

# Coalitions for change in sustainable national CBFM programs in the Pacific



## Key details

### Location

Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu

### Duration

Start Sep 2021

End Dec 2025

### Budget

AUD 7,664,545

### Commissioned organisation

University of Wollongong

### Partners

Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (Solomon Islands); Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources Development (Kiribati); The Pacific Community (SPC); University of Wollongong; Vanuatu Fisheries Department; WorldFish

### Project Leader

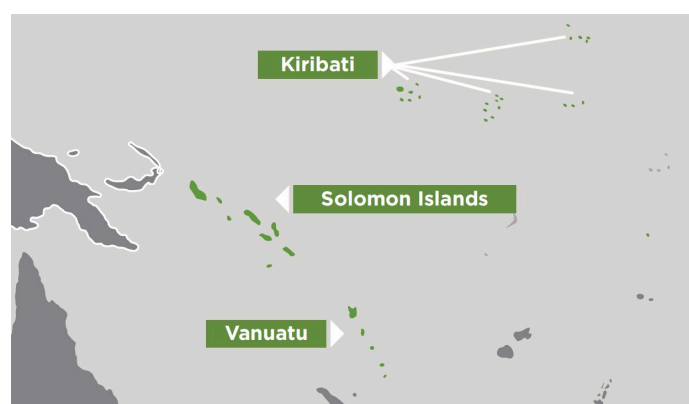
Dr Dirk Steenbergen

### ACIAR Research Program Manager

Dr Chris Barlow

**Program** Fisheries

**Project code** FIS/2020/172



## Overview

This project aims to scale up examples of inclusive community-based fisheries management (CBFM) in Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu to self-sustaining national CBFM programs that support resilient coastal communities and drive the further spread of CBFM in the Pacific region.

Securing the sustainable supply of coastal fish is a development priority for Pacific countries and their regional organisations. Coastal fisheries resources are important for food and nutrition security and economic development. Appropriate coastal fisheries management regimes, implemented by multiple actors across scales (including communities, (sub)national fisheries agencies and non-government actors) will be critical to meeting the needs of coastal communities and the policy priorities of Pacific countries.

CBFM is a proven vehicle by which to deliver improved fisheries in rural communities. CBFM is a set of principles and concepts that increase the likelihood of sustainable coastal fishery systems providing human benefits and ecosystem services over the long term.

The project has been co-designed with regional and national networks and agencies in support of their policy objectives. The emphasis placed on activities and outcomes in Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu differs depending on their priorities and stage in development of coastal fisheries and CBFM.

## Expected project outcomes

The ambition to drive the evolution of CBFM to establish self-sustaining national CBFM programs as part of a regional network of investments, is articulated in end of project outcomes that collectively lead to the project's overarching development goal to strengthen CBFM structures and processes that support food and nutrition security objectives for resilient coastal communities. To do so, the project will:

- Enhance awareness and improve accessibility to information on CBFM in all coastal communities in KIR, SLB and VUT.
- Enable a meaningful proportion of communities in the three countries to be sustainably and inclusively managing their coastal fisheries, contributing to food and nutrition security outcomes.
- Strengthen and enable national agencies and non-government stakeholders to cooperate in supporting and implementing effective CBFM.
- Energise existing momentum of institutional change in the coastal fisheries sectors of KIR, SLB and VUT, and contribute to regional initiatives coordinated by SPC.
- Inform and influence CBFM scaling regionally and contribute to a body of scholarship and practice that will influence global research and development in coastal fisheries, particularly in small-island developing states.

## Summary of achievements to date

### 2021–22

Since inception, the project has focused on consolidating partnerships and establishing contracting, project management and MEL systems. In-country teams' staffing have been extended and expanded. In Solomon Islands two WorldFish staff are being recruited into seconded positions at MFMR to strengthen network coordination and data management capacity. In Kiribati and Vanuatu, teams form integrated CBFM units within national coastal fisheries programs of MFMRD and VFD respectively.

These arrangements are enabling implementation despite various domestic disruptions, including COVID-19 outbreaks occurring for the first time in all three countries. Teams maintained distanced community support and reoriented resources to advance other planned activities. Initiating work towards establishing national CBFM programs has seen investments in collaborative partnerships with non-government stakeholders (e.g. Solomon Islands National University Annual report: Coalitions for change in sustainable national CBFM programs in the Pacific and Wan Smolbag in Vanuatu), assessments undertaken (e.g. national staff capacity needs, gender empowerment and social inclusion (GESI) capacity and information dissemination capacity), development of new CBFM information material, and progress towards development of national CBFM scaling strategies. The project is supporting SPC-FAME in implementing key action areas of the regional Framework for Action to Scale-up CBFM (2021). The project is providing new CBFM information material and updating in-country CBFM coverage data to be included in the regional CBFM web-portal, as well as supporting the development of national CBFM scaling strategies to streamline the regional framework's operationalisation. Collaborative research with SPC-FAME is advancing automated systems for community-based catch monitoring and establishing critical baseline spatial data on coastal village dispersion across the three countries.

