely to carry out the review to enable improvement of the process and raise awareness of such a process with the Parties.

19. The Secretariat confirmed that the 2025 payment had not been paid yet. However, some progress had been made. Following the Forum Leaders meeting in September 2025 in Honiara at which the Leaders acknowledged with appreciation receipt of the 2024 and supported renewed and continuous engagements with the United States to facilitate the payment for 2025, the US had announced to Forum Leaders attending the UNGA in New York, that the United States *"will soon provide the second \$60 million payment to FFA Secretariat as part of the 10-year Economic Assistance Agreement associated with the Treaty."*

20. The Secretariat further informed that it had the opportunity to discuss with US officials from the State Department on the margins of TCC21 in October 2025 in Pohnpei the prospect of the 2025 payment to be made before the end of the year. The US officials advised that with the looming "shutdown" of the US federal government at the time, which was still ongoing, it was almost certain that the 2025 payment would be delayed to the first quarter of 2026, provided that the shutdown did not continue. In addition, the US advised that convening of the Annual Consultation at this time of the year would not be convenient but suggested if this could be held in the first quarter of 2026 in Honiara, possibly after the annual MSCWG meeting that was normally held in March each year, and suggested an informal meeting with the Secretariat on the margins of WCPFC22.

21. Regarding the application of the FFA Financial Regulations to the management of the PDF, the Secretariat advised that this would need to be considered taking into account broader issues, including the financial integrity of the FFA as an inter-governmental organisation and the risks involved if the financial regulations were not applied, noting that such regulations and due processes were established by the Member countries themselves.

22. FSM appreciated the work on the Treaty data sharing and communications between the Secretariat as the Administrator of the Treaty and each PIP. It requested if the Secretariat could provide all formal correspondences directly to the FSM focal point. On the use of the PDF, FSM continued to believe that the decision on how to use the PDF remained at the national level, including the need to follow national laws and procedures for the implementation of PDF funded projects and activities.

23. The Secretariat advised that the FFA formal and fisheries contacts have been established for communications protocol with the FFA Members to which all FFA formal correspondences were directed, in particular, to the formal contacts and copied to the fisheries contacts. In most cases, the formal contacts are the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Members, including the FSM. If there had been changes in these contacts, the Secretariat requested that the changes were advised to the Secretariat by the respective formal contact of the Members.

24. Fiji advised of its recent ratification of both the 2024 amendments and 2016 amendments, noting that its instrument of ratification had been deposited with the PNG High Commission in Suva, Fiji.

25. In response to Nauru seeking clarity on the shutdown of the US Government, the Secretariat advised that this was caused by the federal budget not approved by Congress due to internal politics, which resulted in the shutdown of the Government operation with many public servants not working. The shutdown started on 1 October 2025 and it is continuing indefinitely. This affected the Government operations, including the delay in the approval process for the 2025 payment under the EAA.

26. New Zealand enquired about the process for the ratification of the amendments to the Internal Agreement whether this would also follow the process for ratification of the Treaty amendments. In response, the Secretariat advised that for the purpose of the Internal Agreement, the depositary is the Secretariat to which instruments of ratification should be sent. In addition, the Deputy Director-General reminded that delegates would be required to provide the credentials to the Secretariat authorising them to sign the Agreement. In this regard, the Parties were invited to propose a time to negotiate, approve and sign the agreement.

27. New Zealand added that its delegation did not have the authority to sign the amendment but would request a clean copy of the Agreement as adopted to facilitate the approval process at the national level for signing.

23. The Pacific Island Parties:

(i) **Adopted** the proposed amendments to Schedule 1 of the PIP Internal Agreement provided in Attachment 1, as revised by Australia;

(ii) **Reminded** the Pacific Island Parties to provide appropriate credentials for the representatives who will sign the Agreement, which will be arranged on the margins of the FFA Pre-WCPFC22 meeting in late November 2025 in Manila;

(iii) **Encourage** the Pacific Island Parties to ratify the amendments, after signing them, as early as possible;

(iv) **Agreed** that each Pacific Island Party shall ratify the amendments to the Internal Agreement and the outstanding amendments to the Treaty before that Party's financial share from the Treaty funds is distributed;

(v) **Agreed** that the Annual Consultation cannot be held in 2025 but looked forward to the 2026 Annual Consultation which details will be advised by the Secretariat in consultation with the PIP Chair and US; and

(vi) **Noted** that the 2024 payment under the EAA has been received and distributed, and the 2025 payment will be delayed to the first quarter of 2026 due to the ongoing shutdown of the US Government.

Other matters

24. Other matters included in the agenda of the meeting had been discussed in the previous agenda item. There were no additional matters raised.

Closing

25. The Chair advised the meeting that a draft record of the proceedings will be provided for comments before it is finalised.

26. In closing the meeting, the Chair thanked the PIPs for their active participation and invited the Director-General for a closing remark.

27. The Director-General noted the shared understanding that the representatives would secure credentials for them to sign the Agreement and to advise the Secretariat of a suitable time and date when a group signing or individual signing could be arranged. In closing, the Director-General thanked the PIPs for their constructive participation and positive outcomes of the meeting.

28. Tuvalu delivered the closing prayer.

ADOPTED AGENDA

I. INTRODUCTION

- a. Opening of Meeting
- b. Apologies
- c. Adoption of Agenda

2. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE PIPs INTERNAL AGREEMENT

3. OTHER MATTERS

4. CLOSE OF MEETING

- a. Record of Proceeding
- b. Closing

Attachment B

List of Delegations

Pacific Island Party	Delegate	Designation	Organisation	Email Address
Australia	Regan Field	Director-Pacific Fisheries & Maritime	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)	Regan.Field@dfat.gov.au
	Rohan Currey	Principal Scientist	Australia Bureau of Agriculture & Resource Economics and Sciences	Rohan.Currey@aff.gov.au
Cook Islands	LuaLua Tua-Trood	Director of Offshore Fisheries	Ministry of Marine Resources	L.tua@mmr.gov.ck
	Tiare-Renee Nicholas	Data Manager	Ministry of Marine Resources	t.nicholas@mmr.gov.ck
FSM	Jamel James	Acting Executive Director	National Ocean Resource Marine Authority (NORMA)	jamel.james@norma.fm
	Mathew Chigiyal	Deputy Executive Director	NORMA	mathew.chigiyal@norma.fm
	Eugene Pangelinan	Local Consultant	NORMA	
Fiji	Nanise Kuridrani	Acting Director of Fisheries	Ministry of Fisheries & Forestry	nanisekuridrani@gmail.com
	Epi Qalobula Batibasaga	Senior Fisheries Officer	Ministry of Fisheries & Forestry	batibasaga@gmail.com
Kiribati	Kaon Tiamere	Director of Fisheries - Oceanic Division	Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources (MFOR)	kaont@mfor.gov.ki
	Uati Tirikai	Senior Compliance Officer	MFOR	uatit@mfmrd.gov.ki
	Monoo Mweretaka	Legal Advisor	MFOR	monoo@legal.gov.ki
	Riibeta Abeta	Secretary	MFOR	riibetaa@mfor.gov.ki
	Glen Joseph	Director	MIMRA	Gjoseph@mimra.com
Marshall Islands	Berry Muller	Deputy Director-Oceanic	Marshall Is Marine Resources Authority (MIMRA)	bmuller@mimra.com
	Laurence E Edwards, II	Legal Counsel	MIMRA	ledwards@mimra.com
	Mark Beau Bigler	Chief Fisheries Officer	MIMRA	bbigler@mimra.com
Nauru	Erana Aliklik	Chief Executive Officer	Nauru Fisheries & Marine Resources Authority (NFMRA)	Aliklik.nauru@gmail.com
	Malgram Dowabobo	Manager, Oceanic Fisheries	NFMRA	mdowabobo@gmail.com
	Karlick Agir	Catch Data Officer	NFMRA	k.agir1957@gmail.com
	Kazz Olsson	VMS and VDS Officer	NFMRA	kazz.olsson@gmail.com
	Frankie Ribauw	Legal Counsel	NFMRA	fribauw303@gmail.com
New Zealand	Sarah McAvinchey	Lead Adviser - Pacific Ocean & Fisheries, Pacific Regional Division	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT)	Sarah.McAvinchey@mfat.govt.nz
	Andrea Gilbride	Senior Policy Officer, Pacific Regional Division	MFAT	Andrea.Gilbride@mfat.govt.nz

	Daniel Kerrigan	Principal Advisor International Fisheries	Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI)	Daniel.Kerrigan@mpi.govt.nz
	Vivita Matanimeke	Policy Officer	MPI	Vivita.Matanimeke@mpi.govt.nz
(Tokelau)	Lesley Gould	Fisheries Advisor	Fisheries Management Agency	LeslykGould@gmail.com
	Solomua Ionatana	Fisheries Access & Licensing Manager	Fisheries Management Agency	tualen@gmail.com
Niue	Poi Okesene (FFC Chair)	Director, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF)	Ministry of Natural Resources	Poi.Okesene@gov.nu
	Launoa Gataua	Principal Fisheries Officer, DAFF	Ministry of Natural Resources	Launoa.Gataua@gov.nu
Palau	Zillah D. Oiterong-Chin	Fisheries Licencing & Revenue Officer	Bureau of Fisheries	dirremeang@gmail.com
	Everson Sengebau	Fisheries Officer	Bureau of Fisheries	ebs6ya@gmail.com
Papua New Guinea	Glynis Farari	Acting Director, Regional Economic Affairs Branch	Department of Foreign Affairs	glynis.farari@dfa.gov.pg
	Rhonda Tevlone	Legal Officer	State Solicitor's Office, Dept Justice & Attorney General	rtevlone@gmail.com
	Simon Kaumi	Senior Officer – International Fisheries	National Fisheries Authority (NFA)	skaumi@fisheies.gov.pg
	Gerry Katai	Tuna Industry Advisor	NFA	gerrykatai@gmail.com
Samoa	Moli Iakopo	Principal Fisheries Officer - Offshore & Compliance	Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries	moli.iakopo@maf.gov.ws
Solomon Islands	Charlyn Golu	Deputy Director of Fisheries - Offshore	Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR)	CGolu@fisheries.gov.sb
	Douglas Aitorea	Asst Deputy Director Offshore - Noro Office	MFMR	DAitorea@fisheries.gov.sb
	Derick Suimae	Chief Fisheries Officer - Compliance	MFMR	dsuimae@fisheries.gov.sb
	Jan Oli Pitu	Chief Officer - Management	MFMR	jpitu@fisheries.gov.sb
	Derrick Tagosia	Chief Fisheries Officer - EM & ER	MFMR	dtagosia@fisheries.gov.sb
Tonga	Siolaá Malimli	Deputy CEO - Operation	Ministry of Fisheries	siolaamalimali@gmail.com
	Elaine Havealeta	Deputy CEO - Corporate Services	Ministry of Fisheries	ehavealeta78@gmail.com
Tuvalu	Samasoni Finikaso	Managing Director	Tuvalu Fisheries Authority	samfinikaso70@gmail.com
	Siouala Malua	Principal Fisheries Officer	Tuvalu Fisheries Authority	sioualam@tuvalufisheries.tv
	Uni Liufau	Acting Senior Fisheries Officer - Compliance	Tuvalu Fisheries Authority	unil@tuvalufisheries.tv
Vanuatu	William Naviti	Acting Director General	Ministry of Fisheries	wnaviti@vanuatu.gov.vu
PNAO	Sangalofa Clark	Executive Director	PNA Office (PNAO)	sangaa@pnatuna.com
	Brian Kumasi		PNAO	brian@pnatuna.com
FFA Secretariat	Noan Pakop	Director-General	FFA	noan.pako@ffa.int
	Pio Manoa	Deputy Director-General	FFA	pio.manoa@ffa.int
	Ludwig Kumuro	Director of Fisheries Management	FFA	ludwig.kumuro@ffa.int
	Allan Rahari	Director of Fisheries Operation	FFA	
	Kaburoro Ruaia	Multilateral Treaty Manager	FFA	kaburoro.ruaia@ffa.int

	Tevita Tupou	Strategic Engagement Advisor	FFA	tevita.tupou@ffa.int
	Matea Nauto	Engagement Coordinator	FFA	matea.nauto@ffa.int
	Joyce Samuelu-Ahleong	Fisheries Management Advisor	FFA	joyce.samuelu-ahleong@ffa.int
	Ana Taholo	Compliance Policy Advisor	FFA	ana.taholo@ffa.int
	Jason Raubani	MCS Policy Advisor	FFA	jason.raubani@ffa.int
	Kasipo Teo	Legal Officer	FFA	kasipo.teo@ffa.int

**AGREEMENT TO AMEND SCHEDULE 1 OF THE AGREEMENT AMONG
PACIFIC ISLAND STATES CONCERNING THE IMPLEMENTATION AND
ADMINISTRATION OF THE TREATY ON FISHERIES BETWEEN THE
GOVERNMENTS OF CERTAIN PACIFIC ISLAND STATES AND THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

RECALLING the first Agreement of the Pacific Island Parties on the distribution of the payments from the Government of the United States of America made on the 2nd April 1987 in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea;

FURTHER RECALLING the subsequent agreements of the Pacific Island Parties on the revised distribution of the payments made over the years of operation of the Treaty, including the revised distribution that was agreed at the Pacific Island Parties Meeting held on 12 April 2018 in Nadi, Fiji;

FURTHER RECALLING the decision of the 22nd FFC Ministerial Meeting (FFCMIN22) held on 5 September 2023 in Kokopo, Papua New Guinea, on the revised agreed approach to the distribution of the Treaty funds; and

FURTHER RECALLING the decision of the 11th Special Pacific Island Parties Meeting (SPIP11) held virtually on 14 November 2023 on the distribution of the amount set aside for the ‘Activity related payment’ component and the confirmation of the redistribution of the ‘Equal shares’ of certain Parties to the Exploratory pool members; and

IN FURTHERANCE of the decision of the 22nd FFC Ministerial Meeting and the 11th Special PIP Meeting, the Pacific Island Parties have agreed to amend Schedule 1 to the Agreement Among Pacific Islands States Concerning the Implementation and Administration of the Treaty of Fisheries between the Government of Certain Pacific Islands States and the Government of the United States of America (the “Internal Agreement”) on 14 November 2023 as specified in Schedule 1 to this Agreement;

IT IS AGREED that Schedule 1 to this Agreement supersedes Schedule 1 to the Internal Agreement.

DISTRIBUTION OF PAYMENTS

The Administrator shall distribute any amounts received pursuant to the Principal Agreement as follows:

1. From the total of US\$60 million payment or such other amount as may be paid by the United States Government pursuant to the Economic Assistance Agreement (EAA) between the Government of the United States of America and FFA, the Administrator shall deduct administrative and management costs in accordance with Article 6.1 and 6.2. and the balance remaining shall be distributed as follows:

Allocation	Amount	Approximate %
Administration & Management fee	1,265,000.00	2.1%
Equal share and PDF	27,000,000.00	45%
Top-up and activity related payment	31,735,000.00	52.9%
Total	60,000,000.00	100%

2. The allocated amount for Equal share shall be \$27 million which shall include a fund referred to as the “Project Development Fund” (PDF).

(a) This amount shall be distributed equally to the Pacific Island Parties after the deduction of the PDF.

(b) Each Pacific Island Party shall nominate a PDF amount to be deducted from its Equal share which shall be held and administered by the FFA Secretariat in accordance with the FFA financial regulations and procedures agreed between the Pacific Island Parties.

3. The allocated amount for the Top-up payment shall be \$31.735 million which shall include the payment for related activities.

(a) The Top-up amount shall be \$30.325 million which shall be calculated by multiplying the number of Upfront Days provided for the Parties named in Paragraph 7(a), 7(b) and 7(c) of Annex II of the Principal Agreement with the price of \$8,469 for each upfront day, or such other agreed price.

(b) The amount for activity related payment shall be \$1.5 million which shall be distributed based on the proportional distribution of efforts of vessels fishing for that licensing period.

4. ~~For the Pacific Island Parties named in paragraph 7(d) of Annex II of the Principal Agreement, the payment of \$250,000 shall be made from Australia’s Equal share in accordance with the agreement of Australia and shall be distributed in the proportion advised by these Parties. Any additional payment of \$6,000 per day from the Industry shall be paid to that Party in whose waters the fish was caught.~~

5. Any interest accrued on the United States Government payment shall be distributed equally amongst the Pacific Island Parties.

6. Any payments made by the Industry pursuant to Paragraph 8 of Annex II of the Principal Agreement shall be distributed in accordance with the agreement of the Pacific Island Parties and any interest accrued shall be distributed in the same proportion as the fund that it accrues from.

Done at Honiara, Solomon Islands on the XXth October, 2025.

(Note: Pages for Parties' signature will be added)