



# **Green Economy in a Blue World**

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## *Pacific Perspectives 2012*



UNITED NATIONS

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# Green Economy in a Blue World: *Pacific Perspectives*

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## Foreword



The Pacific is vital, valued and connected to our region and our world.

Pacific Island developing countries are all too often seen as separated by the ocean from each other and from mainland Asia. We can see the Pacific islands in an ocean of isolation, or we can choose to see them situated in an ocean of opportunity.

Green Economy in a Blue World: Pacific Perspectives offers green economy analyses, linked to a range of policy options, to better balance Pacific development in our pursuit of a more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable future.

For Pacific island countries, the green economy is very much a blue economy, which is why the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDs) chose this theme, in Samoa last year, to be conveyed by the Pacific to Rio+20. It was also why the special case of the Pacific island countries was again reaffirmed at the ESCAP Commission session earlier this year.

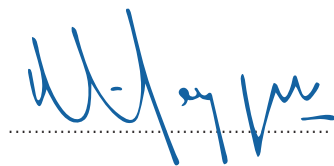
In the context of climate change and ocean acidification, it is clear that the vulnerability of small island developing states is increasing, but coping capacity is not. It is also clear that the strong economic performance of some Pacific island countries, particularly Papua New Guinea, has not always been accompanied by equally strong development gains. The challenge lies in turning opportunities into sustainable economic, social and environmentally responsible benefits for the people of the Pacific.



Green economy tools and policies, in the context of a blue world, can address many of the structural issues at the heart of these challenges – helping to inform and advise Pacific nations as the curators of our largest natural global assets – the oceans on which human life itself depends.

Rio+20 recognized that there is no ‘one size fits all’ approach to the green economy. For green economy policies to make an impact, they must be adapted to fit the context of each member State. Sustainable development requires local strategies, with locally relevant policies, based on the specific terrestrial and marine environment, culture, and social circumstances. Production, transport and service delivery costs, for example, are higher in the Pacific than in any other area. The challenges of isolation, size and small populations make balancing economic, social and environmental development even more challenging.

This publication explores the concept of a green economy in the Pacific, including a summary of the opportunities, challenges and constraints. I am confident that it will support the efforts of our development partners and Governments in formulating policies for a more inclusive, sustainable and resilient Pacific.



Noeleen Heyzer  
Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations  
and Executive Secretary of ESCAP

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