

AF Knowledge Fair, Tanzania May 17, 2024

NIE - Ministry of Finance & Economic Management, Cook Islands Government

# Locally Led Adaptation: **Empowering** **Cook Islands Communities**



ADAPTATION FUND

Penrhyn Island in the Cook Islands, flat atoll islands to the remote north-west of the mainland Rarotonga. AF PEARL Project MTR mission 2022



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MINISTRY OF FINANCE & ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT  
DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION DIVISION

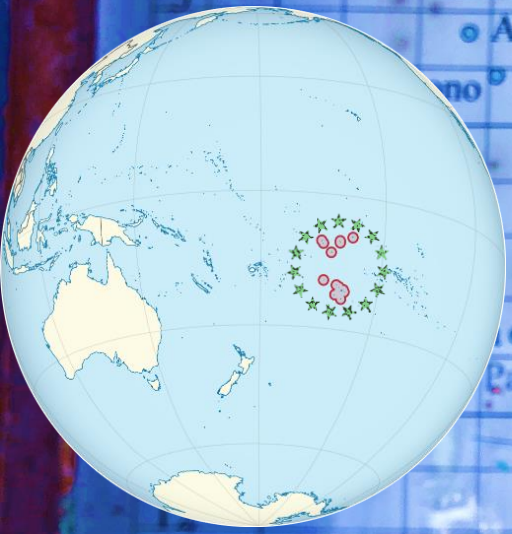


# Cook Islands Profile

- **Composition:** 15 islands  
12 inhabited & 3 nature reserves
- **Land mass:** 236.7 km<sup>2</sup>
- **Terrain:**  
Northern: low coral atolls Southern: volcanic, hilly islands
- **Elevation:**  
Lowest point:  
Pacific Ocean 0 m  
Highest point: Te Manga 652 m
- **Ocean area:** 2,200 million km<sup>2</sup>
- **Population:** 20,200 (2023 est),
- **GDP:** NZD 165.4 m
- **Average temperatures** 26 and 30 degrees, colder months 20 °C



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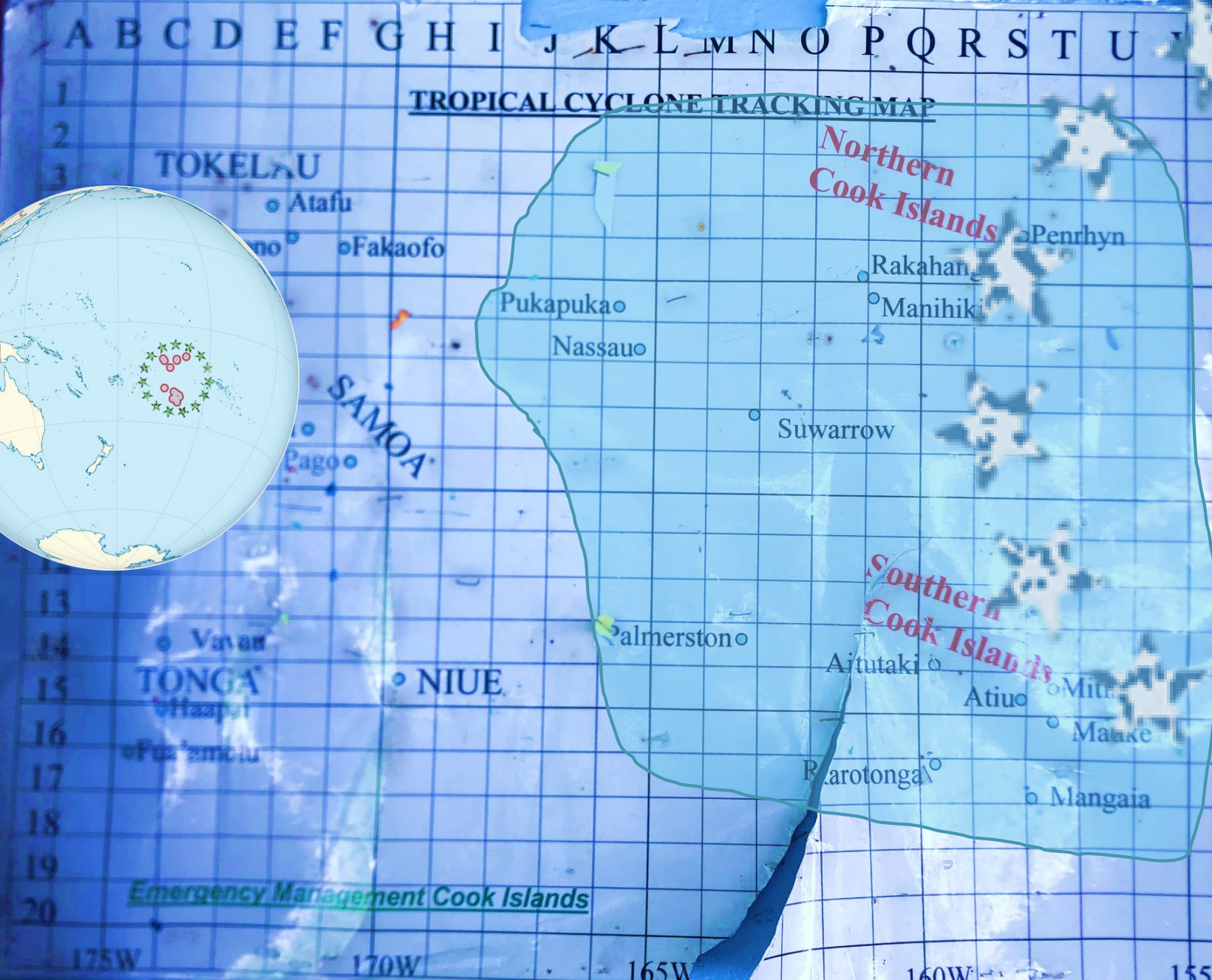


## TROPICAL CYCLONE TRACKING MAP

Northern  
Cook Islands

Southern  
Cook Islands

Emergency Management Cook Islands







# Importance of Partnerships & Collaboration

- ❖ communities, local stakeholders, and government agencies
- ❖ adaptation measures are tailored to the specific needs and context of local communities
- ❖ promote local ownership and sustainability
  - ❖ facilitates knowledge sharing
  - ❖ resource mobilization
  - ❖ exchange of best practices

## Community Engagement:

- Innovation, Capacity Building, & Community Empowerment
- Establish mechanisms to encourage and facilitate locally appropriate climate change responses, including traditional knowledge and science-based initiatives.







Pa Enua Mayors and Government executives meet with Adaptation Fund PEARL Project team from Ministry of Agriculture and MFEM NIE staff, Rarotonga Mayors Conference 2021

Cook Islands Government

MFEM NIE

Re-accredited NIE:

October 2023 - 2028

First Accreditation:

July 2018 - 2022

# Community Engagement:

A commitment to community engagement and involvement in the design and implementation of adaptation projects, ensuring that local knowledge and needs are considered.

- National level - Government agencies and Island governments
- National & Island Governments - Grassroots engagement with island residents, public and private sectors, civil society groups and ngos, interest groups
- Consultations, educational, awareness raising, workshops



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## Achievements of LLA

- ❖ Enhanced our national capacities and country ownership for adaptation and mitigation of adverse climate change effects.
- ❖ Enhanced community resilience to climate change impacts.
- ❖ Preservation and revitalisation of traditional knowledge and practices
- ❖ Implementation of nature-based solutions for climate change adaptation.
- ❖ Increased awareness and understanding of climate change impacts and adaptation strategies among local communities.
- ❖ Informed decisions and manage climate change driven pressures in a proactive and strategic manner
- ❖ Strengthened partnerships and collaboration between communities, local stakeholders, and government agencies.



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# Lessons:

- Decentralized design projects
- Tailored grant amounts
- Capacity building of Local Actors
- Inclusive decision-making processes
- Long term institutionalization Local partners - Government

Empowering local actors  
Promoting local ownership and sustainability,  
Tailored adaptation interventions  
Specific needs and contexts of local communities



Youth on the Pa Enua Islands of the Cook Islands typical outward migration to the mainland Rarotonga.

# Challenges:

- outward migration of our youth
- limited resources and infrastructure
- climate change impacts
- vulnerability of small population size
- remoteness from international markets,
- High transportation costs
- vulnerability to external economic shocks
- fragile land and marine ecosystems





# Future Directions for LLA



- Scaling up successful locally led adaptation initiatives to reach more communities.
- Strengthening capacity building and knowledge sharing among local actors.
- Integrating traditional knowledge and practices into adaptation strategies.
- Enhancing monitoring and evaluation of locally led adaptation initiatives to assess their effectiveness and inform future actions.
- Advocating for policy support and financial resources to sustain and expand locally led adaptation efforts.
- Local-led approaches to be integrated into the overall climate change response in the Cook Islands.



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