PACIFIC TOURISM
ORGANISATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

VISION

OUR PACIFIC ISLANDS EMPOWERED AND BENEFITTING FROM SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

MISSION

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

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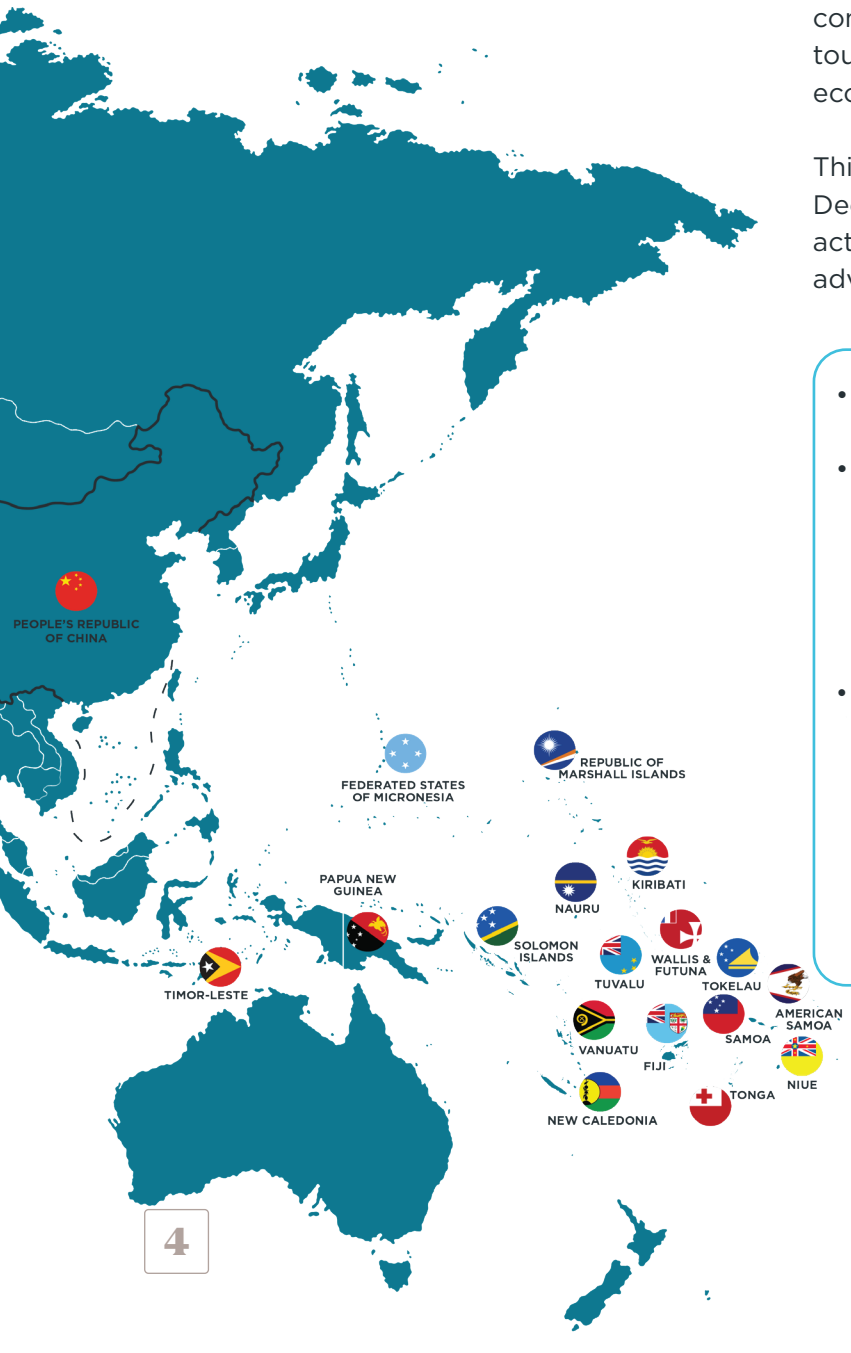
Executive Summary

Established in 1983 as the Tourism Council of the South Pacific, the Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) serves as the mandated regional tourism representative.

It comprises 21 government members: American Samoa, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Marshall Islands, New Caledonia, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Wallis & Futuna, Rapa Nui and the People's Republic of China. The organisation also includes private sector entities.



SPTO has shifted its focus to emphasize sustainable tourism development while continuing efforts in regional marketing, research, and data insights. Driven by its mission, "*Sustainable tourism development through innovative partnerships*," SPTO evolved from a purely marketing-focused organisation to a key player in regional tourism policy, development, and research. In response to the challenges of mass tourism growth and climate change, sustainability has become a core priority, especially in the post-pandemic era.

In collaboration with partners, SPTO continues to advocate for a resilient tourism recovery that benefits Pacific Island economies, cultures, and environments.

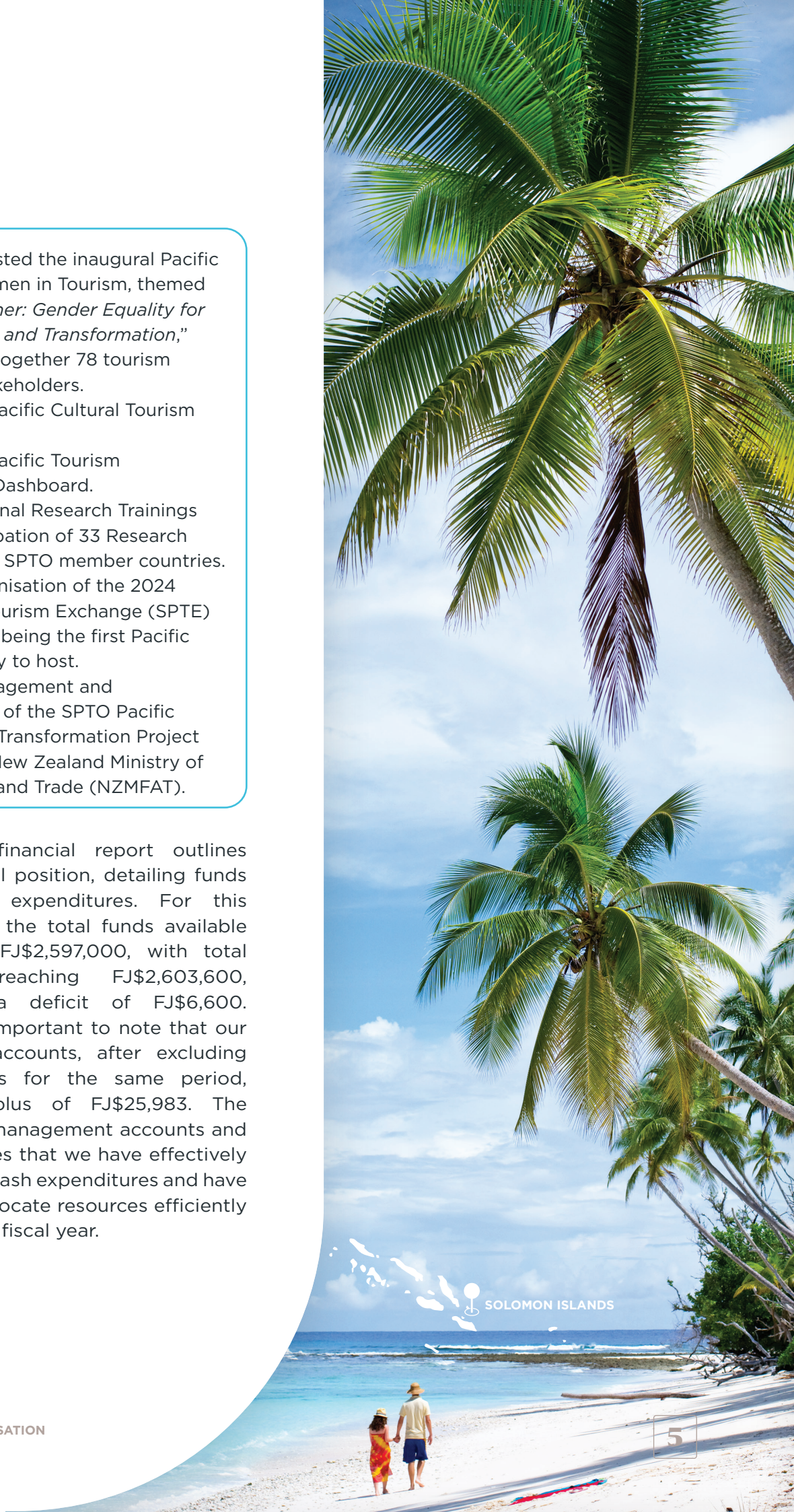
This Annual Report covers January to December 2024, detailing SPTO's progress, activities, and financial performance in advancing its strategic priorities.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Endorsement of the new SPTO Strategic Plan 2025-2029.
- Successfully represented and advocated SPTO at high level meetings such as the 13th Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture (FestPAC), Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) Leaders Meeting.
- SPTO presented the Statement of Commitment from the Council of Tourism Ministers (COTM) at the inaugural Ministers of Tourism High Level Meeting. This marked a significant milestone, as the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties 29 (COP29) in Azerbaijan featured its first-ever tourism thematic day.

- Successfully hosted the inaugural Pacific Talanoa for Women in Tourism, themed "*Thriving Together: Gender Equality for Tourism Growth and Transformation*," which brought together 78 tourism leaders and stakeholders.
- Launch of the Pacific Cultural Tourism Guidelines.
- Launch of the Pacific Tourism Benchmarking Dashboard.
- Delivered Regional Research Trainings with the participation of 33 Research Officers from 18 SPTO member countries.
- Successful organisation of the 2024 South Pacific Tourism Exchange (SPTE) in Nadi with Fiji being the first Pacific member country to host.
- Successful management and implementation of the SPTO Pacific Tourism Digital Transformation Project funded by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (NZMFAT).

The audited financial report outlines SPTO's financial position, detailing funds received and expenditures. For this reporting year, the total funds available amounted to FJ$2,597,000, with total expenditure reaching FJ$2,603,600, resulting in a deficit of FJ$6,600. However, it is important to note that our management accounts, after excluding non-cash items for the same period, reflect a surplus of FJ$25,983. The surplus in our management accounts and budget indicates that we have effectively controlled our cash expenditures and have been able to allocate resources efficiently throughout the fiscal year.



Chairperson's Message

Halo olgeta!

DEAR SPTO MEMBERS, PARTNERS & STAKEHOLDERS

As we reflect on the year 2024, it is with great pride and appreciation for the collective efforts of SPTO that I share this report. It has been a year marked by growth, resilience, and innovation, with the Secretariat leading the way in shaping the future of tourism in the Pacific. This year's milestones highlight the dedication and passion of our team and our partners, and the progress we've made in advancing our mission to create a sustainable and thriving tourism sector that benefits our communities.

Our shared vision of advocating for sustainable tourism practices has allowed us to reach new heights. From our humble beginnings as a marketing-focused organization, SPTO has evolved into a trusted and influential advocate for regional tourism policy as well as data insights for informed decisions for our members. In alignment with the Pacific's long-term goals, our ambitious Strategic Plan for 2025–2029 reflects our commitment to the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, and it is structured around six key strategic focus areas that will shape the future of tourism in the Pacific.

As we continue to work with our Board, Deputy Chair, CEO, and dedicated team, we aim to build a tourism sector that not only thrives but also supports and enriches our communities. My vision for Pacific tourism is forward-thinking and grounded in the principles of sustainable growth, digital transformation, informed decision making based on data & insights and resilience.

Our strategy is to empower local communities through skill development and innovation. By leveraging our collective strengths and setting clear, achievable goals, we are building a resilient and adaptable tourism sector that meets future challenges and delivers meaningful and enriching experiences to visitors. In alignment with the Blue Pacific Strategy's focus on Technology and Connectivity, we continue to equip tourism operators and communities with the tools needed to thrive in the digital age. Through strategic online campaigns, social media engagement, and advanced digital platforms, we are amplifying the visibility of Pacific destinations and sharing our rich cultural narratives with a global audience like never before.

Looking ahead, the SPTO 2025-2029 Strategic Plan will focus on sustainable destination management, enhanced research, and capacity building through regional collaboration. A key priority is strengthening the synergy between tourism and aviation, ensuring improved accessibility while minimizing environmental impacts. Our approach is guided by six strategic focus areas: sustainable destination management, marketing support and events, and

research coordination, alongside partner collaboration, capacity building, and stronger integration between tourism and aviation. The success of this strategy will require sustained investment, and we are committed to strengthening internal capabilities in governance, partner relations, communications, and operational management to drive meaningful and lasting change in Pacific tourism.

Our commitment to collaboration, innovation, and sustainability remains unwavering. Through continued partnerships, we can shape a future where responsible tourism benefits our people, preserves our cultures, and safeguards our environment. Together, we can ensure sustainable and inclusive growth for all Pacific Islanders, strengthening our region's position on the global tourism map and preserving the beauty and traditions that make the Pacific so special.

Let us move forward together, guided by our shared vision for a sustainable, resilient, and thriving Pacific tourism sector.

Tangitegu Tupuas

ADELA ISSACHAR ARU
Chairperson
SPTO Board of Directors

Chief Executive Officer's Message

Warm Pacific Greetings!

DEAR SPTO MEMBERS, PARTNERS & STAKEHOLDERS

2024 has been a year of profound transformation for SPTO. We have not only strengthened the Pacific's presence on the global tourism stage, but have also deepened our commitment to sustainability, innovation, and cross-sector collaboration. It is an honour to present the key milestones of our journey this past year, reflecting the collective efforts and forward-thinking approach that continues to shape the future of tourism in our region.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Strengthening Regional Collaboration

- Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) Heads Meeting: Focused on setting 2024 priorities, reviewing the 2050 Strategy Implementation Plan, and refining the Regional Architecture to enhance Pacific cooperation.
- 53rd PIFS Leaders Meeting: SPTO contributed to discussions on tourism's role in regional economic growth, highlighting sustainable tourism as a key driver for development.
- CHOGM | Apia, Samoa: As the first CHOGM to be hosted in the Pacific, this gathering provided a platform to address key regional issues, including climate change and sustainable tourism.

Promoting Pacific Tourism on Global Stage

- SeaTrade Cruise Global | Miami, USA: Positioned the Pacific as a premier cruise destination by engaging with global cruise operators and showcasing the region's unique offerings.
- Global Business Network (GBN) & 4th International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) | St. Johns, Antigua and Barbuda: Reinforced SPTO's commitment to sustainable tourism and supporting businesses in SIDS.
- 8th SPTE | Nadi, Fiji: Brought together 67 sellers from 15 National Tourism Offices (NTOs) and 63 buyers from key international markets, strengthening trade partnerships.
- 40th Council of Pacific Arts and Culture (CPAC) & FestPAC 2024 | Hawaii: Reinforced SPTO's commitment to cultural preservation and its integration into sustainable tourism strategies.
- COP29 | Baku, Azerbaijan: For the first time, SPTO delivered a joint statement at the First Ministerial Meeting on Enhanced Climate Action in Tourism during UNFCCC, cementing its role as the leading agency.

Driving Sustainable and Inclusive Tourism

- Launch of the Pacific Cultural Tourism Guidelines: Promoting responsible cultural tourism by balancing heritage preservation with industry growth.
- French Translation of the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework: Expanding the PSTPF's accessibility to Francophone PICs, promoting a unified sustainability approach.
- Launch of Environmental Sustainability Projects: Introducing key regional resources, such as Responsible Marine Wildlife Viewing Guidelines, Procurement Criteria to Phase Out Single-Use Plastics, and Environmental Auditing Guidelines for Tourism Accommodations.

Advancing Data and Digital Transformation

- Pacific Tourism Data Initiative & Digital Benchmarking Workshops: Conducted in-country missions across 10 PICs under Phase 2 of the Pacific Digital Tourism Transformation, funded by NZMFAT. 252 participants attended these workshops.
- Digital Transformation: A Necessity for the Future: SPTO recognizes digital transformation as not just an opportunity, but a necessity for the future of Pacific tourism to ensure the region remains competitive in an evolving global landscape. SPTO's Pacific Tourism Digital Transformation Project, supported by NZMFAT, bridges the region's digital divide, emphasising the need for innovation to enhance competitiveness, attract visitors, and future-proof the industry. Despite challenges, such as limited resources and connectivity in PICs, SPTO remains committed to overcoming these barriers and driving meaningful change.

These milestones reflect SPTO's ongoing dedication to sustainable growth, digital innovation, and strengthening the Pacific's position in the global tourism landscape.

STRATEGIC VISION FOR 2025-2029

This strategy builds on the progress made in 2024, providing a clear roadmap for a thriving and resilient Pacific tourism industry. Through regional collaboration, the strategic vision for SPTO for 2025-2029 prioritises sustainable destination management, enhanced research, and capacity building. Strengthening the relationship between tourism and aviation to improve accessibility while minimizing environmental impact is also a key focus.

Reflecting on 2024, we recognize the road ahead demands collaboration, resilience, and innovation. SPTO remains committed to leading Pacific tourism toward a sustainable and inclusive future. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our Council of Ministers, Board of Directors, NTOs, industry partners, and stakeholders for their unwavering support. I also commend the SPTO team, whose dedication and hard work continue to drive meaningful progress. Despite being a small team, SPTO achieved remarkable success in 2024, demonstrating efficiency, resilience, and impact. Together, we will build a thriving tourism sector that preserves our heritage, supports our communities, and strengthens our economies.

Ofa atu

CHRISTOPHER COCKER
Chief Executive Officer
SPTO

Board of Directors 2024

Adela Issachar Aru
CHAIRPERSON
Vanuatu

Viliami Takau
DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON
Tonga

Christopher Cocker
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Minnie Tuia
American Samoa

Karla Eggelton
Cook Islands

Wu Zhao
People's Republic of China
(resigned November 2024)

Jin Liang
People's Republic of China
(appointed November 2024)

Salaseini Daunabuna
Fiji

Gina Bunton
French Polynesia

Bermance Aldis
Federated States of Micronesia

Reeti Onorio
Kiribati
(appointed April 2024)

Cramer Cain
Nauru

Julie Laronde
New Caledonia

Micah Fuhiniu Viviani
Niue

Eric Mossman Uvovo
Papua New Guinea

Francis Carlos Domnick
Republic of the Marshall Islands

Pativaine Tevita
Samoa

Dagnal Dereveke
Solomon Islands

Antonio Da Silva
Timor Leste

Asi Fangalua Halaleva-Pasilio
Tokelau

Silaati Filiake
Tuvalu
(until January 2024)

Paufi Afelee
Tuvalu
(appointed January 2024)

Marion Kualoa
Wallis & Futuna

Rapa Nui

PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES

Robert Skews
Turama Pacific
(resigned May 2024)

James McCann
Fiji Hotel & Tourism Association

Akuila Batiweti
Fiji Airways

Bud Gilroy
South Pacific Cruise Alliance
(resigned June 2024)

Caroline Raimbault
Manihini Consulting
(appointed November 2024)

Rashmi Tulsiani
Vanuatu Hotels & Resorts Association
(appointed April 2024)

Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
BCI	Business Confidence Inde
BOD	Board of Directors
CAS	Community Attitude Survey
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
CITM	China International Travel Mart
CMM	Pacific Ministers for Culture Meeting
COP29	29th United Nations Climate Change Conference
COTM	Council of Tourism Ministers
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CPAC	Council of Pacific Arts and Culture
CROP	Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific
DEMA	Diving Equipment & Marketing Association Show
DFAT	Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DST	Ministry of Culture and Tourism of China
EDM	Electronic Direct Mail Marketing
EOSP	Executive Office and Special Projects Division
EU	European Union
FestPAC	Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture
FHTA	Fiji Hotel and Tourism Association
FJ	Fiji
FJD	Fijian Dollar
FNPF	Fiji National Provident Fund
FRCS	Fiji Revenue and Customs Services
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
GBN	Global Business Network
GT	Grant Thorton
IMP	Industry Membership Programme
IVS	International Visitor Survey
IWD	International Women's Day
LDS	Lead Digital Specialist
LMS	Learning Management System
MDF	Market Development Facility
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NSO	National Statistics Office
NTO	National Tourism Organisation
NZMFAT	New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
NZVSA	New Zealand Volunteer Service Abroad
PAYE	Pay As You Earn Tax
PIC	Pacific Island Country
PIC Japan	Pacific Island Centre Japan
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PSDI	Private Sector Development Initiative
PSSP	Pacific Storytelling Specialist Programme
PSTPF	Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework 2021-2030
PSTS	Pacific Sustainable Tourism Standards
PT	Provisional Tax
PTDI	Pacific Tourism Data Initiative
PTRCF	Pacific Tourism Research Cooperation Framework
PTRI	Pacific Tourism Research Institute
PTSS	Pacific Tourism Statistics Strategy
PWC	PricewaterhouseCoopers
RMI	Republic of the Marshall Islands
RTO	Regional Tourism Organisation
SFA	Strategic Focus Area
SIDS	Small Islands Developing States
SIST	Small Island State & Territory
SPC	The Pacific Community
SPCA	South Pacific Cruise Alliance
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
SPTE	South Pacific Tourism Exchange
SPTO	Pacific Tourism Organisation
STEP	Sustainable Tourism Enhancement Project
SUP	Single-use plastic
ToSP	Treasures of the South Pacific
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNSIDS4	4th United Nations SIDS Conference
UNWTO	United Nations Tourism
USA	United States of America
USP	University of the South Pacific

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Executive Office & Special Projects Division

The Executive & Special Projects Division (EOSP) serves as the strategic backbone of SPTO, overseeing the organization's leadership and management functions.

In 2024, EOSP continued its pivotal role in guiding SPTO's initiatives towards achieving sustainable tourism development in our region through innovative partnerships.

MAJOR DIVISIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2024

Outcome: Review of SPTO's Strategic Plan 2020-2024 and Key Achievements

Over the 2020-2024 period, SPTO successfully implemented various initiatives that have directly supported its member countries and advanced sustainable tourism in the Pacific region. These efforts have resulted in tangible achievements across policy development, capacity building, community-based tourism, digital transformation, and regional collaboration.

Attracted a Wide Range of Development Partners and Funding Support

The total funding secured from 2020-2024 was approximately FJD $16.1 million, with FJD $9.3 million contributed by NZMFAT through the Digital Transformation and Pacific Tourism Data Initiative projects.

Development and Endorsement of Regional Tourism Strategies and Policy Frameworks

Several PICs have adopted SPTO-led strategic frameworks to guide their national tourism policies, ensuring alignment with sustainable tourism principles.

- PSTPF: Adopted by Fiji, Tuvalu, and Kiribati to shape their sustainable tourism strategies.
- In 2024, Fiji utilised the PSTPF to shape its National Sustainable Tourism Framework.
- Samoa completed its inaugural Tourism Policy, with ongoing development for a national sustainable tourism policy alongside the Republic of the Marshall Islands.
- French Polynesia continued refining its tourism framework, emphasizing its boutique and cultural destination appeal.

These efforts were further strengthened by the Pacific Tourism Statistics Strategy (PTSS) and the Digital Strategy, which enhance data-driven decision-making and digital transformation in the tourism sector.

Capacity Building and Training

SPTO has provided extensive training opportunities across its member countries, offering workshops on data analysis, sustainable tourism development, and digital marketing.

In total, 2,703 participants from NTOs, National Statistical Organizations (NSOs), industry partners (tour operators, hotels, Airbnb, etc.), and key stakeholders were trained, contributing to capacity building and knowledge sharing across the Pacific.

Community-Based Tourism and Sustainability

Several SPTO member countries prioritized sustainable tourism practices to drive community-based tourism initiatives:

- Cook Islands saw growth in cultural and agritourism projects.
- Samoa allocated a budget to support capacity development in outer islands.
- French Polynesia observed significant growth in eco-tourism and cultural tourism businesses, emphasizing sustainability and community empowerment.

Digital Marketing and Technology

The adoption and implementation of digital tools and data analytics has enhanced marketing and decision-making across SPTO member countries.

Regional Collaboration and Events

SPTO played a key role in fostering regional collaboration through various events and forums. Fiji hosted the SPTE 2024, which attracted 64 buyers and 67 sellers to the

Pacific's premium tourism event, providing a platform for business networking and market expansion. Additionally, SPTO actively participated in 43 key regional and 35 international forums, successfully profiling the Pacific tourism sector and strengthening its presence on the global stage.

Overall Strategic Plan Completion Assessment

SPTO has achieved a 71.43% implementation rate of the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan.

NTO Satisfaction with SPTO Strategic Plan Implementation

100% of NTOs have expressed a positive assessment of SPTO's implementation of the Strategic Plan 2020-2024 in their respective countries.

Outcome: Pacific Tourism advocacy and engagement

To effectively advocate for the organization and the Pacific tourism sector, the EOSP spearheaded SPTO's active engagements in around 22 regional and international forums, several of which are highlighted below:

Regional

- National Sustainable Tourism Framework Launch
- University of the South Pacific Research Seminar
- 57th CROP Heads Meeting
- Forum Economic Ministers Meeting (FEMM)
- Forum Officials Committee Meeting (FOC)
- Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting (FFMM)
- 53rd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting

International

- 2024 Seatrade Cruise Global, 8th-11th April | Miami, USA
- 2024 World Tourism Cities Federation WTCF Summit, 21st-23rd April | Wellington, New Zealand
- GBN and SIDS4, 25th-26th May | St. Johns, Antigua and Barbuda
- CPAC, 7th Meeting of the Pacific Ministers for Culture (CMM), Pacific Arts, Culture and Sustainable Development Symposium and FestPAC 2024, 3rd-16th June | Hawaii, USA
- Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF) Pacific Island Nations Week, 9th-13th July | Tokyo, Japan
- Effective Public-Private-Community Partnerships in tourism for the inclusive and sustainable development of Small Islands, 18th July | Virtual
- CHOGM24, 21st-25thOctober | Apia, Samoa
- COP29, 18th-20th November | Baku, Azerbaijan

Outcome: Enhanced strategic leadership and management

Development of the new 2025-2029 Strategic Plan

SPTO's 2020-2024 Strategic Plan concluded at the end of 2024. An organisational review of SPTO's value proposition and core competencies was presented to the Board in 2023. Building on this, SPTO had conducted comprehensive consultations to gather valuable insight and feedback from a diverse range of stakeholders, including government and private sectors members during the 2024 May Board meeting and SPTE, as well as from tourism industry leaders, regional partners, development partners, and SPTO management and staff. A Steering Committee, elected by the Board, led each phase of the plan's development while incorporating perspectives from the entire Board. Special convenings of the Small Island States Sub-

Committee were held to ensure the views of Small Island States were considered.

The outcome of these consultations have guided and shaped the development of SPTO's new Strategic Plan for 2025-2029, which was approved at the Board and Council meetings in November.

This collaborative and inclusive approach ensured the strategic plan is practical, well-informed, responsive to current needs, and aligned with our collective vision for the Pacific tourism sector's future and the 2050 Blue Pacific Continent Strategy.

The Strategic Plan 2025-2029 sets out a new Vision, Mission, and Values for SPTO that will drive action in six Strategic Focus Areas (SFAs):

- SFA 1: Sustainable destination management
- SFA 2: Marketing support and events
- SFA 3: Research coordination and insights
- SFA 4: Partner coordination and support
- SFA 5: Capacity building and training
- SFA 6: Connecting Tourism and Aviation

Outcome: Strengthening SPTO staff capabilities and skills

The following training and workshops were conducted throughout the year to identify areas of opportunity for improvement and provide insights regarding staff capabilities and skills:

- SPTO Digital Specialist Workshop
- SPTO Digital Marketing Online Training
- Destination Climate Champions Online Course
- SPTO Comms Campaign - IWD 2024
- SPTO Staff Strategic Plan Workshop

Moreover, the CEO and Board Chairperson virtually met on a weekly basis to plan and discuss key strategic issues pertaining to the organization's benefits and its membership. Weekly management meetings were also conducted by the CEO whilst the social

club committee organised wellness and team bonding activities throughout 2024.

A staff retreat was organized in Quarter 4 to facilitate a SPTO Annual Work Plan 2025 Workshop on mapping future activities, donors, partners as well as reporting templates with the new Strategic Plan. This was followed by SPTO's annual Christmas function to convey the Secretariat's appreciation to the staff and their families.

Outcome: Enhanced public relations and corporate communications

In 2024, SPTO activities and achievements were disseminated to all stakeholders and partners through 73 media releases, 18 public relation events and 12 media interviews attended by the CEO and/or senior management team.

Outcome: Strengthened governance and reporting

To ensure SPTO governance and reporting requirements are fulfilled, the induction of new Board of Directors was conducted. The session highlighted key roles and responsibilities as a Board Director as well as managing expectations for all meetings. Induction sessions were provided for the following members:

- Ms. Paufi Afelee, Tuvalu – 19th April
- Ms. Reeti Onorio, Kiribati – 19th April
- Ms. Rashmi Tulsiani, Vanuatu Hotels & Resorts Association – 19th April
- Ms. Teura-Marea Raimbault, Tahiti – 29th November

As required by the SPTO Constitution, the SPTO Board of Directors and Council of Tourism Ministers, met as follows:

- BOD Meeting, 3rd May | Nadi, Fiji. Click here for the Directors Resolutions.
- BOD Meeting: 13th November | Suva, Fiji. Click here for the Directors Resolutions.
- CTM Meeting, 14th November | Suva, Fiji. Click here for the Council Communique.

The reporting and monitoring of the organisation's performance was ensured through the following reporting mechanisms:

- CEO monthly updates to the Board
- Quarterly Divisional Reports
- Quarterly Board Sub-Committee Meetings

Outcome: Increased key strategic partnerships

Throughout 2024, the EOSP spearheaded the enhancement of connections with vital partners, donors, and stakeholders. This responsibility is fundamental to SPTO fulfilling its objectives and aspirations, notably in facilitating support for projects and initiatives aimed at benefiting its members.

In 2024, the following key partnerships were maintained and established with donors, development partners, the private sector, and regional organisations.

Existing and ongoing Partnerships:

- Asian Development Bank (ADB) Pacific Subregional Office
- PIFS
- United Nations Small Island Developing States (UNSIDS)
- The Pacific Community (SPC)
- Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)
- United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)
- New Zealand Volunteer Service Abroad (NZ VSA)

- Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA)
- CROP Agencies
- Fiji Airways
- Association of the South Pacific Airlines (ASPA)
- United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO)
- International Association of Airlines (IATA)
- Australian and New Zealand Hospitality Associations (THA)
- Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Aviation
- NZMFAT
- International Labor Organization (ILO)
- APCO Worldwide
- Private Sector Development Initiative (PSDI)
- Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF)
- Embassy of China, Fiji
- Market Development Facility (MDF)
- Pacific Island Centre (PIC) Japan
- MasterCard Pacific
- World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)
- Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO)
- Destination Think
- United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)
- International Finance Corporation (IFC)

New Partnerships:

- Cornell University
- Sustineo Pty Ltd

SPTO formally signed 4 MOUs/MOAs with:

- MDF
- Fiji Airways
- SPREP
- PIC Japan

Outcome: Innovative partnerships through regional air connectivity

Under the new Strategic Plan's innovative partnerships to Improving Air Access and Route Development, the EOSP is responsible for lobbying and advocating to improve regional air connectivity. This was fulfilled in 2024 by a series of meetings between the SPTO CEO and David Charlton and Narelle Hallion of the DFAT Pacific Aviation Division in Nadi. Outcomes of these meetings include having the DFAT Consultant, Mr. David Carpenter, who drafted a report on Enhanced Integration of Tourism and Aviation in Pacific Island Countries, conduct a consultation session with the Board members on the draft report, as a scene setter before the Strategic Plan workshop by PSDI in May 2024. Click here to access this scoping study report. Moreover, the draft Terms of Reference for the Pacific Air Connectivity and Tourism Steering Committee recommended by the COTM in October 2023, was finalized. The inaugural meeting of the Steering committee was conducted in November 2024, where the decision was made to include the RAMM Secretariat in the committee.

The SPTO CEO also met with Mr. David Carpenter, the DFAT Aviation Consultant in July to discuss potential collaboration between DFAT and SPTO to integrate aviation and tourism sectors, with focus on developing a tourism component that aligns with the P4A program in which SPTO can play a key role. As part of the P4A support, the SPTO's Deputy Chair, Mr. Viliami Takau, Republic of Marshall Islands Board Director, Francis Carlos Dominic, and the SPTO CEO attended the P4A Governance Training in Canberra in September 2024. The SPTO CEO finally met with the P4A officials in December to discuss SPTO's new Strategic Plan, with a focus on Strategic Focus Area 6: Connecting Tourism to Aviation. Discussions remain ongoing.

Consultations for the new Strategic Plan 2025-2029 uncovered that connectivity remains a challenge across all PICs. As a result, strengthening the link between tourism and aviation was identified as a key

priority and incorporated as Strategic Focus Area 6 (SFA6) in the new Strategic Plan.

Outcome: Successful management of the Pacific Tourism Digital Transformation Project

Phase 2 of the SPTO Pacific Tourism Digital Transformation Project represents the continuation of a two-phase initiative funded by NZMFAT. It spans four years, commencing in October 2021 and concluding in September 2025.

Due to SPTO's continual dedication to enhancing relationships with established development partners and donors, the organisation successfully accomplished several initiatives under the NZMFAT Phase 2 Project in 2024.

Sustainable Tourism Planning, Research & Statistics E-Learning Modules Development:

The Sustainable Tourism Planning and Research & Statistics divisions collaborated with consultancy agencies to develop and deliver specialized e-learning modules. These modules are designed to provide NTO staff and industry partners with targeted training, equipping them with essential skills in cultural tourism, data analysis, and research methodologies.

Sustainable Tourism Planning

- *Pacific Cultural Tourism Planning* – Integrating cultural heritage into tourism development strategies to promote sustainable and authentic experiences.

Research & Statistics

- *Monitoring and Evaluation* – Training on effective performance assessment frameworks to measure tourism initiatives' impact.
- *Research Survey and Design* – Guidance on designing and implementing surveys to collect reliable tourism data.
- *Tourism Demand Forecasting* – Techniques to predict tourism trends and visitor patterns to support strategic decision-making.
- *Tourism Benchmarking* – Methods for comparing tourism performance across destinations to enhance competitiveness and inform policy development.

These training modules empower tourism professionals with the knowledge and tools necessary to strengthen data-driven decision-making and foster sustainable tourism growth across the Pacific region.

Pacific Tourism Benchmarking Dashboard

The dashboard was developed as part of SPTO's efforts to enhance data-driven decision-making, allowing PICs to assess and compare their tourism performance. It features two main datasets, these are Digital Marketing Indicators and Sustainable Tourism Indicators. Currently in the testing phase due to incomplete datasets, the dashboard will eventually offer public access to regional averages and private access for country-specific data. Developed by Trove Tourism Development Advisors, it was endorsed by SPTO's BOD. Additionally, SPTO plans further enhancements in 2025, including a Benchmarking Strategy to improve insights.

Training sessions for NTOs introduced them to the platform, with session recordings shared for wider access. Further training is planned to ensure effective use.

Pacific Storytelling Specialist Programme (PSSP)

As of Year 3, 14 agents have completed the PSSP of the current 376 registrants actively participating in its courses. To further promote the programme, SPTO is utilising the Pacific Storytelling initiative,

specifically through Pacific Connections: Unveiling Heritage through Storytelling. SPTO is finalising consultant engagement for this initiative, aiming to involve at least three member countries in its first phase — one from each region: Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia.

Pacific Sustainable Tourism Standards (PSTS)

Sustainable Tourism Regional Consultations focused on enhancing understanding and implementation of the PSTS and their integration into national tourism plans and the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework (PSTPF). Key discussions included updating of country progress, identifying gaps, and sharing best practices for advancing sustainable tourism.

SPTO engaged in new partnerships with SWITCH Asia Pacific, seeking technical support for the region's transition towards Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) and Circularity in tourism. This collaboration will also provide policy review, reforms, capacity building, and implementation guidance aligned with PSTS.

The Climate Champions and Destination Management Training Programme (aligned with PSTS) has led participating NTOs to develop national sustainable tourism standards. Sustainable Destination Management training through e-Cornell University is also being negotiated for a Pacific cohort, which further supports PSTS implementation alongside Climate Champions and Cultural Tourism e-learning modules.

Adoption of Digital Stack Recommendations

A total of 15 out of 18 countries have successfully adopted digital stack technology. The Digital Marketing Officer is working closely with the Lead Digital Specialist to onboard NTOs onto the second year of the digital stack, which will initiate a cost-sharing program. As part of this program, SPTO will fund 50% of the software costs, with the remaining 50% covered by the NTOs. This cost-sharing initiative will begin in 2024, and by 2025, the goal is for all NTOs to fully sustain their own software costs. All participating countries have agreed to these sustainability plans.

Upgrading NTO Digital Websites

In 2024, SPTO identified the following countries for a full revamp of their tourism websites:

- Timor Leste
- Tonga
- Nauru
- Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI)
- Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)

The upgrades will feature fresh content, enhancing user engagement, increasing website traffic, and driving higher tourist arrivals. This, in turn, is expected to result in greater revenue for the tourism sectors of these countries.

Pacific Tourism Data Initiative (PTDI)

In Year 1 of the PTDI, all in-country training was successfully completed, with key outcomes in research and survey design, hands-on training in data collection and analysis tools, and the implementation of IVS, BCI, and CAS surveys. A research symposium was also held in Fiji.

Key Achievements

- 10 in-country training courses are conducted across the PTDI countries.
- Research Officers from 10 PTDI countries and 8 other NTOs participated in a 4-day Research Workshop in Fiji.

Survey & Report Dissemination

- IVS surveys were disseminated to 9 PTDI NTOs. However, discussions are still ongoing in Timor-Leste regarding the methodology for data collection for IVS.

- PNG and Kiribati CAS surveys were successfully launched and analyzed.
- Biannual and Annual IVS reports were developed and shared with NTOs.

These activities contributed to strengthening research capacity and supporting data-driven decision-making across the region.

Lead Digital Specialist (LDS) Achievements

Mr. Danny Cohanpour, the Lead Digital Specialists, provided strategic guidance, training, and ongoing support to SPTO, NTOs and industry stakeholders. As a result, SPTO has significantly strengthened digital transformation efforts across the Pacific tourism sector through digital stack implementation, capacity building (trainings, webinars, and SPTO learning platform), strategic advisory, as well as collaborating with individual NTOs and industry members to deliver key Digital Transformation activities.

SPTO Regional Workshops, pre-SPTE

SPTO successfully delivered key capacity-building workshops across research, sustainable tourism, and marketing, engaging a total of 100 participants.

The Research Workshop brought together officers from 10 PTDI countries and 8 additional NTOs for in-depth training on data collection and analysis.

The Sustainable Tourism Regional Consultations enhanced understanding and implementation of the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Standards (PSTS) across member countries.

Meanwhile, the Digital Champions training equipped NTO representatives with advanced digital marketing skills, enabling them to train others within their organisations. Additionally, these initiatives collectively strengthened regional expertise, knowledge-sharing, and best practices in tourism development.

The survey design and data analysis processes and programmes such as Survey Monkey, SPSS and NVIVO that were presented will all be beneficial to the Yap Visitors Bureau in its work of producing and disseminating timely information on the tourism sector. Learning about NVIVO and the ability to analyse qualitative data will be extremely helpful with the visitor's surveys that Yap currently conducts. Also, following the various training sessions by the SPTO team, we are also going to improve on our visitor survey design and administration in the field.

Ishwar Persad
Tourism Consultant
Yap Visitors Bureau

Pita Hausia
Senior Marketing Officer
Tonga

The benchmarking tool will help us as a region come together in terms of digital marketing!

Optimizing our digital platforms and enhancing website functionalities are crucial steps for our digital transformation.

Kersom Richard
Creative & Production Officer
Vanuatu

The SPTO training has been an amazing experience. I joined the session with absolutely no understanding of what Monkey Survey, SPSS, and NVIVO are, but the presentations were well-informed, remarkably organized, and very clear that I have erudite so many things. Like how to construct professional surveys using Survey Monkey, managing statistical and quantitative data easily on SPSS, and aiding to work effectively with different sorts of qualitative data stored into one on NVIVO all within a week. I'd say it was a great opportunity to broaden my knowledge professionally and will be useful going forward especially with the position that I currently hold in my workplace.

Tiataylormaria Niualuga
Business Economic Research Policy Officer
Samoa Chamber of Commerce

The Tuvalu Sustainable Tourism Policy aims to enhance cultural retention while addressing climate change impacts. This involves niche marketing and educating tourists about Tuvalu's local context and our socio-environmental issues. The Fatama Homestay Policy encourages tourist engagement with the local culture while minimising the cutting down of trees to set up accommodation businesses. Our homestay initiative allows visitors to witness firsthand the daily lives of Tuvaluans, the direct impacts of climate change, and how locals have adapted their routines in response to these challenges...

Paufi Afelee
Principal Tourism Officer
Tuvalu Department of Tourism

In conclusion, the EOSP remained pivotal to advancing SPTO's sustainable tourism objectives for 2024. Through active engagement in regional and international forums, the division effectively promoted both SPTO and the broader Pacific tourism sector. Key achievements included securing approval for its new Strategic Plan for 2025-2029, enhancing organisational performance through various initiatives, strengthening public relations, overseeing major projects, enhancing governance, while also expanding strategic partnerships. These highlight the EOSP's commitment to SPTO's mission and its members, laying solid groundwork for future growth.

Marketing Division

The main responsibility of the Marketing Division is to advocate the Pacific region as the top tourist destination. The Division handles various essential marketing tasks, including planning, brand management, project management, coordinating trade shows, digital marketing and promoting the cruise and yachting sector.

The Marketing Division also oversees SPTO's Industry Membership Programme (IMP) and Pacific Storytelling Specialist Programme (PSSP) as part of its commitment to the Pacific region.

The Division continued to work closely with donor agencies, development partners, government agencies and ministries, NTOs, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), industry associations and trade groups, academic institutions and researchers, media outlets and other key partners to achieve the following priorities:

- Develop planning systems that effectively meet the marketing needs of member countries and Industry Members.
- Strengthen the connection between the Pacific region and key long haul, short haul and emerging markets.
- Increase awareness and promote the Unique Selling Points of the Pacific Islands to potential customers.
- Manage the PSSP to effectively communicate the unique aspects of the region.
- Lead the SPTO Digital Transformation Project to enhance digital marketing capabilities of SPTO's partners in the Pacific.
- Manage the IMP to build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders and partners.
- Develop and implement digital marketing campaigns to attract visitors to the region.
- Collaborate with local businesses and organisations to develop and promote tourism experiences and products.
- Measure and evaluate the effectiveness of marketing initiatives and adjust strategies accordingly.

MAJOR DIVISIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2024

Outcome: Strengthened existing partnerships and establishment of new opportunities

Strengthening the "Ours is Yours" Brand

The "*Ours is Yours*" brand has been featured prominently on SPTO's social media channels and on the homepage of its consumer site. The promotional video associated with the "*Ours is Yours*" brand continued to perform well on the SPTO YouTube channel which gained over 21,132 views over 445.4 hours.

SPTO maintained consistent use of the hashtag #OursIsYours managed by the Marketing Division across key social media platforms – Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and LinkedIn. It featured prominently in 2,221 instances, ensuring ongoing brand visibility taking on a prominent role and strategically boosting the visibility of tourism-related news shared across the SPTO platforms.

The Marketing Division played a pivotal role in highlighting crucial updates about the organisation, including key events such as observing International Women's Day sharing quotes by female staff and Board members; inviting the public to contribute to the Pacific Marine Tourism Guidelines and Code of Conduct; SPTO BOD meetings in Fiji; SPTE 2024 and sponsor promotion; Development Partners Exchange; COTM meetings; various workshops coordinated by SPTO, and other corporate communications.

Moreover, this underscored organisational successes, including the prestigious recognition SPTO received being awarded the Commonwealth Secretary General's Innovation for Sustainable Development Award. These engaging posts collectively garnered a notable number of impressions,

which significantly reinforced and advanced the brand's presence across these platforms.

Content Strategy Trainings for NTOs

Under its Digital Transformation Project: Activity 3.2 Digital Content Upgrade, SPTO re-strategised the approach to quarterly coaching sessions hosted through clustered tier sessions integrating digital marketing trainings for NTOs throughout the year to improve the effectiveness of their respective digital content. These coaching sessions were also extended to private sector industry members of SPTO member countries.

Throughout 2024, there were five content upgrade training sessions conducted with SPTO member countries, which saw a total of 73 participants across all five sessions, representing NTOs and industry members.

SPTO also worked on two other initiatives to improve digital content:

Digital Website Upgrade for 5 NTOs

- SPTO identified five NTOs - Timor Leste, Tonga, RMI, FSM, and Nauru, to have their websites upgraded.
- The primary objectives are to upgrade the digital website to enhance usability, accessibility and attractiveness. It is also to ensure the websites meet each NTO's specific needs and requirements and provide training and support to NTO staff to enable effective management and maintenance of the upgraded websites.

SPTO Consumer Website Revamp

- The comprehensive revamp process of SPTO's consumer website was to align it with current digital trends and enhance user engagement. The goal was to create a dynamic and engaging platform that not only shows the rich diversity of the Pacific region, but also facilitates seamless interaction and information sharing among members.

The Digital Transformation Project is crucial in positioning the SPTO consumer website as the premier digital destination for travelers seeking authentic experiences across the Pacific region.

Outcome: Ongoing presence and awareness in key short-haul, long-haul and emerging markets

South Pacific Tourism Exchange

The SPTE serves as a pivotal travel trade event facilitated by SPTO, bringing together member countries, industry stakeholders, and international partners. Held annually, SPTE aims to streamline business interactions between global travel partners and tourism operators from the Pacific region to foster mutually beneficial relationships and promote the diverse offerings of Pacific destinations.

Continuing its tradition, the SPTE 2024 was held from 4th – 5th May in Nadi, Fiji. It offered a platform for participants to engage in meaningful discussions, exchange innovative tourism products, and explore avenues for sustainable growth in the industry. The aggregate value of the cash sponsorships for the event was FJD $150,180 against a target of FJD $250,000.

SPTE 2024 attracted 15 NTOs and 52 private sectors totalling 67 confirmed sellers, which was slightly more compared to the previous year.

Additionally, 66 buyers registered with only 63 confirmed participations at SPTE 2024, which was a stark increase (44.67%) from 2023. The short-haul buyers hailed from Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Vanuatu, while the long-haul buyers were from more distant markets, such as the United States of America, Canada, Japan, South Korea, Poland, India, Germany, France, United

Kingdom, Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Portugal, China and Singapore.

There was a notable increase of buyers from both European and Asian markets, which increased the value of the event for sellers in attendance as more markets could be reached compared to the previous year.

Treasures of the South Pacific (ToSP)

The ToSP 2024 roadshow was attended by SPTO, which served as a pivotal strategy in fulfilling the objective of improving market awareness in short-haul markets. Through compelling presentations and engagement with around 600 top stakeholders, including travel agents and representatives from Australia's tourism industry, SPTO successfully highlighted the diverse and distinctive attractions of short-haul Pacific destinations.

As part of talent development, with funding from Pacific Trade Invest (PTI) Australia, SPTO showcased the Hidden Treasures of the South Pacific, represented by Small Island States & Territories (SISTs). These included Tonga, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Nauru, RMI, and FSM - each offering breathtaking wonders, cultural richness, and unforgettable experiences.

Comprehensive information shared during the ToSP 2024 educated attendees about lesser-known Pacific offerings (SISTs), encouraging potential travellers to explore these destinations. Active participation and positive reception from attendees underscored the effectiveness of the event in enhancing market awareness and generating interest among short-haul travellers.

Moreover, collaboration with key industry players and the consistent acknowledgment of SPTO as a sponsor during the roadshow reinforced the organisation's presence, significantly contributing to the improvement of market awareness for short-haul markets.

Long-haul Markets

In 2024, SPTO created 123 Instagram posts which were published to promote PIC destinations to key long-haul markets. To maximize visibility and engagement, trending hashtags and popular music were strategically incorporated into Instagram reels, while also enhancing content discoverability and viewer appeal. This deliberate approach ensured each post's optimization for engagement and visibility across the platform.

Throughout the year, these posts explored diverse niche markets, such as adventure tourism, weddings, and culinary experiences. To optimize engagement, the social media post formula outlined in the Digital Content Upgrade Strategy was implemented with each post diligently tagged to the relevant NTO of the featured destination. This further encouraged SPTO Instagram followers to further explore these destinations on the respective NTO's Instagram pages.

Moreover, SPTO actively participated in Diving Equipment & Marketing Association Show (DEMA) 2024 and China International Travel Mart (CITM) 2024 to promote the Pacific as a premier tourism destination. These events provided valuable opportunities to engage with key stakeholders in the dive tourism sector and the Chinese outbound travel market, respectively.

Outcomes of Attending

- DEMA 2024: Strengthened partnerships with global dive operators and media, highlighting the Pacific's rich marine biodiversity and sustainable dive tourism offerings. Facilitated business linkages between Pacific destinations and international dive travel buyers.
- CITM 2024: Increased awareness of Pacific tourism offerings in China, fostering engagement with key Chinese travel agents and potential investors. Gathered market insights to refine SPTO's China market strategy and strengthen the Pacific's presence in this high-growth tourism segment.

Emerging Market – South Korea

As part of the Enhancing E-Commerce Opportunities for Pacific MSMEs Project, SPTO Korea shared 47 posts in 2024 with images and stories of Pacific destinations reaching close to 2,900 followers and subscribers of key social media channels. In other coordinated promotional activities with SPTO Korea, SPTO published a total of 20 blogs and 27 social media posts covering a range of topics relevant to the Pacific region.

The SPTO Korea co-op with Palmtour managed to set up new landing pages with information on Pacific destinations and products. Palmtour is the largest honeymoon travel agent in the South Korea market with over 500 registered couples across its 12 branches and a 70% conversation rate. Additionally, SPTO Korea began discussions with Palmtour with the support of Fiji Airways to provide special rates targeting honeymooners for a sales campaign.

Also note that SPTO completed its collaboration with Ms. Daisy Park, SPTO Korea Market Representative, when funding completed for recovery. Overall, these efforts helped to increase market awareness in South Korea and promote some PICs as a sustainable and luxury tourism destination.

Outcome: Development of Pacific segment products

Consumer-focused blogs published on the official SPTO consumer website served as the cornerstone of this initiative with a total of 22 blogs featured in 2024. These blogs were tailored to showcase unique offerings of the region featuring two to three destinations

each month and diving deep into the specifics of niche market products. Each blog post was hyperlinked, redirecting readers to respective NTO websites facilitating direct engagement and interaction.

SPTO's Instagram platform was also utilised, showcasing Pacific niche markets in reels. These blogs were further amplified for maximum reach and impact, being shared on SPTO's social media channels with Call to Action (CTAs) prompts for readers to explore specific blog contents, and relevant hashtags that were strategically incorporated to enhance post visibility. Click here to view analytics.

Outcome: Innovative Partnerships – Cruising and Yachting

In April 2024, SPTO's CEO and Marketing Manager attended the Seatrade Cruise Global Trade Show and Conference, which returned to the Miami Beach Convention Center in Florida, USA. This was made possible through SPTO's joint partnership with South Pacific Cruise Alliance (SPCA) that coordinated the event on behalf of its members, which include SPTO, Tonga, Samoa, Tahiti, Pitcairn Islands, American Samoa, New Caledonia, Wallis & Futuna, Vanuatu and Cook Islands.

Seatrade is a popular trade show for SPTO and its member countries, and is the only event that exclusively covers the cruise industry. The overall objective of participating in the world's largest cruise travel show is to be educated on the latest trends in the global cruise industry, identify opportunities and challenges for cruise development in the Pacific and promote the Pacific to the world.

As stipulated in the SPTO Strategic Plan 2020-2024, part of the Marketing Division's innovative partnership priority area is to develop the Cruising and Yachting sector in the Pacific. Hence, SPTO's participation in the four-day event, which offered a selection of live events and conferences, marketing services, digital and print advertising. The platform consisted of 600 exhibitors, over 80 cruise line brands and 120 represented countries, which offered an opportunity to promote one's brand and products to stakeholders in the cruise industry.

At the event, SPTO was able to establish contact with two cruise media personnel to write on cruising in the Pacific and nine expedition cruise executives who are earmarked to package the Pacific in 2025 and be invited to attend the SPTE 2025.

Outcome: Pacific Storytelling Specialist Programme

The PSSP is an accreditation programme that aims to train and educate travel agents around the world on how to sell the Pacific region with confidence and passion. It was continually promoted in the weekly Pulse e-newsletter, which helped create awareness about the programme, which subsequently led to travel agents enrolling in the programme.

A new Learning Management System (LMS) called Tovuti was purchased in February and launched in July 2023. The platform provided new and updated educational content, which offered better learning experiences for participants.

Advertisements for PSSP were published on SPTO's LinkedIn page along with electronic direct mail (EDM) sent out to SPTO's database to promote and create awareness of the PSSP platform. Reminders were also sent to existing registrants to complete the learning modules. These activities helped create a structured plan to achieve the objective of increasing programme enrollment and certification. As a result, 285 new PSSP

agents registered for the programme in 2024 with a total of 14 participants successfully completing the programme, achieving Gold Tier certification.

Completion at this level, however, remains a challenge for the majority of registrants due to the current process requirements. Specifically, participants must exit the Tovuti LMS, separately register, and complete country-specific courses for Fiji, Cook Islands, Tahiti, New Caledonia, Samoa, and Vanuatu. This additional step has created barriers as courses are self-paced, and delays in receiving registration approvals and login credentials often hinder timely completion. Moreover, given these constraints, the Gold Tier course may be perceived as a lower priority for many users. Despite this, overall engagement remains strong with a combined total of 107 completions across the Bronze and Silver tiers.

To effectively execute the PSSP, the Marketing Division managed enrolments, completion, and other programme related administrative tasks. Additionally, this programme is an important component of the Pacific Digital Transformation Project, funded by NZMFAT.

Outcome: SPTO website as lead referral site for tourism in the Pacific

In 2024, the SPTO website experienced a fluctuating pattern, commencing the year robustly with 52,338 pageviews across 39,168 sessions, but faced decline in engagement in Quarter 2 and Quarter 4 respectively, resulting in a 21% decrease in total pageviews compared to 2023. This contrasted with the more consistent upward trend observed in 2023, indicating a changing digital landscape and evolving user behavior that necessitated a reassessment of content and engagement strategies.

On the other hand, the SPTO JobsLink website saw a high of 179,289 pageviews

in Quarter 1, but experienced a significant decrease for the rest of the quarters and faced a 38% decrease in total pageviews in 2024 when compared to 2023.

Outcome: Optimizing destination exposure via Electronic Direct Mail

The Marketing Division sent out a total of 136 EDM campaigns in 2024 compared to 102 in 2023, including newsletters, webinar invitations, event invitations, and digital toolkits. The mailing list for SPTO decreased by 63 with a total of 13,880 email contacts for SPTO by the end of Quarter 4.

Quarter 1 saw the addition of 1,729 new subscribers to SPTO's mailing list and the creation of 49 campaigns. In Quarter 2, 131 new subscribers were added and 24 campaigns were created. Quarter 3 had 761 new subscribers and 34 campaigns created. Finally, in Quarter 4, 128 new subscribers were added and 29 campaigns were created, which was a 33.3% increase than in 2023.

Outcome: Optimizing destination exposure via social media networks

Throughout the year, SPTO saw slight growth on most of its social media channels. Facebook remained the most popular platform with a total of 103,000 followers, followed by YouTube with 27,700 subscribers, LinkedIn with 16,000 followers, X (formerly Twitter) with 7,125 followers and Instagram with 2,228 followers.

Facebook experienced a 1% increase in followers from the previous year, while YouTube had no growth in subscriber base compared to 2023. However, LinkedIn grew by 23%, X (formerly Twitter) experienced a 2.3% decrease while Instagram had a 7.3% growth compared to the previous year.

Despite Facebook and YouTube experiencing slower growth, SPTO planned to re-look at their strategies for those platforms to boost engagement and increase targeted followers such as utilising paid promotions.

Outcome: Industry Membership Programme

The IMP was consistently promoted in the weekly Pulse e-newsletter. Programme registrations encountered a slight increase through the SPTE 2024 by incentivizing new registrations from the tourism industry to sign up as IMP members and receive a discount on their SPTE 2024 registration.

The Marketing Manager promoted the IMP to industry members during his bi-annual stakeholder meetings with industry partners along the Suva-Nadi corridor. The Marketing Officer responsible for the IMP sent email follow-ups to interested partners. The programme was also promoted at the SPTE 2024, with sellers indicating their interest to register for the programme in 2024. In fact, the IMP was promoted at all trade events that SPTO participated and coordinated in 2024. IMP membership drive campaigns were conducted in various SPTO member countries dovetailing with the Digital Training programme in Papua New Guinea (PNG), Vanuatu, Samoa, Cook Islands, Niue, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste, FSM, and Tonga.

SPTO conducted an IMP Annual Review survey distributed to NTOs, current and past industry members, and prospective and basic-free members. The aim was to gain valuable insight about member satisfaction as well as offer recommendations to optimise membership benefits. The survey provided valuable insights into member preferences, key benefits, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. Members highly value

access to tourism research, sustainability guidance, and training, particularly in digital marketing and networking opportunities at SPTO events. While the IMP offers significant benefits, some members indicated a need for greater awareness of available resources and more streamlined communication via a centralized digital portal. Increasing market visibility for members and providing more support in digital transformation and sustainability initiatives were also highlighted as key areas for enhancement.

Based on this feedback, SPTO has the opportunity to refine the IMP by offering more targeted training, cultivating deeper engagement through virtual networking, enhancing communication channels, and supporting members in gaining greater international exposure.

SPTO's BOD and COTM endorsed the new IMP membership structure with key findings that all non-government members involved in tourism should be classified under the IMP category, while all non-government membership outside the tourism industry should be classified as non-IMP. The IMP is to be further categorised into the following: air and maritime travel, hospitality, retail and accommodation, marketing and media, and tourism service providers. The non-IMP is to be further categorized into education institutions and civil society NGOs.

At the end of 2024, SPTO had a total of 39 paid industry members which was a 225% increase compared to 2023 along with 165 basic free membership categories. The Marketing Division remains steadfast in the commitment to ongoing efforts focused on facilitating both membership renewals and acquisition of new IMP members under the new IMP categories. As SPTE 2025 registrations commenced in October 2024, early bird discounts were offered to both existing and new member sign-ups, a strategic initiative anticipated to increase growth in IMP numbers.

SPTO's Marketing Division has made remarkable progress in positioning the Pacific region as a leading tourist destination through the digital transformation of SPTO and its members. Through strategic initiatives and collaborations with key

partners, the division has strengthened brand awareness, expanded market reach, and enhanced digital marketing efforts. The success of the "*Ours is Yours*" campaign and its strong social media presence has reinforced the Pacific brand, while the SPTO Digital Transformation Project has provided valuable training and upgrades to NTOs and industry members. Participation in international trade events, such as SPTE and SeaTrade Cruise Global, has bolstered SPTO's visibility in key markets, attracting new opportunities for growth and development.

Market expansion efforts, particularly in long-haul and emerging markets, have been instrumental in promoting the Pacific's unique offerings. The division's focused social media strategies, partnerships with industry stakeholders, and consumer engagement initiatives have led to increased awareness and interest in Pacific tourism. The development of the PSSP and the optimization of SPTO's website and EDM campaigns have further strengthened SPTO's role as a leading facilitator of tourism information in the region.

Despite some challenges, including fluctuating website engagement and social media growth, the Marketing Division remains committed to refining its strategies and leveraging digital advancements to enhance its outreach and impact. Moving forward, the division will continue to strengthen industry partnerships, optimize digital engagement, and create innovative campaigns to ensure the sustainable growth of tourism in the Pacific region. Through continuous adaptation, strategic marketing, and collaborative efforts, SPTO's Marketing Division is well-positioned to drive the Pacific's tourism industry forward, ensuring that the region remains a sought-after destination for global travellers.

Sustainable Tourism Division

The work of the Division of Sustainable Tourism (DST) in 2024 focused on meeting its strategic goal per the SPTO Strategic Plan 2020-2024 and advancing efforts in implementing the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework (PSTPF).

MAJOR DIVISIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2024

Outcome: Cultural sustainability of the tourism sector supported through guidelines and advocacy

In enhancing the cultural sustainability of the tourism sector, the Pacific Cultural Tourism Guidelines developed in 2023 were officially launched by SPTO's BOD at their May meeting. The guidelines come at a critical time as global tourism experiences a strong rebound since the resumption of international travel after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The guidelines provide a practical framework for tourism operators, policymakers and communities to promote culturally ethical tourism. SPTO recognizes that this is an important resource for guiding the development of national cultural tourism policies and programmes. Furthermore, it encourages the growth of cultural tourism by providing strategies that NTOs can use to develop destination positioning, identify a destination's unique points of difference, foster partnerships for cultural tourism, inform community awareness and education programmes, support the development of cultural and creative industries and the integration of cultural tourism principles in tourism experiences.

The Cultural Tourism Guidelines are available in English and French.

On the advocacy front, this year saw the participation of SPTO and its member countries at the 13th FesPAC in Honolulu, Hawai'i. Coordinated by SPC, FestPAC, the world's largest celebration of indigenous Pacific Islanders, provides a vital platform for showcasing the diverse artistic and cultural heritage of the region. SPTO's involvement included attendance at CPAC meetings, the Ministers for Culture meeting, the hosting of the Sustainable Cultural Tourism session at the Pacific Arts, Culture and Sustainable Development Symposium and the participation of three SPTO youth at the Young Pacific Leaders meeting.

The discussions highlight the importance of cultural exchange and celebration and the need to halt the erosion of traditional practices, customs and language. The festival also provided the opportunity for SPTO member countries to reinforce community-centred tourism development that is culturally ethical, aligning with the Pacific Cultural Tourism Guidelines. SPTO joined the One CROP team in coordinating the visibility of tourism at the event whilst also supporting related dialogues and exhibitions. A total of five NTOs partnered with their culture focal points in promoting destinations and cultural products at the event. Side meetings were also held between SPTO and its members and the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Outcome: Sustainable tourism advocacy at United Nations SIDS4

SPTO attended the 4th UN SIDS Conference in St. Johns, Antigua & Barbuda in May 2024, signifying a crucial step in advocating for sustainable tourism within Small Island Developing States. SPTO's engagement spanned both the GBN Forum and the official UN SIDS Conference, both of which were important platforms to highlight the unique challenges and opportunities faced by the tourism sector in the Pacific. With SPTO's CEO and Manager of Sustainable Tourism actively involved in various side events, SPTO focused on strategic discussions surrounding climate financing models, private sector initiatives, and partnerships for climate resilience. This participation highlighted SPTO's commitment to securing resources

and fostering partnerships that elevate the recognition of tourism as a key sector for sustainable development of SIDS in the face of climate change. SPTO's presence at UN SIDS4 served to amplify the voice of Pacific tourism on the global stage, ensuring that the region's specific needs are addressed in international development fora.

The UN SIDS 4 Outcomes Document can be accessed here.

Outcome: Established a high level and sector-wide stakeholder engagement platform for Women in Tourism in the Pacific

The inaugural Pacific Talanoa for Women in Tourism, themed "*Thriving Together: Gender Equality for Tourism Growth and Transformation*," brought together 78 tourism leaders and stakeholders on 13th November 2024. The event aimed to advance discussions on women's roles in Pacific tourism, focusing on opportunities, challenges, and collaborative pathways. Aligned with Goal 2 of the 2030 PSTPF, the Talanoa addressed systemic challenges women face and sought actionable steps for empowerment among others. The event also highlighted the progress and opportunities gained from the Gender Mainstreaming Activity implemented by SPTO and ADB PSDI, which involved nine NTOs and SPTO.

Key Event Outcomes

- Women's contributions are vital for responsible tourism, requiring representation at all levels and addressing barriers like limited access to resources.
- Regional gender equality frameworks need implementation at national and local levels with ongoing support and monitoring.
- Women's leadership is crucial, necessitating platforms for sharing best practices in gender-responsive policies.
- Increased collaboration with private sector stakeholders and non-state actors is essential for advancing gender equality.
- Participating organisations committed to acting on the recommendations of the Gender Audit activity and integrating gender-responsive measures.
- Early priorities from the Gender Audit Regional Synthesis Report, including policy adjustments and leadership commitments, were identified for implementation.
- Immediate barriers for women in tourism, such as limited capacity development and resources, were highlighted as regional priorities.
- NTOs shared findings from their gender audits, showcasing existing good practices and entry points for gender mainstreaming.

The official Summary Outcomes from the Talanoa can be accessed here.

Outcome: Launch of environmental sustainability resources for the tourism industry

In November 2024, the Council of Tourism Ministers endorsed and officially launched three key environmental sustainability resources, a significant stride for the Pacific tourism sector. These resources, encompassing Standards for phasing out single-use plastics (SUPs), Guidelines for responsible marine wildlife viewing, and the Practical guidelines for environmental audits of tourist accommodations in the Pacific, are designed to drive the industry towards more environmentally responsible practices. This

initiative underscores a collective commitment to preserving the Pacific's natural heritage and ensuring the long-term viability of the sector.

These initiatives were made possible following regional consultations held in May in collaboration with industry partners, government agencies, academia and non-government organisations. Development partners, notably the Australian Government and the European Union through the Pacific Bioscapes Programme and the ACP EU Programme for Multilateral Environmental Agreements, provided financial and technical support. Inter-CROP collaboration between SPREP and SPTO highlights the importance of shared responsibility in achieving sustainable tourism goals while protecting the fragile Pacific environment.

Supporting the socialising of these tools with industry, national stakeholders and NTOs will be a key priority in 2025.

These resources can be accessed from the following links:

- Standards for phasing out SUPs in the Pacific tourism industry
- Responsible Marine Wildlife Viewing Guidelines
- Practical Guidelines for Environmental Audits in Tourist Accommodations in the Pacific

Outcome: Increased commitment to Climate Action in Pacific Tourism

This year, the Sustainable Tourism Division prioritized climate action through targeted capacity building and strategic partnerships. A key initiative implemented this year was the Climate Champions Training, an online programme offered to thirty-one tourism officials from NTOs. Facilitated by the Travel Foundation and Expedia Travel Group over the six-month period from July to December, this training covered essential areas like understanding the basics of climate change, climate impacts on the tourism sector, approaches to climate action planning, measurement and marketing. Selected representatives

from the cohort were supported by the New Zealand Government to attend the 2024 *Te Unga Mai* event in Rotorua, New Zealand. This event is the peak destination management platform for New Zealand Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) and national partners. A side meeting between the Pacific cohort and selected RTOs that have also completed the Climate Champions training was held to share learnings.

In Quarter 3, the Division collaborated with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to deliver a regional climate resilience technical training. Thirty-two participants from diverse sectors, including NTOs, NGOs, industry, and government agencies took part. Through funding assistance from the US Department of State and the Oceans Foundation, the training provided participants with valuable knowledge deeply reflecting on the meaning of resilience and what it means for Pacific Island communities in the context of tourism. The training covered topics such as climate vulnerability assessments, climate science relevant for tourism and its practical application. Participants also benefitted from network-building opportunities noting the diverse backgrounds of attendees. The workshop report can be accessed here.

Finally, the Division, in partnership with UNWTO, ensured a strong Pacific voice at COP29 in Azerbaijan. The SPTO CEO presented the Statement of Commitment from the COTM at the inaugural Ministers of Tourism High Level Meeting. This marked a significant milestone, as COP29 featured its first-ever tourism thematic day.

The Statement of Commitment delivered by the SPTO CEO can be accessed here.

Outcome: New partnerships for sustainable tourism practices and standards through the Sustainable Tourism Enhancement Project

This year marked a new partnership between SPTO and SWITCH-Asia through the establishment of the Sustainable Tourism Enhancement Project (STEP), an initiative funded by the European Union (EU). Dedicated to strengthening existing national tourism standards programmes, this initiative is in line with the objectives of the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Standards and Goals 1 and 4 of the PSTPF. It also aims to explore relevant pathways to assist countries who are either working towards or planning to establish their own national tourism standards programs. The project integrates the standards with sustainable practices and circular economy principles.

In November and December 2024, STEP launched its first phase with scoping missions in Vanuatu and Kiribati. These missions focused on assessing the current state of tourism policies and practices in these nations, with the aim of identifying gaps and opportunities for integrating sustainable tourism standards and support for circular economic linkages. The scoping missions are scheduled for Fiji and Samoa in early 2025.

Key Missions Outcomes

- A thorough review of existing tourism policies in Vanuatu and Kiribati to evaluate their alignment with regional sustainable tourism standards.
- Identification of specific needs and priorities for each country in adopting and implementing sustainable tourism practices.
- Recommendations for policy reforms and practical steps to integrate resource efficiency and circular economy principles in their tourism sectors.

These outcomes are crucial for the project's next steps, which include developing action plans for the four pilot countries: Vanuatu, Kiribati, Fiji and Samoa, and a Regional Roadmap for SPTO and the wider membership by May 2025. These plans will outline strategies for implementing sustainable tourism standards and support for elevating sustainable practices. The success of STEP Phase 1 will be critical in shaping a potential Phase 2 of the STEP initiative for the region.

In summary, 2024 saw SPTO make significant strides across a spectrum of sustainable tourism initiatives through the work of the Division. From launching key resources for environmental protection and fostering climate resilience to championing gender equality and cultural preservation, SPTO has demonstrated a comprehensive approach to responsible tourism development. The launch of the Pacific Cultural Tourism Guidelines and active participation at FestPAC highlighted the Division's commitment to safeguarding cultural heritage, while the inaugural Pacific Talanoa for Women in Tourism established a crucial platform for gender equity.

Furthermore, SPTO's strategic advocacy at UN SIDS4 and UNFCCC COP29 accentuated its role in amplifying the Pacific tourism sector voice on global stages. The establishment of STEP and the launch of environmental sustainability resources further emphasized shared commitment to implementing practical solutions for sustainable tourism. These achievements collectively reinforce the Division's dedication to building a resilient, inclusive, and culturally rich tourism sector that benefits both present and future generations.

Research & Statistics Division

Through pioneering framseworks and collaborative workshops, the Research & Statistics Division has worked to shape a resilient and forward-thinking tourism landscape. Reflecting on 2024, it is evident our efforts have not only laid strong foundations but also illuminated pathways for sustainable tourism growth.

Committed to supporting informed decision-making, the division provides valuable data and analysis to strengthen research efforts in the tourism sector. Our quarterly and annual visitor arrival reports serve as essential resources for stakeholders engaged in tourism-related activities.

MAJOR DIVISIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2024

Outcome: Development of the Pacific Tourism Benchmarking Dashboard, advancing data-driven sustainability

Developed as part of SPTO's ongoing efforts to enhance data-driven decision-making, the Pacific Tourism Benchmarking Dashboard is a significant step toward sustainable tourism benchmarking in the Pacific. The datasets and indicators featured in the dashboard were developed through the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Indicators Framework (PSTIF), which was endorsed in 2023.

The benchmarking platform, the first of its kind for SPTO member countries, enables nations to assess their performance and compare their progress with regional counterparts. The platform incorporates two primary datasets:

- Digital Marketing Indicators: Measuring the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies, including online engagement and outreach.
- Sustainable Tourism Indicators: Evaluating tourism's economic, environmental, and social sustainability impacts.

Dashboard Accessibility and Features

While the dashboard has been developed, it remains in the testing phase due to incomplete datasets. Once fully operational, the platform will offer:

- Public Access: Pacific average Digital Marketing Indicators and Sustainability Datasets will be available for general viewing, ensuring transparency in tourism performance.
- Private Access: Will require secure login credentials to protect sensitive information and ensure data integrity- this will house individual country data on digital marketing indicators and sustainability datasets.

The development of the benchmarking platform, led by consultants from Trove Tourism Development Advisors, was endorsed and launched at the SPTO BOD Meeting in November 2024 by Paul Davis – Senior Advisor Tourism (NZMFAT). This also served as an introduction to SPTO members, showcasing the platform's potential to support data-driven strategies in tourism.

SPTO is committed to enhancing the benchmarking platform in 2025 to deliver more comprehensive and regionally relevant insights. As part of this initiative, SPTO is developing a Benchmarking Strategy to strengthen data-driven decision-making and better serve the Pacific region.

By advancing this initiative, SPTO aims to empower PICs with robust data insights, enabling more effective policy development, resource allocation, and sustainable tourism growth across the region.

Pacific Tourism Dashboard Training for NTOs

NTOs were formally introduced to the interface of the Pacific Tourism Dashboard through training sessions led by the consultant Mr. Danny Cohanpour from Trove Tourism. Conducted across two sessions, the training covered both private and public interfaces and was attended by representatives from:

- Vanuatu Tourism Office
- Tourism Solomons
- Cook Islands Tourism Marketing Corporation
- Tahiti Tourisme
- FSM Department of Resources & Development – Tourism Division

To ensure wider access, session recordings were shared with NTOs who were unable to participate due to conflicting priorities.

Further training sessions are planned to enhance NTOs' understanding and effective use of the dashboard.

Pacific Tourism Research Institute (PTRI)

Following the approval of the Pacific Tourism Research Cooperation Framework (PTRCF), the SPTO BOD also recommended the establishment of the Pacific Tourism Research Institute (PTRI), which will be jointly managed by a regional tertiary institution and SPTO.

The PTRI is a key pillar under the PTRCF and will develop a research agenda that identifies regional priorities through consultations with key stakeholders, including donors, NTOs, CROP agencies, academic institutions, and relevant government agencies.

Efforts have begun to establish the PTRI in partnership with potential regional tertiary institutions with the first meeting held with the University of the South Pacific (USP) Vice Chancellor, in which they declared their expression of interest in developing the institute. SPTO provided them with the PTRCF for their review and is awaiting comment. Meanwhile, SPTO continues to scope for regional tertiary partners.

Regional Research Training Delivery

In the rapidly evolving tourism industry, leveraging data for decision-making is essential for success. Research officers play a vital role in analyzing data to develop strategies, enhance visitor experiences, and promote sustainable growth.

With shifting consumer preferences, economic trends, and environmental factors influencing the industry, accurate data collection and analysis are essential for stakeholders to remain competitive. Understanding traveler behaviour, assessing destination performance, and leveraging statistical tools like Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and benchmarking platforms are vital for making informed decisions.

During the four-day training from 28th April - 1st May 2024, 33 participants from 18 member countries gained hands-on experience in Data Analysis, Digital Benchmarking, and Project Monitoring and Evaluation.

COUNTRY	No. PARTICIPANTS
American Samoa	1
Cook Islands	1
FSM	5
Fiji	1
French Polynesia	2
Kiribati	2
RMI	2
Nauru	1
New Caledonia	1
Niue	2
PNG	1
Samoa	3
Solomon Islands	1
Timor Leste	2
Tonga	1
Tuvalu	3
Vanuatu	3
Wallis & Futuna	1
TOTAL	33

The first three days were held at the Novotel Hotel, Nadi, and the final day at Tanoa International Hotel, Nadi. The sessions combined theory and practical exercises to help participants unlock opportunities, manage risks, and optimize outcomes in tourism research.

Training Session Outcomes

- Enhanced skills and knowledge of Research Officers in utilizing statistical analysis software (SPSS) effectively and leveraging a digital measurement and benchmarking platform for research purposes.

- Increased understanding of the introduction and importance of the Digital Measurement and Benchmarking Online Platform.
- Integration of monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) practices into research methodologies.
- Improved proficiency in data analysis techniques and effective use of digital tools for research through interactive sessions and practical exercises.

By equipping research officers with essential skills, this training fostered innovation, collaboration, and a data-driven approach to enhancing the tourism industry's sustainability and competitiveness.

Outcome: Increased collaboration between SPTO and member countries in the Pacific Tourism Data Initiative

The PTDI made significant strides in 2024, building on the foundational work laid in late 2023. Through targeted capacity-building efforts, expanded survey implementation, and strengthened analytical capabilities, the initiative continues to enhance data-driven decision-making across participating PICs: Tonga, Samoa, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste, FSM-Yap, Niue and Cook Islands.

Capacity Building and Training

Following the successful in-country training in Kiribati in Quarter 4 of 2023, similar hands-on training sessions were conducted throughout Quarter 1, Quarter 2, and early Quarter 3 of 2024 in the remaining nine PTDI member countries. These workshops covered key areas of research survey design, quantitative analysis using SPSS, qualitative analysis with NVivo, and report preparation using Excel and PowerPoint.

COUNTRY	No. PARTICIPANTS	TIMELINE
Kiribati	8	December 2023
Solomon Islands	25 (Day 1), 40 (Day 2) and 15 (Day 3&4)	February 2023
Tonga	26	February 2024
Niue	7	February 2024
Cook Islands	25 Participants, 31 PSTIF Meetings	March 2024
Samoa	12	April 2024
PNG	16	May 2024
FSM-YAP	8	June 2024
Vanuatu	13	June - July 2024
Timor-Leste	12	July 2024
TOTAL	252	-

A major highlight of the year was the four-day Regional Training Workshop in April, held in the week leading up to SPTE. This event brought together participants from SPTO's 18 member countries, inclusive of the 10 PTDI countries, for an intensive knowledge-sharing and skill-building session, further strengthening regional collaboration and standardizing analytical approaches.

Additionally, recognizing the ongoing need for technical support, refresher training was conducted throughout 2024 for PTDI countries that see the value in the reports produced and software training. These have been complemented by continuous software support for SurveyMonkey, SPSS, and NVivo, ensuring NTO research teams are fully equipped to conduct in-depth data analysis and reporting. Countries that have received targeted software and analytical support include:

- Tonga, Samoa, Kiribati, and PNG (SPSS training)
- Vanuatu (SPSS and NVivo training)

Successful Survey Implementations

In 2024, PTDI successfully expanded its tourism-related data collection through multiple survey initiatives:

- Business Confidence Index (BCI): Launched in six out of ten PTDI member countries. This includes three active members prior to October 1, 2023: Tonga, PNG and Solomon Islands, as well as three previously paused countries: Kiribati, Timor-Leste, and FSM-Yap.
- Community Attitude Survey (CAS): Implemented in eight out of ten PTDI member countries. Five of these were active members before October 1, 2023: Tonga, PNG, Niue, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu, while the remaining three were previously paused: Kiribati, Timor-Leste, and FSM-Yap.
- International Visitor Survey (IVS): Implemented in nine out of ten PTDI member countries. Seven of these were active members before October 1, 2023 – Tonga, PNG, Niue, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Cook Islands and Vanuatu. The remaining two were previously paused countries – Kiribati and FSM - Yap. Timor-Leste is set to commence its IVS in 2025.

Support for Small Island States Outside PTDI

While RMI, Tuvalu, and FSM are not formally part of the PTDI, SPTO has provided targeted assistance to these countries in 2024 to support their IVS initiatives. This assistance ranged from guidance on methodology and software costings to initiating discussions with NZMFAT on potential future support under PTDI. In Tuvalu, SPTO played a more hands-on role, supporting the implementation of a three-month IVS using a face-to-face methodology, with SPTO providing enumerator training, data analysis support, and report preparation assistance. These efforts reflect SPTO's broader commitment to strengthening data collection and analytical capacity across all member countries, regardless of formal PTDI participation.

These collective efforts mark a significant step forward in strengthening the region's capacity for tourism data analysis and evidence-based policy formulation. Through continued engagement, training, and survey execution, PTDI countries—and those receiving indirect support—are better

positioned to collaborate with SPTO in shaping sustainable tourism development across the Pacific.

Overall, the Research & Statistics Division remains at the forefront of SPTO's efforts to drive data-driven decision-making in the Pacific's tourism sector. Through the development of the Pacific Tourism Benchmarking Dashboard, regional research training, and the continued implementation of the PTDI, the division has strengthened the analytical capacity of member countries, enabling them to make informed policy decisions. The planned establishment of the PTRI further underscores SPTO's commitment to fostering research excellence and regional collaboration.

By equipping NTOs with essential skills in data collection, analysis, and digital benchmarking, the division has laid a strong foundation for sustainable tourism growth. The successful implementation of surveys and software has expanded the region's access to high-quality tourism data, enhancing strategic planning and resource allocation.

As the tourism landscape continues to evolve, the Research & Statistics Division remains committed to advancing innovative research methodologies, strengthening regional cooperation, and ensuring that Pacific Island nations are empowered with the insights needed to build a resilient and competitive tourism industry.

Finance & Operations Services Division

The Finance and Operations Division provides financial and operational support to all divisions, aiming to enhance transparency, efficiency, and accountability throughout the organisation for effective decision-making and smooth day-to-day operations.

MAJOR DIVISIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2024

Outcome: Robust financial services

Accountability remained a key focus for the division, with strong emphasis on maintaining high standards of governance and compliance. Through rigorous monitoring and reporting mechanisms, the division ensured all financial and operational activities were conducted in a responsible and ethical manner. The Finance Division continued to implement effective financial management practices and processes at the divisional and organizational level to achieve transparency and accountability.

Financial performance was tracked through continuous monitoring of operational and divisional budgets, along with revenue collection. Regular updates on specific budgets were communicated to the CEO and all divisions to ensure transparency and accountability in financial management. Additionally, the Finance Team conducted regular account reconciliations to uphold the integrity, reliability, and transparency of financial information by resolving discrepancies and verifying records. These practices collectively reinforce a framework where financial activities were monitored and communicated effectively, promoting responsible management of resources. Cash flow forecasts for 2024 were prepared, allowing for effective management of operating accounts and ensuring adequate cash levels to support ongoing operations. Overall, SPTO's cash reserves have increased due to a budget surplus in 2024.

Ensuring accuracy, reliability, and transparency in financial reporting, SPTO accounts were maintained and independently audited by Grant Thorton (GT), previously known as PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC). The division developed and implemented an audit and reconciliation plan to ensure SPTO complied with relevant statutory regulations, General Acceptable Accounting Principles, and SPTO Financial policies and procedures.

The successful audit of the financial accounts highlighted significant achievements for SPTO. The audit resulted in an unqualified opinion for both the core account and NZMFAT project, affirming that the financial statements were fairly presented and compliant with accounting standards. The audits not only validated the organization's financial integrity but also identified areas for improvement in financial management and internal controls. This led to enhanced decision-making and risk management practices.

Outcome: SPTO Membership Review

As we advance towards the implementation of SPTO's 2050 Blue Pacific Continent Strategy and Strategic Plan 2025-2029, a comprehensive review of its membership structure was crucial. This review was further driven by our commitment to adapting to the evolving needs of our membership, aligning with development partners' priorities, and addressing emerging challenges and opportunities within the broader tourism landscape of the Pacific region.

In alignment with SPTO's Finance Strategy 2022–2024, which recommended seeking and diversifying SPTO's funding sources, a thorough evaluation of its membership structure and government membership fee was carried out by KPMG. This initiative focused on enhancing organisational effectiveness, ensuring

financial sustainability, and promoting inclusivity within SPTO's member base. A key component of achieving financial sustainability for SPTO involved adjusting membership fees, as the last review was carried out in 2014 with a 20% increase in the government membership fee. Given the increase in operational costs, it became critical to reassess the government fee structure in 2024.

In November 2024, the BOD approved an 8.5% increase in government membership fees, effective from 2026, as part of this review. Additionally, a new membership structure for the IMP and a development partner category were also approved. The BOD will continue to assess the government membership restructure in 2025 to ensure SPTO's long-term sustainability and ability to support sustainable tourism growth across the Pacific.

The Finance & Operations Division issued the organisation's government members with membership invoices in Quarter 1 of 2024. 19 countries had fully paid their 2024 membership fees.

Outcome: Efficient administrative and procurement support

The Finance & Operations division played a pivotal role in ensuring the smooth and effective operation of the organisation. The division efficiently managed key financial services, including processing salaries, management allowances, and supplier payments. It ensured full compliance with the regulations set by Fiji Revenue and Customs Services (FRCS) and Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF), completing timely lodgments and payments for Pay As You Earn Tax (PAYE), Contractual Provisional Tax (PT), and FNPF deductions over the course of the year. Staff welfare, via medical insurance, term life policies, leave entitlements, and other benefits were also maintained by the division.

The division also provided essential expertise and guidance to other divisions across SPTO. It supported the development and implementation of Terms of Reference, procurement processes, Memorandum of Understanding, and internal policies and

frameworks. The division's commitment to good governance was demonstrated through its management of procurement functions, ensuring the acquisition of quality goods and services at competitive prices, reflecting value for money.The division also supported other divisions during tender evaluations and Requests for Quotation and developed and maintained procurement registers in line with SPTO's procurement policy, ensuring robust contract management and ease of reference.

Outcome: Refurbishment of SPTO's Office Reception

The refurbishment of the SPTO reception area was initiated in Quarter 4 to address the challenges posed by worn-out materials and an outdated design. Recognizing that the reception area is crucial for creating a first impression, the renovation is aimed at enhancing the organization's image and improving visitors' experience. The newly renovated reception was successfully completed, and the official opening was done by the Board of Directors in November that attended the SPTO meetings in Suva.

The Finance and Operations Division has made significant strides in enhancing SPTO's financial transparency, accountability, and operational efficiency throughout 2024. The division's efforts in maintaining robust financial management practices have ensured the organization's financial integrity, with successful audits validating its adherence to accounting standards.

The comprehensive review of SPTO's membership structure and the adjustment of government membership fees have positioned the organization for long-term sustainability and growth. In addition to its financial accomplishments, the division has efficiently managed administrative and procurement processes, ensured compliance and provided essential support to other divisions within SPTO.

Financial Statements

PACIFIC TOURISM ORGANISATION
SPECIAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
31 DECEMBER 2024

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REPORT ON THE SPECIAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

In accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors, we herewith submit the balance sheet of the organisation as at 31 December 2024, and the related income statement and cash flow statement for the year then ended and report as follows:

1. Directors

The following were directors of the organisation from all member countries at any time during the financial year and up to the date of this report:

- Cook Islands - Ms. Karla Eggelton
- Samoa - Ms. Pativaine Tevita
- American Samoa - Ms. Minnie Tuia
- China - Mr. Wu Zhao resigned in 2024 and replaced by Mr. Jin Liang
- Fiji - Ms. Salaseini Daunabuna
- French Polynesia - Ms. Gina Bunton
- Federal State of Micronesia - Mr. Bermance Aldis
- Kiribati - Mr. Petero Manufolau (Chairperson) resigned on 31st December, 2023 and replaced by Ms. Reeti Onorio
- Nauru - Ms. Juliana Pitcher resigned in 2024 and replaced by Cramer Cain
- New Caledonia - Ms. Julie Laronde
- Niue - Ms. Micah Fuhiniu–Viviani
- Republic of the Marshall Islands - Mr. Francis Carlos Domnick
- Papua New Guinea - Mr. Eric Mossman Uvovo
- Solomon Islands - Mr. Dagnal Dereveke
- Timor Leste – Mr. Antonio Da Silva
- Tokelau - Mr. Mika Perez resigned in
- 2024 an was replaced by Ms. Asi Fangalua Halaleva-Pasilio
- Tonga - Mr. Viliame Takau (Deputy Chairperson)
- Tuvalu - Ms. Paufi Afelee
- Vanuatu - Ms. Adela Issachar Aru (Chairperson)
- Wallis & Futuna - Ms. Marion Kualoa
- Rapa Nui - Mr. Edmund Paoa

Private Sector Representative include the following:

- Fiji Hotel and Tourism Association - James McCann
- South Pacific Cruise Alliance - Bud Gilroy resigned in December 2024 replaced by Ms. Teura-Marea Raimbault
- Turama Pacific - Robert Skews resigned May 2024
- Fiji Airways - Akuila Batiweti
- Holiday Inn Resort Vanuatu - Ms. Rashmi Tulsiani

2. Principal activity

The principal activity of the organisation is to promote and develop the tourism industry in the Pacific and foster regional co-operation between the member countries, the tourism operators and the private sector.

During the year ended 31 December 2024 there has been no material change in the nature of the organisation's activities or in the classes of activities in which the organistion has an interest.

REPORT ON THE SPECIAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued

3. Operating results

The deficit of income over expenditure for the financial year was $6,600 (2023: surplus of income over expenditure of $33,386).

4. Reserves

No transfers to reserves were recommended by the directors in respect of the year ended 31 December 2024.

5. Provisions

There were no material movements in provisions during the year apart from normal amounts set aside for items such as doubtful debts, depreciation and annual leave.

6. Bad and doubtful debts

We have taken reasonable steps before the organisation's financial statements were made out to ascertain that all known bad debts were written off and adequate provision was made for doubtful debts.

At the date of this report, we are not aware of any circumstances which would render the amount written off for bad debts, or the amount of the provision for doubtful debts, inadequate to any substantial extent.

7. Current assets

We took reasonable steps before the special purpose financial statements were made out to ascertain that the current assets of the organisation were shown in the accounting records of the organisation at a value equal to or below the value that would be expected to be realised in the ordinary course of business.

At the date of this report, we are not aware of any circumstances which would render the values attributable to the current assets in the organisation's special purpose financial statements misleading.

8. Basis of accounting

We believe that the basis of preparation of the special purpose financial statements is appropriate and the organisation will be able to continue its operations for at least 12 months from the date of this statement. Accordingly, we believe the classification and carrying amounts of the assets and liabilities as stated in these special purpose financial statements to be appropriate.

REPORT ON THE SPECIAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued

9. Other circumstances

At the date of this report, we are not aware of any circumstances not otherwise dealt with in this report or special purpose financial statements which would render any amounts stated in the special purpose financial statements misleading.

10. Unusual transactions

The results of the organisation's operations during the financial year have not in the opinion of the directors been substantially affected by any item, transaction or event of a material and unusual nature other than those disclosed in the special purpose financial statements.

11. Events subsequent to balance date

No charge on the assets of the organisation has arisen since the end of the financial year to the date of this report to secure the liabilities of any other person.

No contingent liability has arisen since the end of the financial year to the date of this report.

No contingent or other liability has become enforceable or is likely to become enforceable within a period of twelve months after the end of the financial year which, in the opinion of the directors, will or may affect the ability of the organisation to meet its obligations as and when they fall due.

12. Directors benefits

No director of the organisation has, since the end of the previous financial year, received or become entitled to receive a benefit (other than a benefit included in the total amount of emoluments received or due and receivable by directors as shown in the organisation's special purpose financial statements) by reason of a contract made by the organisation or related corporation with the director or with a firm of which he is a member, or with an organisation in which he has substantial financial interest.

Dated 10th day of April 2025.

For and on the behalf of the Board

Chief Executive Officer

Chairperson

APPROVAL OF THE SPECIAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

In the opinion of the Directors, the special purpose financial statements set out on pages 8 to 16 are drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Pacific Tourism Organisation as at 31 December 2024 and of its results and cash flows for the year ended on that date.

The Directors and Management believe the basis of preparation of the special purpose financial statements and the classification and carrying amounts of assets and liabilities as stated in these special purpose financial statements are appropriate.

The special purpose financial statements are approved in accordance with a resolution of the directors this 10th day of April, 2025.

For and on behalf of the Board

Chief Executive Officer

Chairperson

Grant Thornton

SPECIAL PURPOSE AUDITOR'S REPORT

Grant Thornton
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To the members of Pacific Tourism Organisation

Report on the Special Purpose Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying special purpose financial statements of (referred hereafter as "financial statements") of the Pacific Tourism Organisation (the 'Organisation'), which comprise the balance sheet of the Organisation as at 31 December 2024 and income statement, and cash flow statement for the year then ended and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements are prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the accounting policies as described in Note 1 to the financial statements.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Independence

We are independent of the Organisation in accordance with the ethical requirements of the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountant's Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (IESBA Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Fiji, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements and the IESBA Code.

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial statements, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements. As a result, the financial statements may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect to this matter.

Other Information

Management is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Director's Report on the Special Purpose Financial Statements but does not include the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the special purpose financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the special purpose financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the special purpose financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of Directors and Management for the financial statements

The Directors and Management are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the accounting policies as described in Note 1 to the financial statements, for determining that the basis of preparation is acceptable in the circumstances, and for such internal control as the Directors and Management determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Directors and Management are responsible for assessing the Organisation's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Directors and Management either intends to liquidate the Organisation or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Directors and Management are responsible for overseeing the Organisation's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

SPECIAL PURPOSE AUDITOR'S REPORT - continued

As part of an audit in accordance with the ISAs, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Organisation's internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Directors and Management.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Directors and Management use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Organisation's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Organisation to cease to continue as a going concern.

We communicate with the Directors and Management regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Restriction on Use

This report is made solely to the Organisation's members. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Organisation's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Organisation and the Organisation's members as a body for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Grant Thornton
Chartered Accountants

Paritosh Deo
Partner

11 April 2025
Suva, Fiji

INCOME STATEMENT

	Note	2024 $	2023 $
Income			
Members' contributions		1,309,647	1,299,338
PRC donation		333,111	325,380
Activity income		478,500	949,149
Other income	8	475,742	345,860
Total Income		2,597,000	2,919,727
Expenditure			
Depreciation		31,646	41,420
Doubtful debts expense		39,300	69,925
Activity costs	9	894,986	1,301,029
Salary and other staff costs		1,004,186	879,179
Administration and other operational costs		633,482	594,788
Total expenditure		2,603,600	2,886,341
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year		$(6,600)	$33,386

The above income statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

BALANCE SHEET

	Notes	2024 $	2023 $
ASSETS			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	2	958,246	785,622
Government membership fees in arrears	3	75,375	1,227
Intercompany receivable		-	41,866
Other debtors and prepayments	4	337,689	291,144
Total current assets		1,371,310	1,119,859
Non-current asset			
Term Deposits		497,609	518,448
Plant and equipment	5	31,417	51,419
		529,026	569,867
Total assets		1,900,336	1,689,726
EQUITY			
Accumulated funds	7	1,457,923	1,464,523
Total equity		1,457,923	1,464,523
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities			
Creditors and accruals		218,136	200,138
Related party payable		4,158	-
Total current liabilities		222,294	200,138
Non-current liabilities			
Donor grant – deferred income	6	220,119	25,065
Total non-current liabilities		220,119	25,065
Total liabilities		442,413	225,203
Total reserves and liabilities		$ 1,900,336	$ 1,689,726

The balance sheet should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

These special purpose financial statements are approved in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors.

Chief Executive Officer

Chairperson

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

	Notes	2024 $	2023 $
Cash flows from operating activities			
Receipts from member countries		1,309,647	1,299,338
Receipts from donor funded workshops/conferences		317,698	361,765
Payments to suppliers and employees		(1,463,916)	(1,710,371)
Net cash from operating activities		163,429	(49,268)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest from term deposits		20,839	-
Purchase of plant and equipment		(11,644)	(19,007)
Net cash used in investing activities		9,195	(19,007)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash		172,624	(68,275)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		785,622	853,897
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	2	$958,246	$785,622

The cash flow statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE SPECIAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Set out below is a summary of the significant accounting policies adopted by the organisation in the preparation of the special purpose financial statements. These policies have been consistently applied by the organisation except where otherwise stated.

(a) Basis of accounting

These financial statements are Special Purpose Financial Statements ('financial statements') and it reflects the activities of SPTO's Main and Revenue Accounts. The special purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies described below. They have been prepared on the basis of historical costs and except where specifically stated, do not take into account current valuations of non-current assets.

(b) Plant and equipment

Property, plant and equipment are stated at historical cost less depreciation. Historical cost includes all expenditures that are directly attributable to the acquisition of the asset.

Plant and equipment acquired through the various projects undertaken by the organisation and which are funded by donors are capitalised as the organisation's assets at the Board's valuation.

Subsequent costs are included in the asset's carrying amount or recognised as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the organisation and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. The carrying amount of the replaced part is derecognised. All repairs and maintenance are charged to the income statement during the financial period in which they are incurred.

(c) Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated on a straight-line basis so as to write off the cost of each asset over its estimated useful life.

The depreciation rates in use are:

Furniture, Fittings & Equipment	20.0%
Computer Equipment	33.3%
Motor Vehicle	20.0%

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE SPECIAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued

(d)Donor grants

Grants from governments and other donors are recognised at their fair value when there is a reasonable assurance that the grant will be received, and the organisation will comply with all attached conditions.

Grants relating to costs are deferred and recognised in the income statement over the period necessary to match them with the costs that they are intended to compensate.

Grants relating to the purchase or acquisition of property, plant and equipment are included in liabilities as deferred revenue and are credited to the income statement on a straight-line basis over the expected lives of the related assets.

(e) Foreign currency

All amounts in foreign currencies at balance date are translated to Fijian dollars at the rates of exchange prevailing at year end. All transactions during the year denominated in foreign currencies are translated at rates prevailing at the transaction date.

Exchange differences are brought to account in determining the results for the year.

(f) Employee entitlements

The amounts expected to be paid to employees for their pro-rata entitlements for annual leave are accrued annually at current wage rates.

(g)Reporting currency

The special purpose financial statements are presented in Fijian dollars, which is the functional and presentation currency of the organisation.

(h)Revenue recognition

Subscription income is brought to account on an accrual basis. Any subscriptions received in advance are carried forward in the balance sheet under current liabilities. Subscriptions in arrears are taken up as receivables.

(i) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, demand deposits and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

(j) Comparative figures

Where necessary, comparative figures have been changed to conform to changes in presentation in the current year.

2. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

Cash and cash equivalents comprise of:

	2024	2023
	$	$
Cash on hand	400	400
Cash at bank	957,846	785,222
	$ 958,246	$ 785,622

3. GOVERNMENT MEMBERSHIP FEES IN ARREARS

Fees in arrears	177,675	64,227
Less: Provision for doubtful debts	(102,300)	(63,000)
	$ 75,375	$ 1,227

4. OTHER DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS

Other debtors and prepayments	338,139	298,069
Less: Provision for doubtful debts	(450)	(6,925)
	$ 337,689	$ 291,144

5. PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

(a) Plant and equipment are included on the following bases:

	2024	2023
	$	$
Furniture, fittings and equipment		
• at Board's valuation	3,031	3,031
• at cost	53,199	49,951
	56,230	52,982
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(38,711)	(33,674)
	17,519	19,308
Computer equipment		
• at Board's valuation	77,330	89,855
• at cost	137,116	131,719
	214,446	221,574
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(200,548)	(189,463)
	13,898	32,111

5. PLANT AND EQUIPMENT - continued

Motor vehicle		
• at Board's valuation	36,768	36,768
• at cost	-	-
	36,768	36,768
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(36,768)	(36,768)
	-	-
Total plant and equipment		
• at Board's valuation	117,129	129,654
• at cost	190,315	181,670
	307,444	311,324
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(276,026)	(259,905)
	$ 31,417	$ 51,419

(b) The depreciation policy adopted is set out in note 1(c).

(c) The organisation also acquires plant and equipment through the various projects undertaken and which are funded by donors. In accordance with note 1(b), these assets are capitalised in the organisation's special purpose financial statements at values recommended by the Board based on costs incurred by the donors to acquire these items.

(d) Reconciliation of plant and equipment

	Furniture, Fitting & Equipment	Computer Equipment	Motor Vehicle	Total
	$	$	$	$
Carrying amount as at 31 December 2023	19,308	32,111	-	51,419
Additions	3,248	8,396	-	11,644
Disposals	-	(15,524)	-	(15,524)
Depreciation	(5,037)	(11,085)	-	(16,122)
Carrying amount as at 31 December 2024	$ 17,519	$ 13,898	-	$ 31,417

6. DONOR GRANT – DEFERRED INCOME

	2024 $	2023 $
Opening balance	25,065	261,389
Add: Grant received during the year (at Board's valuation)		
: Community Based Project	77,782	-
: Pacific Ocean Litter Project	86,905	-
: SPTE Programme	44,750	-
Add: Donated Assets	-	-
Less: Amortization on donated assets	(14,383)	(23,576)
Less: Transfer to other income during the year	-	(212,748)
	$ 220,119	$ 25,065

7. ACCUMULATED FUNDS

The accumulated funds is reconciled as follows:

Opening balance – 1 January	1,464,523	1,431,137
(Deficit) / Surplus in income over expenditure for the year	(6,600)	33,386
Add: Other adjustments	-	-
Closing balance – 31 December	$ 1,457,923	$ 1,464,523

8. OTHER INCOME

Exchange Gains/(Losses)	24,217	6,765
Interest Income	5,159	4,631
Other Income	148,770	31,169
Program Management Fee	297,596	303,295
	$ 475,742	$ 345,860

9. ACTIVITY COSTS

Project Activity Costs	103,218	441,463
Marketing Events/Activities	634,922	714,505
Other Core/Project Activities	156,846	145,061
	$ 894,986	$ 1,301,029

10. INCOME TAXES

The organisation is exempt from income taxes in accordance with the Second Schedule of the Diplomatic Privileges and Immunities Act, 1971.

11. PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY

The principal activity of the organisation is to promote and develop the tourism industry in the South Pacific and foster regional co-operation between the member countries, private sector and the tourism operators.

The organisation's registered office is situated on level 3, FNPF Place, Victoria Parade in Suva.

12. COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

(a) There were no commitments as at 31 December 2024 (2023: $Nil).

(b) There were no contingent liabilities as at 31 December 2024 (2023: $Nil).

13. EMPLOYEE ENTITLEMENTS

	2024	2023
Provision for annual leave	$ 67,517	$ 53,445
Average number of employees during the financial year	15	16

14. EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO BALANCE DATE

No charge on the assets of the organisation has arisen since the end of the financial year to the date of this report to secure the liabilities of any other person.

No contingent liability has arisen since the end of the financial year to the date of this report.

No contingent or other liability has become enforceable or is likely to become enforceable within a period of twelve months after the end of the financial year which, in the opinion of the directors, will or may affect the ability of the organisation to meet its obligations as and when they fall due.

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