Regional Organisations and Climate Change Adaptation in Pacific Island Developing States

An Analysis of the Regional Institutional Framework for Climate Change Adaptation in the Pacific Small Island Developing States and Territories

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Image: View from the sea wall in Suva, Fiji. Photo by author.

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List of abbreviations

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific group of states
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AF	Adaptation Fund
AOSIS	Alliance of Small Island States
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CCA	Climate change adaptation
CES-CC	CROP Executives Subcommittee on Climate Change
CHICCHAP	Choiseul Integrated Climate Change Programme
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CROP	Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
DPCC	Development Partners for Climate Change
DRM	Disaster Risk Reduction
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FBC	Fiji Broadcasting Corporation
FLNKS	Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste [Kanak and Socialist National Liberation Front]
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
GCCA	Global Climate Change Alliance (EU)
GDP	Gross domestic product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEF SGP	Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LDC	Least Developed Country
MCES	Micronesian Chief Executive Summit
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (New Zealand)

MFEM	Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (Cook Islands)
MIRAB	Migration, Remittances, Aid, Bureaucracy
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSG	Melanesian Spearhead Group
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIE	National Implementing Entity
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PACC	Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change
PaCE-SD	Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development
PCCFAF	Pacific Climate Change Framework for Adaptation Financing
PCCP	Pacific Climate Change Portal
PCCR	Pacific Climate Change Roundtable
PIDF	Pacific Islands Development Forum
PIDP	Pacific Islands Development Programme
PIF	Pacific Islands Forum
PIFACC	Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PLG	Polynesian Leaders Group
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PSIDST	Pacific small island developing states and territories
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands
RMI	Republic of the Marshall Islands
SOPAC	South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SPCR	Strategic Plan for Climate Resilience
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UN GA	United Nations General Assembly
USP	University of the South Pacific
WACC	Working Arm on Climate Change (CES-CC)
WHO	World Health Organisation
WPNCL	West Papua National Council for Liberation

Abstract

Climate change is projected to impact all aspects of life in the Pacific small island developing states and territories (PSIDST) within the coming decades, and effective adaptation is urgently needed. Out of frustration with the impasse in global climate change action, the PSIDST have begun organising their climate change adaptation on the regional scale, through a number of regional organisations, particularly the Pacific Islands Forum, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, the Pacific Islands Development Forum and the University of the South Pacific. The literature offers a number of criteria for successful regional organisations dealing with climate change, but the Pacific regional organisations fail to meet most of them and therefore do not provide the benefits of organising climate change action on the regional scale as opposed to the global scale. In a series of interviews with officials it was found that thus far very few practical adaptation projects have been carried out, and that most adaptation funding is spent on external consultants writing policies and strategies which are not implemented. The most important obstacles for effective climate change adaptation in the PSIDST are: a lack of coordination among regional organisations and donors, a lack of core funding in regional organisations, too much control by donors over the functioning of the regional organisations and a lack of capacity in the PSIDST. In order to improve the system and the effectiveness of climate change adaptation projects, the regional organisations should commit to more coordination and cooperation and take a long-term, programmatic approach to climate change adaptation, donors should provide the regional organisations with more core funding and make more use of human capacity in the region, and the PSIDST should make an effort to reduce corruption and increase their national institutional capacity.

Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in this dissertation has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

Intellectual property statement

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background and Research Questions

Climate change is expected to drastically change the lives of people around the world, and in few places is this already more visible than in the Pacific Small Island Developing States and Territories (PSIDST; Barnett, 2001; Barnett and Campbell, 2010). The PSIDST are expected to be affected sooner and more severely than any other countries, and they are frequently represented as the 'canaries in the coalmine' of climate change (See section 2.4; Barnett and Campbell, 2010). Though the issue is a large and increasingly pressing one which requires global action, international climate change negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have thus far not produced any consensus or other significant results. In different areas around the world, countries frustrated with the global impasse have begun to organise climate change action in new or existing regional organisations, ahead of an international consensus (Ostrom 2012). Most of these organisations can be found in the developed world, and consist of industrialised countries or regions self-imposing stricter mitigation targets than those currently required under the UNFCCC (e.g. the European Union and the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative in the north-west of the United States; Benson, 2010). In the Global South, where advocacy and adaptation (responding to the effects of climate change) are generally higher on the agenda than mitigation (reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and funding for projects generally comes from external sources, there is scope for regional organisations as hubs in networks of multi- and bilateral donors, member countries, non-governmental organisations and relevant private and civil sector partners (Cash *et al.*, 2006; Brondizio, Ostrom and Young, 2009; Barnett and Campbell, 2010). These hubs facilitate the cooperation between large multilateral and bilateral donors and small member countries in implementing climate change adaptation (CCA) projects. The country members organise themselves in the hubs to pool their wishes for CCA, as well as data and experiences, and the hubs negotiate appropriate funding with the donors and assist with implementation of projects (Barnett, 2001. Cash *et al*., 2006).

The literature offers many criteria for the ideal regional organisation working on solutions to global issues, mostly based on the functioning of regional organisations in the developed world. It should be a non-hierarchical network of states, organising

the vertical (cross-scale) and horizontal (inter-state) interactions with international organisations, non-governmental organisations and other states outside the network (Cash *et al*.; 2006, Benson, 2010). The organisation thus forms a bridge between governments and institutions at different scales (Young, 2002; Cash *et al*., 2006). It is important that there is a balance of power in these interactions among the different scales, to avoid top-down decision making which reduces trust and legitimacy on the ground (Young, 2002,; Benson, 2010). While maintaining this horizontality, the organisation should show leadership and lead the process of organising climate change action in a unified direction, because non-hierarchical institutions without a clear vision tend to be inefficient at making decisions (Cash *et al*., 2006). Furthermore, the organisation needs to focus on building not just physical capital (material resources), but also human capital (skills and knowledge) in the communities where it implements projects, as well as social capital (relations of trust and reciprocity) within the communities and between the communities and the organisation (Brondizio, Ostrom and Young, 2009). Finally, an organisation dealing with a global issue on a regional scale should be mindful of any consequences of its actions outside the region. These can occur, for example, where strict environmental policies simply encourage polluters to move elsewhere, which solves the problem locally but does not make any difference globally (Cash *et al*., 2006; Ostrom, 2012).

If a regional organisation functions well, it can offer great benefits for its member states relative to working through global institutions. Regional organisations are more knowledgeable about local circumstances, obstacles and opportunities, and do not need to find a one-size-fits-all solution for the sake of simplicity (Cash *et al*., 2006). Decreasing the scale of action also reduces the participation-versus-depth effect, where the ambitiousness of an agreement needs to be sacrificed to secure broad participation. A small group of states dealing with similar circumstances is more likely to achieve consensus on taking ambitious action than a large and diverse group of states would be (Young, 2011). Finally, institutional legitimacy and trust in institutions increase with decreasing scale, which means that communities are more likely to accept solutions coming from closer by and which are tailored to their local circumstances (Adger, Arnell and Tompkins, 2005; Scannell and Gifford, 2013).

According to the literature, this role of bringing together donors, international organisations, countries and communities to implement climate change adaptation projects in the PSIDST is or should be fulfilled by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP; Barnett, 2001; Barnett and Campbell, 2010; Hay, 2013). This is also the position of SPREP itself: in a report for the UNFCCC Loss and Damage Mechanism the organisation describes itself as "the lead Pacific organisation in climate change work" and emphasises the fact that it has implemented more than 100 regional projects, with a special focus on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction (DRR; SPREP, 2013a, p.1.). However, a closer look at the work of the regional organisations in the PSIDST reveals that several other organisations, most significantly the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) also implement CCA-related projects (Pacific Climate Change Portal [PCCP], 2012). According to Barnett and Campbell (2010) a majority of CCA projects are now, in fact, implemented by other organisations than SPREP, though the authors maintain that ideally, SPREP would be the only organisation with the mandate for CCA.

The fact that multiple regional organisations are involved in CCA in the PSIDST means that the extensive pluri-scalar network of actors has multiple hubs. The possible pathways through which the funding eventually reaches the project destination are many and varied (see Figure 1). Some adaptation projects bypass the regional level, and are the result of a direct cooperation between a donor (bilateral, multilateral, NGO or private sector) and a national, regional, or local government (Barnett and Campbell, 2010; PCCP, 2012c). The 2012 progress report on the Pacific Plan (the main strategy for reinforcing regional cooperation and integration) states that one of the main challenges facing CCA in the PSIDST is ensuring coordination between all the different agencies carrying out their own projects (Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat [PIFS], 2012). Maclellan (2009) questions the purpose of having regional organisations engaged in CCA at all when donor coordination is improving and the PSIDST are increasingly engaging in bilateral relations with countries outside the region, without needing interference or facilitation from the regional level.

However, a pluri-central institutional framework can also provide benefits. For example, multiple organisations, each with their own niche with regards to specific expertise and relations with specific donors, are likely to bring more funds into the

region than a single organisation would be able to (Jon Barnett, e-mail correspondence, Feb 23, 2014). Furthermore, granting the full mandate for CCA to an environmental organisation would be logical if CCA were an exclusively environmental issue, which in the PSIDST it is not. Climate change forms a threat not only to the environment, but also to (among others) infrastructure and public health, and in some places it threatens cultural identity and state survival (Barnett and Campbell, 2010). Another example of a benefit of a pluri-central system is that according to the Alliance for Small Island States (AOSIS), competition among organisations for CCA project funding increases efficiency (AOSIS, 2008).

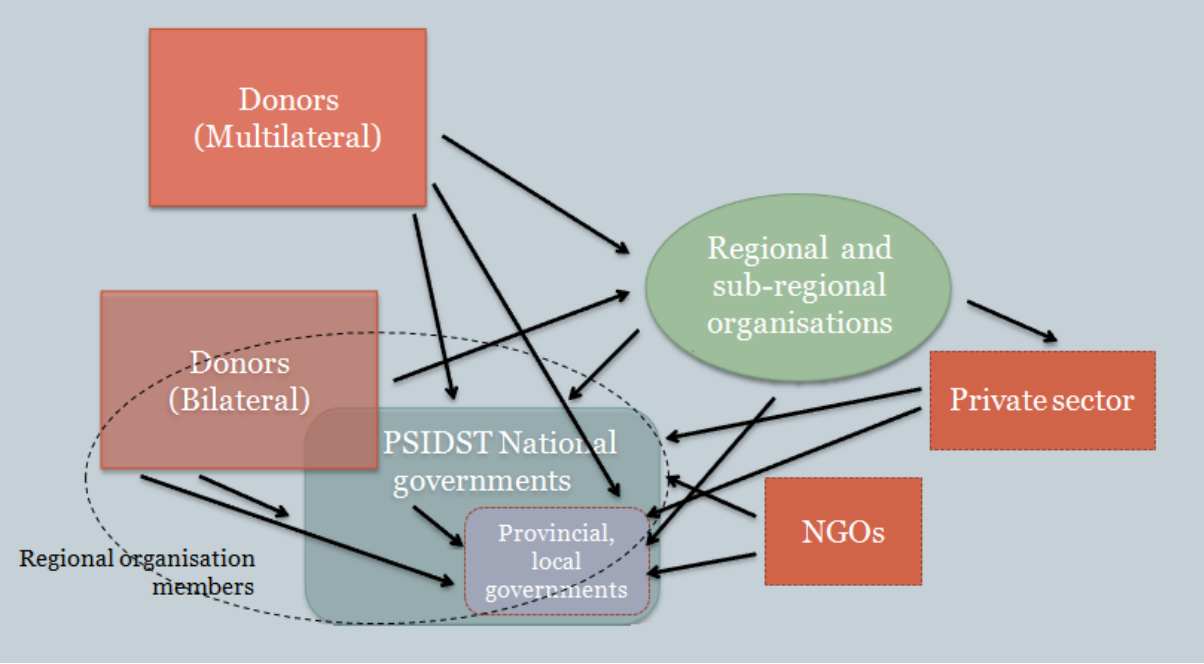

Figure 1. A schematic representation of the climate change adaptation funding flows in the Pacific, showing the different actors implementing adaptation projects and the pathways and collaborations through which funding can reach the national or local level.

This thesis will analyse the regional institutional framework for climate change adaptation in the Pacific Small Island States and Territories, with the aim to answer the central research question:

does the situation in the PSIDST prove that the description of the ideal regional organisation in the literature is fundamentally inapplicable to CCA in the PSIDST, or would CCA projects be more effective if the regional system were closer to that ideal, with one regional organisation as the hub of the network which administers or facilitates all adaptation projects? And would such a dramatic overhaul of the system be achievable? The thesis will also seek answers to the following sub-questions:

- Does this system of a network with multiple hubs deliver the same advantages of working in regional organisations as those put forward in the literature (local knowledge, tailored solutions, increased trust and legitimacy, etc.), and where this is not the case, can this be explained by the organisations failing to meet the criteria for effective regional organisations put forward in the same literature (horizontality, leadership, social capital)?
- To what extent are the regional organisations themselves responsible for the flaws in the system, and which other factors and actors play a role?

Chapter 2 will provide an introduction to the PSIDST, highlighting the regional diversity as well as common characteristics with regards to the geology, demographics, economy and climate change impacts and vulnerability of the countries. It will also describe some of the specific challenges to implementing CCA projects in the PSIDST.

Chapter 3 gives an overview of the most important regional organisations which are engaged in climate change adaptation in the PSIDST. It introduces each organisation and highlights some of the institutional flaws and inter- and intra-organisational tensions in the regional institutional framework. It also describes the nature of the relationships between the regional organisations and bi- and multilateral donors.

Chapter 4 describes the different initiatives for coordination and cooperation among the regional organisations and the donors, along with their strengths and weaknesses.

Chapter 5 addresses the effectiveness of CCA projects in the PSIDST thus far, or rather the lack thereof, and relates the different issues impacting effectiveness to the nature of the regional institutional framework as described in the previous chapters.

Finally, chapter 6 describes current and predicted developments in the regional institutional framework, such as how climate change is changing the system and the growing role of bilateral funding. It also outlines the different suggestions for changes in the system derived from the document analysis and the interviews.

1.2. Methodology

The research questions were answered using two main methods of gathering information: a literature and document analysis, and interviews with relevant officials, following the methodology proposed by Mikecz (2012).

1.2.1. Document Analysis

The aim of the document analysis was to uncover the structure of interactions between the different regional organisations in the PSIDST regional institutional framework, as well as the relationships of those organisations with state governments, donor organisations and other relevant actors. The documents analysed include regional and national strategies, official budgets, independent evaluations, meeting reports, donor publications, government press releases, newspaper articles, treaty texts and many others.

1.2.2. Interviews

Nine respondents were interviewed in total. Eight interviews were conducted in Suva, Fiji, with relevant officials of regional organisations, donor organisations, and governments, both leaders and members of staff. In contacting potential respondents care was taken to achieve a representative sample of officials from different organisations and agencies, though the composition of the final sample depended on who was available at the time. This means that though the interviews present a wide spectrum of opinions on the issues discussed in this thesis, it is not necessarily the full spectrum. Seven interviews took place in the offices of the interviewees, between March 14 and 24, 2014. The eighth took place in a more informal setting outside. A telephone interview was conducted with the ninth respondent three weeks later. It was decided that in order to protect the respondents, the thesis would not refer to any of them by name, position or affiliation with one of the organisations. This was deemed best because of both the content of some of the interviews, and the nature of the international work environment in Suva, where organisations are small. A description like 'A division director for organisation x' would never be applicable to more than a handful of people. The interviews were complemented by e-mail correspondence with academics and officials based outside Fiji.

2. Socio-Ecological Context

The PSIDST (defined in this thesis as the countries and territories of Oceania minus Australia and New Zealand) form a very diverse group of countries (Barnett and Campbell, 2010). The region is the most linguistically diverse on the planet: according to one estimate its roughly 10.5 million inhabitants speak about 1,200 different languages (Ingram, 2006). Though the island states are geologically, culturally and historically diverse, they also share many common characteristics which impact their vulnerability and capacity to adapt to climate change, such as a colonial past, geographical isolation, and high dependence on foreign aid and remittances (Tisdell, 2006; Barnett and Campbell, 2010).

There are several ways to categorise the PSIDST. The most well-known categorisation is the division of the region into Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia (from Greek, respectively: black islands, many islands, small islands; See Figure 2), which is based on geographical, socio-cultural and linguistic differences. Though the boundaries of the groups are not always well-defined (Fiji, for example, is said to lie in both Melanesia and Polynesia; Lynch, Ross and Crowley, 2002), and the factors they are based on are often questioned, they are a political reality even if not necessarily a cultural or ethnic one, as can be seen from the existence of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG), the Polynesian Leaders Group (PLG) and the Micronesian Chief Executive Summit (MCES; Lynch, Ross and Crowley, 2002; Komai, 2013).

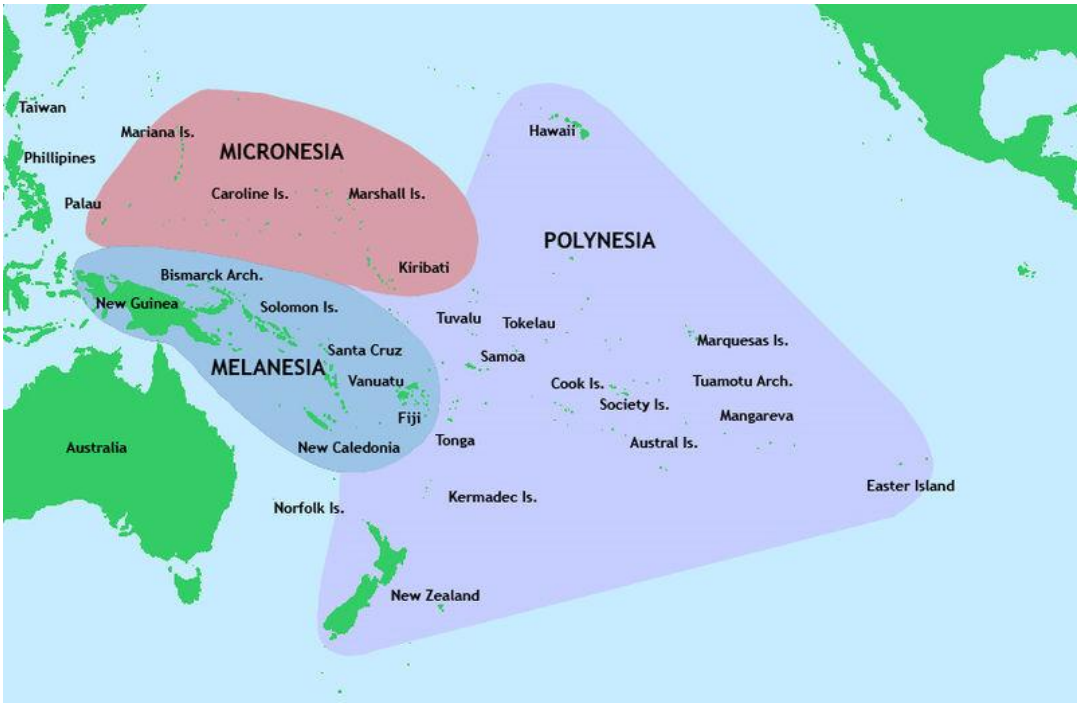

Figure 2: The countries of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

Another useful way of categorising the PSIDST is by political status. Of the 23 PSIDST recognised by the newly established Pacific Islands Development Forum, which explicitly emphasises its being the most inclusive of the Pacific regional organisations[1], five are self-governing in free association with the USA or New Zealand[2], ten are independent states, and eight are dependent territories (3 of the USA, 3 of France, 1 of the UK and 1 of New Zealand; Barnett and Campbell, 2010; PIDF, 2014c). France has the largest colonial presence in the region, and frequently emphasises the fact that it considers itself "a country of the Pacific" (Embassy of France in Fiji, 2013). Not counting East Timor (see footnote 1) or Papua New Guinea, which is often left out of consideration because its inclusion skews statistics to the point of rendering them meaningless[3] (pers.comm. 6), close to 17% of the PSIDST population is French, and more than 25% of the total land area is in French territories (the territories of the USA have 9% of the population and 1.4% of the land area; Barnett and Campbell, 2010; SPC, 2013b).

Table 1 in Appendix I presents some basic statistics on the PSIDST and shows the extent of the differences between the countries. Excluding Papua New Guinea, population sizes range from just 1,200 in Tokelau to 859,000 in Fiji, per capita GDP ranges from USD 1,651 in Kiribati to USD 36,405 in New Caledonia and life expectancy is anywhere between 60 (Nauru) and 76 years (New Caledonia; SPC, 2013b).

2.1. Geology

The PSIDST are also geologically diverse. The types of islands which make up a country to a large extent determine its vulnerability to climate change. A distinction can be

[1] The main difference with the membership of other organisations is the inclusion of East Timor, which is not generally considered a Pacific island state and will not be considered in the rest of this paper unless stated otherwise, and Pitcairn Islands, a territory of the UK which with a population of 50 is usually forgotten about (Government of the Pitcairn Islands, 2014).

[2] 'Free association' has a different meaning depending on the country the PSIDST are in free association with. Free association with the USA means the USA is responsible for the defence of the countries and providing grants and access to social services. Citizens of these states are not citizens of the USA (US Department of Homeland Security, 2011). Free association with New Zealand means that New Zealand is responsible for the defence and some of the foreign affairs of the countries, which means they cannot apply for UN membership. Citizens of these countries are New Zealand citizens (Andrews, 2001; Immigration New Zealand, 2012).

[3] Papua New Guinea has 7,4 million inhabitants and a land area of 463,000 km². Including Papua New Guinea, the average population of the PSIDST is 503,000 and the average land area 26250 km². Exclude Papua New Guinea and these numbers drop to a more representative 158,400 and 4,421 km² (SPC, 2013B).

made between continental and oceanic islands (See Figure 3). Continental islands such as the main islands of New Caledonia and Papua New Guinea were formed at the boundaries of tectonic plates and are characterised by large land areas, high elevations, well-developed soil and flood plains. Oceanic islands exist in a range of forms from volcanic high islands (such as Rarotonga in the Cook Islands) to atolls (such as Tarawa in Kiribati) and raised limestone atolls such as Nauru, atolls which have risen completely above sea level and thus have an inland instead of a lagoon (Barnett and Campbell, 2010). Atolls are the most vulnerable, and they are the only islands at risk of being completely inundated by sea level rise, though all PSIDST will most likely suffer extensively from other climate change impacts (see section 2.4; Barnett, 2001; Barnett and Campbell, 2010). Most PSIDST consist either of continental islands or of a mix of volcanic high islands and atolls, which means that though they are certainly vulnerable to climate change, the chances of those countries disappearing entirely are minimal.

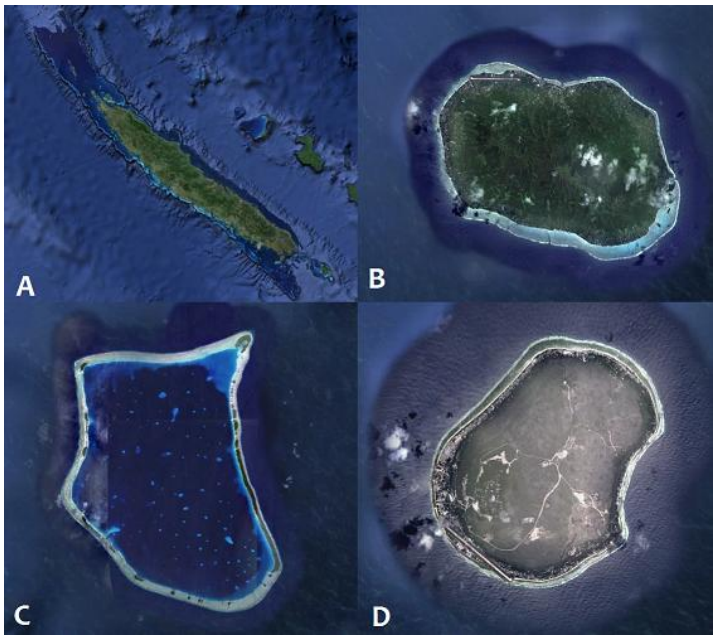

Figure 3: Examples of the different types of Pacific Islands (not to scale). A: Continental island (New Caledonia), B: Volcanic high island (Ratotonga, Cook Islands), C: Atoll (Nukunonu, Tokelau) and D: Raised limestone atoll (Nauru). Source: Google Earth, 2014.

Four states and territories consist entirely of atolls and might therefore eventually lose all their land: Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Tokelau and Tuvalu (Barnett and Campbell, 2010). Of these, Tokelau is a territory of New Zealand, which means that complete inundation and evacuation would cause loss of culture and identity but not of statehood. Kiribati has Banaba, a raised limestone atoll with an area of 6.3 km² (Dahl, 1991). The Kiribati President Anote Tong has stated that the government is considering evacuating to Banaba eventually, so as to preserve Kiribati's statehood even if 94% of the country becomes permanently inundated (Lagan, 2013). The Kiribati government has also purchased land in Fiji, which is currently used for farming to compensate for the loss of arable land to salt water intrusion in Kiribati. It is generally assumed, though, that the

I-Kiribati (the official name for the citizens of Kiribati) may start moving there in the future, for which Fiji has pledged its support. (pers. comm. 4; Delaibatiki, 2014). Tuvalu and the Marshall Islands have no such refuges. This means that sea level rise could cause not only a loss of life and cultural identity but also raise difficult, unprecedented legal questions about when a state is still a state (Barnett and Campbell, 2010). It could also lead to the creation of a new form of 'deterritorialised statehood', if PSIDST populations are evacuated as a whole and allowed to maintain their nationhood within the borders of another country, as proposed by Marshall (2011).

Though the total land area of the PSIDST is only about 550,000 km², the countries have combined Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of almost 29 million km², or almost three times the size of the total land area of the United States (Barnett and Campbell, 2010; SPC, 2013b; Central Intelligence Agency [CIA], 2014a). A significant share of the countries' GDP is derived from selling fishing licenses for the EEZs (in Kiribati's case, this share is 20%, see section 2.3; Barnett and Campbell 2010; International Monetary Fund [IMF], 2014).

2.2. Demographics

The populations of the PSIDST are characterised by a high percentage people younger than 15, as can be seen in the last column of Table 1 in Appendix I (World Bank, 2014a). Due to this, the populations of the independent Pacific island countries are growing, though at differing rates, ranging from 0.1% in the Marshall Islands to 2.2% in Vanuatu (World Bank, 2014b). Though most population growth rates are not alarming in themselves, in combination with rapid urbanisation they can cause severe problems. South Tarawa in Kiribati and Funafuti in Tuvalu are examples of atolls with exceedingly high population densities (3,184 people per km² in South Tarawa in 2010, which is nearly half that of Hong Kong, and note that Kiribati has no high-rise buildings; Kiribati Office of the President 2012; Hong Kong Information Services Department, 2013) and a lack of space for agriculture and basic services such as landfills, waste water management and even graveyards (Simpson, Ratukalou and Alefaio, 2012; Lagan, 2013).

A number of dependent territories and countries in free association with New Zealand and the USA, though, have seen population declines in the past decades. Particularly in Niue and the Cook Islands, which are relatively small and where

emigration to New Zealand is relatively easy, rapid depopulation has been a major cause for concern (Immigration New Zealand, 2012; SPC, 2013b). The Cook Islands saw its population drop from 22,000 in the 1970s to just over 15,000 in 2006. In its National Sustainable Development Plan for 2007-2010, the first strategic outcome was to achieve 'population sustainability' by increasing the population to 25,000 by 2020 (Cook Islands Ministry of Finance and Economic Management [MFEM], 2006; Cook Islands Central Planning and Policy Office, 2007). The latest statistics show that in the past five years or so the population seems to have stabilised at around 13,000 people (MFEM, 2013). In Niue, the population has entered a downwards spiral where the population decline causes the breakdown of basic services, which in turn encourages more people to leave. For years, questions have been raised on whether or not Niue is still viable as an independent country (Nosa, 2009).

2.3. Economy

The nature of the economies of the PSIDST, too, depends for a large part on their political status. The average GDP per capita of the six territories is more than three times higher than that of the other PSIDST, and the average income of the PSIDST in free association with New Zealand or the USA is almost three times higher than that of the fully independent states[4] (excluding Papua New Guinea; see Table 1 in Appendix I; Barnett and Campbell, 2010; SPC, 2013b). Four out of the nine independent states are classified as Least Developed Countries (LDCs) by the United Nations[5] (UN, 2014).

The territories and countries in free association with New Zealand and the US tend to be heavily dependent on aid from their respective 'patron countries', as well as on income from trust funds and remittances from people working in those countries (Bertram, 2004; Barnett and Campbell, 2010). The independent states also depend on aid and trust funds, along with remittances from citizens working abroad or on ships, and some income typically from selling fishing licenses, stamps, and some agricultural products (in the larger, less isolated states; Barnett and Campbell, 2010). Tuvalu and Tokelau also gain income from leasing their web domains (.tv and .tk; Black, 2000; Andres, 2012)

[4] The average GDP per capita of the territories, according to data provided by the SPC, is USD 20,295. That of all other all other states is USD 6,151. PSIDST in free association have a per capita GDP of USD 9,975 on average, and fully independent states of USD 3,761 (SPC, 2013B).

[5] Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Vanuatu is due to graduate from its LDC status at the end of 2017 (UN, 2014).

Generally, the PSIDST are seen as having missed out on the benefits of globalisation while having suffered some of the costs, for a number of reasons (Tutangata and Power, 2002; Tisdell, 2006; Hay, Forbes and Mimura, 2013). Firstly, shipping to and from the islands is expensive, particularly since populations are small and most islands cannot receive large ships, which means that the costs per unit for importing and exporting goods are very high (Tisdell, 2006; Kurika, Moxin and Lolo, 2007). The countries also face extra costs for storage on both ends of the line since shipping connections are infrequent (this, along with energy poverty on the islands which makes cooling large amounts of food impossible, also prevents the import of fresh foods, which greatly affects the health of the populations; Tisdell, 2006; Food and Agriculture Organisation [FAO], 2008), and they pay a premium because, as so few businesses run shipping services, the ones who do often have a monopoly (Tisdell, 2006). All of this means that for most PSIDST, producing goods for export is unprofitable, and the potential for tourism is limited. The PSIDST have suffered costs of globalisation mainly where it has led to increased specialisation and reduced diversification of export markets. In Fiji sugar accounted for roughly 22% of all exports in 2005, but the industry is on the verge of collapse due to the abolition of the preferential pricing and quota system by the EU which is expected to lead to an almost 2% fall in Fijian GDP (Narayan and Prasad, 2005; Radio Australia, 2013a). In many small outer islands, copra (dried coconut flesh which can be turned into coconut oil) is the only export product, and those islands have suffered much from coconut diseases, storms and the volatility of copra prices (Etherington, 2006; FAO, 2008; Australian Civil Society Network on Pacific Trade, 2010).

The smaller PSIDST depend on imports for a large percentage of their food supply, both because of the limited potential for agriculture and because of consumer preference for imported foods (e.g. 80% of food is imported in Tuvalu; FAO, 2008; Baarsch & Berg 2011). This imported food, as mentioned above, is mostly processed and has led to the PSIDST having some of the highest obesity rates in the world (World Health Organization [WHO], 2003; FAO, 2008).

In many PSIDST sovereign wealth funds, or trust funds, provide income stabilisation and are meant to increase long-term self-reliance[6] . They were set up with income

[6] Kiribati, East-Timor, Papua New Guinea, Nauru, Tonga, Tuvalu, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, and Palau

from non-renewable resources, revenue windfalls or donor contributions (Graham, 2005; Le Borgne and Medas, 2007). The trust funds of the countries in a compact of free association with the USA are supposed to replace the annual budgetary support from the USA starting in 2023 when the compacts expire, but there are doubts as to whether or not they will have accumulated enough funds to do so (Le Borgne and Medas, 2007). In most cases, the sovereign wealth funds have been successful in accumulating assets, but have not had the same success in stabilising the economies of the PSIDST or increasing their self-reliance (Le Borgne and Medas, 2007). The dangers of corruption and mismanagement are ever-present, as is exemplified by the case of the Nauru Phosphate Royalties Trust. This fund was established in 1968 to prepare for the exhaustion of phosphate resources on the island. However, when demand for phosphate began to fall while extraction costs rose in the 1980s and 1990s, the government began withdrawing too much from the fund to maintain its spending levels. It also borrowed from commercial banks with the fund assets as collateral (Graham, 2005; PIFS, 2013b). As a result of this, combined with losses from bad investments, the trust fund resources plunged from AUD 1.5 billion in 1990 to less than AUD 100 million in 2003, even though the phosphate did not run out until 2006 (CIA, 2014b). The government is now reluctant to establish new trust funds (Graham, 2005; PIFS, 2013b).[7]

Apart from in the urban areas, most islanders do not use money for everyday transactions (Tisdell, 2006). In rural areas, people tend to live in a state of what is known as 'affluent subsistence' (Government of Kiribati, 2012). Even in cities such as Suva, Fiji, most households particularly in the outskirts (which consist largely of semi-formal settlements), have a few taro plants and some animals for food production (pers.comm. 6). Some of that food is then sold by the roadside. Though 80% of the people in these semi-formal settlements live below the poverty line (Storey, 2006), there is no starvation. This type of poverty was described by one of the respondents as not the acute, life-threatening poverty one sees in documentaries on famines, but rather a dull, dragging poverty where people have enough to eat but get very little

[7] Nauru is currently in a very dire situation, with an unemployment rate of 90%, obesity of over 75% and over 90% of its land area ravaged by phosphate mining. One respondent called this a hangover after "a 30-year party" (pers.comm. 6; WHO, 2003; Republic of Nauru, 2009; CIA, 2014).

variation both in diet and daily activities (pers. comm. 6). The Kiribati Development Plan 2012-2015 describes something very similar: in rural areas there is plenty of food but little cash income, which limits educational opportunities. In the capital city where land is scarce this poverty is much more acutely felt (Government of Kiribati, 2012).

The economies of the PSIDST are frequently characterised as MIRAB economies: MIgration brings Remittances, Aid pays for extensive Bureaucracy (Evans 1999, Lal & Fortune 2000, Tisdell 2006). Only a small part of the labour force in most island countries is in formal employment, and most of those formal jobs are provided by the public sector, which runs mostly on aid money (Duncan and Voigt-Graf, 2008). This large size of the public sector is both a remnant from the colonial era and serves as a social safeguard against the macroeconomic shocks to which small economies are very vulnerable (Le Borgne and Medas, 2007). Remittances come from the often substantial islander populations abroad, or from people working on ships. There are now, for example, roughly twice as many people who identify as Cook Islanders in New Zealand than there are in the Cook Islands themselves (Bertram, 2010), and many individuals send money back to their relatives for decades after migrating (Lal and Fortune, 2000). These remittances and the income from public sector jobs often are the main way in which families earn money, which is shared with the entire family and used to purchase goods that can only be obtained through the cash economy (Tisdell, 2006).

The main donors to the PSIDST are Australia, which is responsible for 50% of all aid money going to the island states, the United States, China and the European Union (pers.comm. 7; O'Keeffe, 2012; Poling and Hansen, 2012). Sometimes the numbers on the percentages of GDP coming from aid money (see Table 1 in Appendix I) can be deceiving due to the definitions of aid used by the donors. The funding for the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI), a peacekeeping and governance building mission paid for by Australia and New Zealand, is considered aid and so is the Australian funding for the asylum seeker processing centres on Nauru (Wrighton, 2010; RAMSI, 2014).

The main question that is raised about MIRAB economies is whether they can be sustainable, or whether they are inherently temporary and unstable (Lal and Fortune, 2000; Tisdell,2006). According to Evans (1999) and Lal and Fortune (2000), a MIRAB economy where people provide for their own basic needs with subsistence

agriculture and fishing, and supplement this with income from aid and remittances, can be sustainable in the long term as long as family ties remain strong to ensure a reliable inflow of remittances. This makes the MIRAB model very different from traditional models of development, and ideas about dependency and the need for decolonisation. According to the MIRAB model, political dependence brings great benefits to small island states, because it guarantees both aid inflow and access to foreign labour markets for islanders (Lal and Fortune, 2000). This is supported by Bertram (2004), who found that the variables which best predict the GDP of a small island state are whether or not it has a close connection to a developed country, and the GDP of that developed country. The statistics in Table 1 (Appendix I) also support the view that dependence has a positive effect on wealth and welfare. The average GDP per capita of Pacific territories is more than five times higher than that of the independent states (not counting Papua New Guinea; SPC, 2013b). Also, inhabitants of the territories have an average life expectancy of 74 years, whereas in the independent states the life expectancy is on average 68 years (SPC, 2013b). These are very significant differences, and they may help explain why two referenda on self-government in Tokelau, in 2006 and 2007, failed to reach the required two-thirds majority vote for independence, even if only just[8] (UN General Assembly [UN GA], 2006; Manning, 2007).

2.4. Climate change in the PSIDST

As mentioned in section 2.1, the vulnerability of PSIDST to climate change depends ultimately on the geology of the islands they consist of. Atolls are the most vulnerable, because they are low-lying (mostly below 2 meters; Barnett, 2001), but also because, among other factors, they lack a soil layer which makes agriculture difficult, they lack groundwater (they rely instead on a fragile freshwater lens which floats on the salt water and is highly dependent on regular rainfall), they have tiny land areas (which means moving inland is not an option) and are often extremely isolated (Kurika, Moxon and Lolo, 2007; Barnett and Campbell, 2010). Even atolls, though, are likely to become uninhabitable long before they become inundated (Barnett 2001). All islands will suffer from the increasing incidence of extreme weather events, which will reduce recovery time between storms (Barnett and Campbell, 2010). Atolls are the most

[8] In 2007, out of 692 votes cast, 446 were in favour of independence, and 246 against (Manning, 2007)

vulnerable to storms because there is no shelter provided by forests, and large storm surges sometimes wash over entire islands, contaminating all agricultural land (SPREP, 2012g). Severe storms also destroy food crops, which can lead to starvation (Radio New Zealand International, 2003), and particularly replacing trees such as coconut palms and breadfruit trees can take years (SPREP, 2012g). Less predictable rainfall patterns and saltwater intrusion into agricultural land will also threaten PSIDST's freshwater supplies and food security (Kurika, Moxon and Lolo, 2007; Barnett and Campbell, 2010). Erratic rainfall does not only cause droughts: many non-atoll islands are already experiencing an increased incidence of floods. During El Nino events, the Southern Group of the Cook Islands suffers from flash floods while simultaneously the Northern group is threatened by crop failures due to droughts (Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change [PACC], 2006). Besides these issues, ocean warming and acidification are projected to destroy coral reefs, which are habitats for fish which are important for subsistence fishing, and form natural breakwaters which protect islands from storm surges (UNFCCC, 2007; Barnett and Campbell, 2010; Ferrario *et al*., 2013). Climate change can also cause the migration of traditional fish stocks, which further threatens food security (UNFCCC, 2007).

Though the inhabitants of the PSIDST have shown to be very adaptable to climatic and environmental variation in the past, they are currently facing obstacles to adaptation beyond physical vulnerability which make adaptation more difficult (Barnett and Campbell, 2010). Some of these were described above, such as high reliance on aid, reliance on imports for food security, export markets based on one or a few products, population growth and urbanisation and a growing incidence of diet-related non-communicable diseases. These are all factors which negatively affect the resilience to climate change of PSIDST populations, and which have to be taken into account when designing CCA projects (Kurika, Moxon and Lolo, 2007). Rapid population growth, for example, can quickly undo any benefits gained from an adaptation project to increase food security (pers.comm. 6). In some PSIDST reinforcing food security does not just require diversifying food crops or introducing salt-resilient crops, but also strengthening transport links to ensure a regular supply of imports.

2.5. Challenges to climate change adaptation projects in the PSIDST

Climate change adaptation is not a straightforward process. In the PSIDST there are some very specific obstacles that must be overcome for a project to be successful. This part will outline some of these challenges and provide examples from the interviews.

Firstly, statistical data in general and climate change data in particular on the region is very poor (pers.comm. 6). Most of the demographic and economic statistics in Table 1 (Appendix I) are taken from an official publication by the SPC (2013b), the main collector and publisher of data on the PSIDST, and can therefore be assumed to be reasonably accurate. However, data about the PSIDST is generally scarce, the same statistics from different sources rarely correspond and projects to standardise the methods of data gathering are still ongoing (pers.comm. 3, 6). For example, though according to the SPC the Papua New Guinean GDP per capita was USD 18,437 in 2011, according to UN Data it was USD 1,794 in the same year (SPC, 2013b; UN Statistics Division, 2014). Some indicators have never been measured; data about literacy rates does not exist for most Pacific island states (UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific [UNESCAP], 2009). Even census data on population sizes can be unreliable: in the Cook Islands, the population numbers used in official graphs depicting population development show the total population in the country on the census night in 2011, excluding Cook Islanders temporarily abroad and including tourists and other visitors which happened on that night to constitute more than 10% of the total population (MFEM, 2011).

How much this poor data can influence policy can be seen from the example of the PSIDST's progress towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). According to most sources, the PSIDST have made very little progress towards these goals, and in some cases they have even regressed (PIFS, 2011a). This greatly worries donors as well as the regional organisations, although it is sometimes attributed to rural Papua New Guinea skewing the statistics (pers.comm. 6; PIFS, 2011a). However, as can be seen in Table 3 in Appendix I (Haberkorn, 2011), the baseline data for infant mortality rates in the PSIDST vary greatly depending on which organisation measured them. As the table shows, the infant mortality rate in Samoa in 1990 was reported to be between 21 and 40 per 1,000 live births. In Nauru it was between 8 and 32 (Haberkorn, 2011). These discrepancies in the baseline data make any subsequent

statements about the (lack of) progress towards a numerical goal meaningless. According to the WHO progress report, in 2008 Samoa had an infant mortality rate of 22, which, depending on the baseline used, could mean it has dropped by nearly 50% or risen by almost 5% (WHO, 2010).

The state of climate change data is very similar. Sea level rise has only been measured for the past two decades, which is far too short to draw any conclusions about a trend. Still, the fact that not everywhere a rise has been detected is fuelling the arguments of climate change sceptics[9], to the great unease of the Pacific islanders (Barnett and Campbell 2010, pers.comm.6). A lack of data makes little difference to communities with first-hand experience of the effects of climate change, but sound data is important for donors and to assess the implementation of national policies. A report by International Union for the Conservation of Nature (Lal and Thurairajah, 2012) on climate proofing roads in Solomon Islands includes an extensive cost-benefit analysis to determine to which level the roads should be reinforced to withstand flooding. According to the report, at least 100 years' worth of rainfall data is needed for a reliable analysis, but the method was still used despite the fact that the data available covered a much shorter period. A lack of data can thus form an obstacle for PSIDST wishing to access funding, because donor organisations often require scientific proof that an intervention is necessary and cost-effective. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) funding application template, for example, states that the project needs to be based on sound data, and that the applicant has to provide evidence that the proposed project is the most cost-effective option (GEF, 2013).

Spreading awareness of and information on climate change is also a challenge in the PSIDST. As mentioned before, hundreds of different languages are spoken in the region, many only by a small number of people (Ingram, 2006). The 610,000 inhabitants of Solomon Islands, for example, speak 71 different languages, or more than 1 language per 10,000 people (Lewis *et al.*, 2014). Translation of information booklets into those languages is expensive and difficult: since the majority of people on outer islands have never had any exposure to science, their languages have no words for most terms used when describing the causes and effects of climate change.

[9] E.g. Nova (2010)

All of those terms need to be explained in ways that make sense to subsistence farmers, which is how the Tok Pisin (Papua New Guinea pidgin) term for 'greenhouse gas emissions' came to be *simok nogut igo antap long kilaut*, 'the bad smoke that rises above the clouds' (Maclellan, Meads and Coates, 2012). Even in Fiji, where the University of the South Pacific has a School of Geography, Earth Science and Environment (USP, 2014a), the indigenous language, iTaukei, has no word for aquifer. It is translated as *iVakaso ni wai e na boto ni qele*, a 'body of water below the ground' (SPC and The Ministry of iTaukei Affairs, 2012). iTaukei also uses the same word for both climate and weather (Barnett and Campbell 2010). This makes any information booklets long and quickly confusing.

Another obstacle specific to projects in the PSIDST is the fact that transportation particularly to outer islands is expensive, time-consuming and unreliable. Even islands with airports sometimes only receive one or two flights a week (e.g. Kiribati National Tourism Office, 2014), which means that project crews frequently get stuck for several days when flights are cancelled, at great cost to the organisations (pers.comm. 7). Some of the outer islands in Tuvalu are serviced only by a ship which, though it is government owned, is so old and unreliable as to be uninsurable, which means that organisations do not allow their employees to use it (pers.comm. 9; UNESCAP, 2013).

Still, transporting people is not the greatest challenge. The outer islands generally have subsistence economies, so that that all non-natural building materials need to be imported (FAO, 2008). Atolls have hardly any resources at all, apart from coconut palms and other trees which provide food (Kurika, Moxin and Lolo, 2007). One project which meant to build water tanks on a number of outer islands in Tuvalu ran over budget when, due to transport links breaking down, it took an entire year to get the cement to the project locations (pers.comm. 7).

This issue also affects communities' ability to profit from the GEF Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP), as the money from the programme cannot be used for logistics. A project to build a biogas reactor in Tuvalu had to be abandoned because the materials were in Fiji (pers.comm. 9). In contrast, some of the larger PSIDST, like Samoa, have been able to profit from the GEF SGP (Barnett and Campbell, 2010).

Finally, technical solutions for outer islands are made less viable by those islands being typically very scarcely populated. Building a desalination plant on an isolated atoll with

a few hundred inhabitants is not only cost-ineffective, it is also unlikely that any of those inhabitants have the skills to maintain the plant and solve technical problems (pers.comm 6; Tutangata and Power, 2002). Even if a resident mechanic is found, spare parts can take weeks to arrive (Hemstock, forthcoming), so if the plant breaks down during a drought, the population is still left without water. Even when installing simple technical solutions, the lack of a 'maintenance culture' in many PSIDST can cause problems (pers.comm 6). For example, the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC, now a division of SPC) carried out a rainwater harvesting project, installing gutters and tanks, and discovered during a follow-up that the gutters were not cleaned. People had simply accepted the decrease in water quality as something inevitable, and moved on (pers.comm. 6)[10]. A manual for organising workshops about rainwater harvesting repeatedly stresses that people have to be convinced that maintenance is important, and that a "change in behaviour … is required to ensure rainwater harvesting systems are well-maintained" (SOPAC, 2004, p.5).

This lack of human capital on outer islands is remedied in part by the regional organisations, in which PSIDST share the costs of expertise which are too great for any one island to bear (Tutangata & Power 2002). For example, many islands lack veterinarians, so the animal husbandry section of the SPC employs two veterinarians who travel the islands (pers.comm. 3).

[10] This lack of a maintenance culture is also described on a national scale in the World Bank Pacific Infrastructure Challenge report (World Bank, 2006), which argues that it is at least partly a consequence of aid dependence. If a new road is free, the incentive to later invest in maintaining it is reduced. After all, one can always apply for more funding to replace it (and that funding is more likely to be granted if the road is in a bad state). This explains why Fiji is always building new roads, while its busiest highway has been neglected for years (World Bank, 2006).

3. The Pacific regional institutional framework

There are currently three major regional organisations dealing with climate change in the PSIDST: the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)[11]. The new Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF) is to focus mainly on sustainable development and is seen by many as a promising alternative to the existing organisations, though it remains to be seen whether or not it can overcome its political difficulties and make as large an impact as the founders believe (Tarte, 2013a; PIDF, 2014c). There are also six other organisations[12] which, according to the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP), have a part to play in dealing with climate change, but of those only the University of the South Pacific (USP) is engaged in implementing adaptation projects (CROP, 2012).

There are also three sub-regional organisations: the Melanesian Spearhead Group, the Micronesian Chief Executive Summit and the Polynesian Leaders Group (Komai, 2013). These also engage in climate change adaptation financing and the implementing of projects.

This chapter will first introduce each of the relevant organisations separately, and then discuss the extent to which their functioning is dominated by donors. It aims to show how the different parts of the regional institutional framework in the Pacific function, and highlight some of the political tensions within and between organisations which, at times, prevent them from cooperating effectively. This chapter will also expose some of the flaws in the system and the extent to which those affect the delivery of the potential benefits of working in regional organisations described in Chapter 1.

[11] The SPC and SPREP are named 'Secretariat of' because they were previously known as the South Pacific Community and the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme, but decided to keep the same acronym. There is also a Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS; Barnett and Campbell 2010).

[12] The Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), the Fiji School of Medicine (FSMed), the Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO), the Pacific Islands Development Program (PIDP), the Pacific Power Association (PPA), the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) and the University of the South Pacific (USP). The Pacific Islands Development Programme (PIDP) is a US-led education program based at the University of Hawaii which focuses on capacity and competence building for the future, and as such does not participate in climate change adaptation directly (CROP, 2012).

3.1. The organisations

3.1.1. The Pacific Islands Forum

The Pacific Islands Forum is the most powerful regional organisation in the PSIDST, and deals mostly with political issues and financing (pers.comm. 3, 4, 7; CROP, 2012). It is also in charge of granting mandates for certain issues to the other organisations, and thus largely determines the extent of the inter-organisational competition for adaptation projects (pers.comm. 9). The PIF has no territories as full members, though New Caledonia and French Polynesia are associate members. Its 16 full members include all non-dependent territory PSIDST, New Zealand and Australia (PIFS, 2014a). The PIF's recent work on CCA includes the publishing of the Pacific Climate Change Framework for Adaptation Financing (PCCFAF; see section 3.1.3; PIFS; 2013a).

The PIF was founded by the PSIDST in 1971, out of frustration with the (ex-) colonial powers dominating the SPC, particularly France which resisted the inclusion of newly independent PSIDST as members (Fisher, 2013). The annual Forum meetings are attended by the heads of government of the member countries (the Forum Leaders). Each meeting is chaired by the head of government of the host country, who then is Forum Chair until the next meeting (PIFS, 2014a). The membership of New Zealand and Australia is a mixed blessing for the other Pacific Island Countries. On the one hand, it gives Pacific leaders an annual opportunity to speak directly with the heads of government of the two most powerful states in Oceania, and involve them in PSIDST issues[13].

On the other hand, New Zealand and Australia have a powerful position within the PIF, described by Lanteigne (2012) as "first among equals". All decisions in the Forum are made in the 'Pacific way', that is, by consensus (Barnett and Campbell, 2010). Though there is a voting mechanism in place for Forum meetings, it is rarely used (PIFS, 2008). Climate change has put pressure on this consensus model, as it has risen to the top of the agenda in the Pacific islands, but is met with growing scepticism in New Zealand and Australian politics. The fact that New Zealand and Australia are have more power in the PIF than the PSIDST, and the fact that both have to agree to any decisions made, reduce the scope for ambitious climate change action by the

[13] The actual attendance rates of the New Zealand and Australian heads of government varies depending on who is in power – an Australian Senate Committee warned in 2003 that the poor attendance of then-prime minister John Howard could be taken as a serious insult by the PIC leaders (Hawksley, 2009).

Pacific Islands Forum (Barnett and Campbell, 2010). In a demonstration of its unwillingness to side with the PSIDST with regards to climate change and to the outrage of the Tuvaluan Prime Minister Apisai Ielemia, at the UNFCCC Conference of Parties in Copenhagen in 2009 Australia pressured several PSIDST delegations to weaken their stance on the maximum acceptable temperature increase, and implied that extra funds for adaptation would be provided in return (Maclellan, 2009). This example shows that organising at the regional level does not necessarily mean that the participation-versus-depth effect is reduced (Young, 2011), because one or two powerful players with de-facto veto powers can still turn ambitious proposals into weak compromises.

Another obstacle to ambitious climate change action by the PIF is its broad mandate. Though climate change is always on the agenda, and the organisation has the power to make real changes, it is never the top priority (pers.comm. 4).

Figure 4: The PIFS in Suva. Photo by the author

The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat is based in the Fijian capital, Suva, which is interesting since Fiji's membership of the Forum has been suspended since 2009, after its Prime Minister Commodore Frank Bainimarama, who has been in power since the military coup of 2006, ignored an ultimatum to set elections in the same year (Maclellan, 2009). PM Bainimarama then questioned the authority of the PIF to set such ultimatums, saying that it "was never meant to determine what type of government members should have"[14] (Maclellan, 2009). This challenge was to no avail. At the time of the suspension, New Zealand Minister of Foreign Affairs Murray McCully said that the Forum would have to consider relocating its secretariat depending on whether or not Bainimarama would allow it to continue functioning without interference and whether or not it would be

[14] Previous to the ultimatum PM Bainimarama had refused to attend both the Forum Meeting of 2008 and a special meeting in 2009 to discuss the political situation and future of Fiji. Bainimarama's full quote about the ultimatum is as follows: "[t]he Forum has gone beyond its mandate. The Forum was never meant to determine what type of government members should have. Indeed, the Forum was never to decide when an election in a member state should be held." (Maclellan, 2009)

appropriate to run a democratic institution from the capital of a military dictatorship[15] (TV NZ, 2009). The fact that the PIFS is still based in Suva shows that the organisation had no such objections, or perhaps just that the logistics of a move were found too daunting.

As the most powerful regional organisation in the PSIDST, the Pacific Islands Forum is an attractive partner for foreign donors and multilateral organisations. It has a close relationship with the European Union, as is shown by the Pacific Region – European Community Regional Strategy Paper and cooperation on programmes such as the Adapting to Climate Change and Sustainable Energy programme (PIFS, 2008; PIFS, 2014b). China and Japan, both significant donors of bilateral aid to the PSIDST, generally prefer to work with national governments directly, and out of the regional organisations they only work with the PIF (Tarte 1997). One of the respondents characterised this practice as 'going straight for the jugular' (pers. comm. 6), as the PIF meetings provide access to all heads of government of the PSIDST at once. Tarte (1997) describes the Japanese tactic of sending delegations from the ministry of foreign affairs to PIF summits in the lead-up to the UN General Assembly meetings, particularly at times when Japan was pushing for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council (Hynek, 2012, describes Japan's use of the same tactic in African countries).

Discontent with the way the Pacific Islands Forum operates is growing in different areas. As a remnant of the colonial past, one respondent said the organisation still had a large 'do-as-we-say-element' to it, where Australia and New Zealand expect to and do to a large extent control proceedings (pers.comm. 9; Winder, Lambourne and Vaai, 2012; Hayward-Jones, 2013). Also, PSIDST leaders at times do not feel like their interests are being represented since the process of getting issues onto the official agenda is very rigid and cumbersome, and the entire organisation is found overly formal and bureaucratic (pers.comm. 3; Seneviratne, 2013; Bola-Bari, 2014). In a review of the PIFS in 2012, it was found that the PSIDST lacked a sense of ownership of the organisations, and that PSIDST leaders did not think the PIF responded to their requests or interests. The PIF also has a core funding issue: only 18% of its budget

[15] Elections have now been set for later in 2014, but Bainimarama has announced that Fiji has no interest in returning to the Forum unless it fundamentally realigns its principles to better serve the interests of Pacific Islanders. In the same announcement, he promoted the new, Fijian-founded PIDF as a more credible alternative (Bola-Bari, 2014).

consists of core funding which the organisation can rely on receiving each year (Winder, Lambourne and Vaai, 2012). In response to this discontent and to its own suspension, the Fijian government founded the Pacific Islands Development Forum, from which developed countries are explicitly banned (Poling, 2013). Though it is officially not meant to be a competitor for the PIF, Bainimarama has in interviews promoted the PIDF as a more credible alternative, which has made the Australian and New Zealand governments decidedly uneasy (see section 3.1.4; Poling, 2013). The similarities between the circumstances of the founding of the PIF and those surrounding the establishment of the PIDF (both were created out of frustration with other regional organisations being dominated by developed countries) will be further analysed in section 3.1.4 about the Pacific Islands Development Forum.

3.1.2. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community

The South Pacific Commission, which is now the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, was founded in 1947 by the six colonial powers in the region[16], with the purpose of assisting each other in restoring stability in the region after World War II. As the Pacific island countries became independent they joined the SPC, starting with Samoa in 1965. By 1983 all 22 Pacific island countries and territories were full members of the organisation. The Netherlands and the United Kingdom withdrew from the SPC when their dependent territories gained independence (SPC, 2011a). The SPC does not call itself a regional organisation, but emphasises that it is an international organisation (SPC, 2011c).

The headquarters of the SPC are in Noumea, New Caledonia. As a result of this the organisation is the only fully bilingual regional organisation in the Pacific, with all its documents available in French as well as English. The SPC website notes the organisation is "proud of its bilingual status" (SPC, 2011a), but according to one of the respondents translating all documents to French takes up a lot of staff time and resources which could be better used elsewhere, for example to translate documents to native languages (pers.comm. 6). Other respondents stated that, especially since the Suva offices outgrew the Noumea headquarters when SOPAC and SPC merged, it would be much more logical to transfer the entire SPC to Suva, which is the international hub of the PSIDST. They also all said, though, that France would never

[16] Australia, France, New Zealand, the Netherlands, the UK, and the USA.

agree to such a move (pers.comm. 1, 3, 6). Though one respondent thought the French involvement in the SPC has an overall negative effect due to this insistence on using the French language and the colonial nature of French rule in New Caledonia, another said that it did not impact the organisation in any significant way (pers.comm 3, 6).

The SPC is governed by the Conference of the Pacific Community, which meets every two years and consists of representatives from member countries and territories, and the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations which meets annually (SPC, 2011a). Climate change is seen by the SPC as a purely scientific and technological issue, and it is frequently stressed that the SPC is a non-political organisation and should remain so (Tavola *et al.*, 2006; SPC, 2011a).

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community is the scientific and technical regional organisation of the PSIDST, and, depending on whom one asks, the only organisation in charge of implementing climate change adaptation projects (pers.comm. 3, 7). One respondent expressed discontent with SPC receiving most of the funding for climate change adaptation, because other organisations could do an equally good or better job (pers.comm. 9). Others said that it was obvious that SPC should be in charge of implementation because it has the technical expertise, and that other organisations challenged its mandate simply because of the money involved (pers.comm. 3, 7).

SPC has the largest budget out of the regional organisations (Barnett and Campbell, 2010), but it consists mostly of funding for specific projects, and the organisation can spend only a very small share on core tasks (as little as 14% in some divisions; pers.comm. 6; AusAID, 2001[17]). Due to this lack of core funding, a large majority of staff in the topical divisions (all divisions except the administrative ones) are foreign consultants brought in by project (pers.comm. 8). This was one of the main criticisms of the SPC in the interviews, that it is "basically an employment agency for foreign technical assistants" (pers.comm. 9). Most of the funds donated to SPC by foreign donor countries go straight to hiring consultants from those countries both because the SPC lacks the core funding to hire its own permanent project staff, and because certain donors (like Australia) attach conditions to funding about hiring consultants

[17] AusAID was merged with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in October 2013 (DFAT; Australian DFAT, 2013a). In this thesis, publications by AusAID before the merger occurred will still be referred to as AusAID publications, and those published after will be attributed to DFAT.

from the donor country (Hawksley, 2009; Wrighton, 2010). In this way the SPC brings minimal benefits to professionals from the PSIDST. These external staff members also carry out a lot of core functions in the divisions during the running time of their projects. Those tasks are outside their official job descriptions but need to be taken care of by someone. That means that every few years when a large project ends, a division loses a significant percentage of its core staff, and has to start from scratch with a new group of people for the next project (pers.comm. 8). Due to this practice the organisation also seems less efficient in implementing projects, because part of each project's budget has to be spent on performing core tasks. One of the recommendations in AusAID's evaluation of the SPC (AusAID, 2001) was that it should aim to procure more core funding to increase its efficiency.

This high rate of turnover of staff greatly impedes institutional learning, because the vast majority of people come from outside the region and do not stay long enough to gain any sort of local expertise (pers.comm. 9). It also forms an obstacle to the building of social capital within the organisation, and between the organisation and PSIDST communities and governments. A community or government working with the SPC on different projects, even when they apply to the same issue, hardly ever deals with the same staff member twice (pers.comm 8). Thus no personal bonds of trust are created, and SPC staff cannot build on previous experiences, so that the start-up costs of every new project are high (Brondizio, Ostrom and Young, 2009). Furthermore, the foreign consultants the SPC hires for project implementation do not have any more knowledge of local constraints and opportunities than consultants from multilateral organisations would. The SPC thus does not deliver the benefit of local knowledge as described by Cash *et al.* (2006).

In 2011, the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) became a division of SPC, in a merger which was part of a reorganisation of the Pacific regional institutions (SOPAC, 2014b). The aim of this reorganisation was to reduce the number of organisations with overlapping mandates, with a more rational and less confusing system as a result (Tavola *et al*., 2006). The donors, which did not find SOPAC useful as a separate organisation, forced it to agree to the merger by threatening to withdraw all funding. SOPAC gave in to the demands, but went "kicking and screaming" (pers.comm. 6, 9). This example raises questions about for whose benefit the system

was rationalised. The initial plans for the reorganisation stated that SPREP too was to become a division of the SPC (Tavola *et al.* 2006). However, SPREP mobilised its political allies to maintain its independence, and it was decided in discussion with the donors that it did not have to join SPC at this time. Within SPC there is little doubt that SPREP will be absorbed sooner or later: "We will get them one day." (pers.comm. 1, 6, 9).

Even though the SPC has few core staff members and depends heavily on donors for project design and funding, the review by AusAID found that the Pacific island countries had a strong sense of ownership of and a generally positive attitude towards the organisation (AusAID, 2001).

The interviews resulted in some confusion as to whether or not the SPC implements any projects at the community level. A number of respondents said it definitely did not, and instead only works with governments on policy issues, but that the donors would like to see that changed (pers.comm. 8, 9). Another said that the SPC definitely did do work on the ground (pers.comm. 7). This contradiction reflects the way many actors in the system think about working with communities: though everyone seems to agree that the only level at which effective climate change adaptation can be done is at the local level because that is where the impacts are felt (Barnett and Campbell, 2010), the organisations end up spending most of their time producing national strategies, policies and feasibility studies (pers.comm. 8,9). Donors, too, often prefer funding the writing of reports because there is a much smaller scope for failure than when working in a community (See Chapter 5; pers.comm. 8, 9).

3.1.3. The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

The SPREP is the smallest of the regional organisations described in this thesis. It was founded in 1982 and was initially a division of the South Pacific Forum. It was turned into a separate intergovernmental organisation in 1992 (Barnett and Campbell, 2010; Carew-Reid, 1984). It was called the South-Pacific Regional Environment Programme until 2004, when the name was changed because the organisation's membership had expanded to countries in the northern hemisphere (Barnett and Campbell, 2010). SPREP focuses mostly on administrative and policy-oriented projects in four main areas: biodiversity and ecosystems management, climate change, environmental monitoring and governance, and waste management and pollution control (SPREP,

2012a). Its goal is to promote coordination and cooperation among its members in order to "[sustain] our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures" (Barnett and Campbell, 2010; SPREP, 2012a).

The organisation has 26 members: 21 Pacific island states and territories, and 5 donor countries (Australia, France, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States). This makes it the regional organisation with the largest developed country membership. The organisation is based in Apia, the capital of Samoa, and has over 90 staff (SPREP, 2012a). It holds annual meetings which are attended by representatives of its member states (mostly from the ministries of the environment) and of other organisations (SPREP, 2013b). It facilitates connections between foreign institutions and international organisations and the PSIDST, and assists with the implementation of projects. It also assists PSIDST with representation at international meetings, provides information about the environment and implements its own projects (Barnett and Campbell, 2010). Of all regional organisations in the PSIDST, SPREP has the smallest budget: about USD 8 million annually, most of which is tied to specific projects. One of the main responsibilities of SPREP with regards to climate change is to oversee the implementation of the Pacific Island Framework for Action on Climate Change (PIFACC) which expires in 2015 (Barnett and Campbell, 2010).

SPREP was originally the only organisation with the mandate for climate change, which was (and sometimes still is) considered a purely environmental issue by the PIFS and the SPC (pers.comm. 4). According to Barnett (2001) it was the obvious candidate to become the regional hub in a larger "polycentric organisational structure", facilitating cross-scale interactions and the implementation of climate change projects. In their book published in 2010, Barnett and Campbell reiterate that SPREP is "the main agency for climate change policy, projects and programmes in the region" and that it "should arguably be the only agency implementing climate change projects" (pp. 121, 122). Hay (2013) and SPREP itself (SPREP, 2013a) also agree. However, some of the interviewees in this study disagree, arguing that SPREP is too small and does not have the expertise to successfully implement projects (pers.comm. 3), that it has achieved nothing and instead only holds a lot of meetings (pers.comm. 9), and that donors do not understand what SPREP does or why it is an independent organisation (pers.comm. 6).

In 2000, AusAID published an independent review of SPREP's functioning, which was very critical and concluded that SPREP should cease its implementation of projects and instead focus on providing information and advice for countries to implement projects themselves. Donors consulted in the report argued that some PSIDST did not have sufficient capacity for project implementation, but a number of island governments contested this (AusAID, 2000).

Since most money coming into the organisation was project-specific, there was very little scope for performing core functions. According to the AusAID review, this problem should be solved by SPREP not taking on any more projects, but it is unclear how the organisation would then be funded (AusAID, 2000). Not much seems to have changed in the years after, as Turnbull (2004) and Barnett and Campbell (2010) describe a very similar situation, with over 90% of SPREP's funding tied to specific projects. Turnbull (2004) also writes that the decision making within the organisation is dominated to a very large extent by its five developed country members, which are also its most important donors. This uncomfortable overlap between funding and membership decreases the accountability of the organisation to its PSIDST members (Barnett and Campbell, 2010).

In 2012, SPREP applied to be accredited as one of the Global Environment Facility's project agencies. Under the GEF-5 pilot, the GEF can accredit 10 organisations which then get direct access to the Facility's funds (GEF, 2011a). The applicant organisations go through several stages of evaluations. The first round is a panel review where the value added to the GEF by each organisation is determined. It was in this first round that SPREP's application stranded. According to the accreditation process report (GEF, 2012), the organisation has produced "only a few projects that have achieved strong results in … providing climate change adaptation benefits." (p.41) Also, it failed to provide "any quantifiable information under any of the six principal projects that it has undertaken" (p.41), and its projects do not necessarily lead to global environmental benefits" (p.41).

Apart from these issues, SPREP received the lowest score out of all applicants for institutional efficiency, due to a lack of data on budgets and outcomes, and relatively high administrative costs, ranging from 28 to 42% of total programme costs. It was also deemed to be lacking a sufficiently large regional network and having too

little experience in collaborating with other partners (GEF, 2012).

Despite this less-than-stellar performance, which led to SPREP being given a failing score, the secretariat of the GEF recommended the review council make an exception and allow SPREP to progress to the next stage, on account of its mission aligning well with that of the GEF (GEF, 2012). The council did not follow up on this recommendation. The CEO of GEF then proposed not letting SPREP through but providing them with capacity building for a year to help them reapply successfully in 2013. Other members worried about creating precedents by doing this, but the CEO stressed that it would be part of a normal GEF project rather than a special favour (International Institute for Sustainable Development [IISD], 2012). Whether or not this happened is unclear.

It is likely, though, that SPREP changed its strategy, since it was accredited in 2013 by the UNFCCC Adaptation Fund (AF) as a Regional Implementing Entity (SPREP, 2013c). This gives SPREP direct access to AF funds, though the AF is struggling to keep up with demands for project funding and there have been concerns that its funds will run out in the near future (Brann, 2012). Still, this accreditation is expected to give SPREP a comparative advantage to the other regional organisations in procuring adaptation projects, at least for a while (pers.comm. 6).

The accreditation by the AF also fits into the strategy proposed in the Pacific Climate Change Finance Assessment Framework (PCCFAF), published in May 2013 by the PIF and written in cooperation with a number of donors (PIFS, 2013a). In this Framework, it is put forward that it would be best if each PSIDST had a National Implementing Entity (NIE) accredited by the AF and thus could access its funds directly. However, due to capacity constraints establishing such an entity and applying for accreditation will probably take a long time, and for the smallest island states it may not be an option at all. SPREP as an accredited Regional Implementing Agency can serve as an interim or a permanent alternative solution, depending on each country's capacity for setting up an NIE (PIFS, 2013a). This report was written before SPREP was accredited (though the application was most likely already underway), and it shows that though there may be some scepticism in the region about SPREP's capabilities, the PIF still has faith in its ability to run adaptation projects. The proposal for a system with NIEs taking over many of the regional organisations' functions was supported by most interviewees (see Chapter 6).

The GEF CEO's support of SPREP's application could be read as a sign that SPREP is somewhat of a 'darling' of the large multilateral organisations. At times it certainly seems 'more eager to please' than the other Pacific organisations: when the UNFCCC adaptation committee requested information on adaptation activities from 122 organisations, and SPREP was one of only 22 to reply. The SPC did not respond[18] (UNFCCC Adaptation Committee, 2013a, 2013b). If SPREP does indeed have exceptionally good relations with large donors and outside organisations, then that could explain at least partly why it managed to stay independent in the reorganisation of Pacific institutions.

Though SPREP has largely a policy-making, advocacy and coordinating function, it also implements projects, such as those funded by the EU Global Climate Change Alliance (EU GCCA; GCCA, 2012). SPREP also plays a leading role in the coordination of CCA activities by different regional organisations (CROP, 2012). It led the writing and is responsible for the implementation of the Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change (PIFACC), now the overarching strategy for all climate change-related projects in the PSIDST (though not all donors comply with it; Barnett and Campbell, 2010). SPREP also convenes the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable which aims to coordinate efforts under PIFACC (see Chapter 4 on coordination; Barnett and Campbell, 2010). Its role in coordination is further exemplified by the setting up of the Pacific Climate Change Portal (PCCP), a website where all organisations share information on projects and strategies. Its project database, though not yet complete, is a promising tool for coordination (PCCP, 2012c).

Though SPREP is not the only regional organisation carrying out CCA projects in the PSIDST, it does (through its coordination efforts) to a certain extent fulfil the function of a bridge organisation. Whether or not it can really be called the 'hub' of the network of actors working on CCA depends on the success of these efforts. The coordination mechanisms in the PSIDST will be further discussed in chapter 4.

3.1.4. The Pacific Islands Development Forum

The Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF) held its inaugural meeting in August 2013, after its founding by the Fijian government had been endorsed during an

[18] Though the SPC was definitely invited to submit a response, PIFS may not have been and can thus not be blamed for not responding.

'Engaging with the Pacific' meeting in 2012[19] (Tarte, 2013a; PIDF, 2014b). Its website states it is a "space for catalysing, mobilizing and mainstreaming action in support of sustainable development through a green economy" in the PSIDST (PIDF, 2014c). Its secretariat, which was opened by the Fijian prime minister on the 26th of April 2014, is based in Suva (Fiji Ministry of Information and National Archives, 2014). The PIDF is governed by the summit of Heads of State or Government of its member states and the leaders of any participating regional or civil society organisations. In between meetings, the Governing Council, consisting of government officials from member states and representatives from private sector and civil society groups, provides strategic guidance. There is also a Senior Officials Committee, which supports the council and provides oversight. Finally, the Secretariat is in charge of administration, communication, information exchange and project support (PIDF, 2014a). The Chair of the PIDF is the Prime Minister of Fiji, though it is not clear whether that is a rule or just the current situation (Fiji Broadcasting Corporation [FBC], 2014b).

The official reasons for establishing the PIDF are manifold. It serves to fill the power gap between the PIF and the other regional organisations (pers.comm. 4). It provides the PSIDST with an organisation solely focused on sustainable development and climate change (pers.comm. 4; PIDF, 2014d). The PIDF website also states that it will be a regional subgroup of the UN Asian and Pacific Small Island Developing States Group (PIDF, 2014c). This means it may become the main point of contact with the UN for the region, which will increase overlap, and tensions, with the PIF (Tarte, 2013a). Mainly, though, it gives PSIDST leaders an opportunity to discuss issues of their interest with each other and representatives from civil society and the private sector, without interference from developed countries (which are explicitly not eligible for membership; Poling, 2013). This South-South development cooperation is meant to give the PSIDST an enhanced sense of ownership of any decisions made (PIDF, 2014d). Though the website does not give information on whether or not the PIDF will implement any adaptation projects, it is a topic which has been discussed during its summits (PIDF, 2013). The PIDF has notified other organisations in the Pacific about

[19] Fiji had started organising EWTP meetings in 2010, in place of a summit of the MSG which was cancelled. At that summit, the Fijian PM was supposed to become the new chair, and he intended to turn it into a larger organisation. Australia reportedly pressured the outgoing chair from Vanuatu to cancel the meeting, and he did (Tarte, 2013).

the fact that it will consider them its implementing agencies, which implies that it is planning to organise projects in the future. It also raises the question of whether or not the PIDF is just adding a superfluous extra layer in between donors and regional organisations (pers.comm. 3). One respondent estimated that 80% of what the PIDF will contribute to the regional institutional framework will overlap with what other organisations are already doing (pers.comm. 3).

The PIDF was founded under similar circumstances as the South Pacific Forum (now the PIF) in 1971. Before the founding of the PIF, the SPC was the only regional organisation in the Pacific, and it was dominated by the (ex-)colonial powers to such an extent that Pacific island leaders were not involved in decision making making. Out of frustration with this meddling, the Pacific island countries set up the South Pacific Forum, under the leadership of the then-Fijian Prime Minister Ratu Mara. Ratu Mara convinced the other PSIDST leaders that Australia and New Zealand should be included in the new Forum, as he thought that "political independence was meaningless without an economic component" (Pacific Islands Development Program [PIDP], 2001). At a speech at the occasion of the PIF's 30st anniversary in Nauru in 2001 he admitted that in retrospect he thought that had been a mistake (PIDP, 2001). In Forum meetings, the delegations from New Zealand and Australia behaved as if they were at the UN General Assembly, imposing strict order and distributing long, formal documents for all other leaders to read (PIDP, 2001). The original vision for the Forum had been of a much more informal organisation, where leaders would be able to speak freely about whatever they thought was most important at the time (PIDP, 2001).

Eleven years after this official statement of regret by the 'father of the Pacific Way' (Falaomavaega, 2011), this discontent, which was apparently shared by his successors in the Fijian government, led to the founding of the PIDF. This time, no developed countries were to be admitted, but besides that rule the PIDF prides itself on being the most inclusive regional organisation in the Pacific (PIDF, 2014c). It does not have a list of members on its website, but rather a list of 'eligible countries' (with descriptions from Wikipedia) which can attend the meetings, should they wish to do so (PIDF, 2014c). A number of PSIDST have thus far boycotted the PIDF and its meetings (see below; Tarte, 2013a), a fact which is ignored by the website. As mentioned before, the PIDF also welcomes representatives from civil society and the private sector -

because, according to Fiji PM Frank Bainimarama, "[g]overnments do not have a monopoly on wisdom" (Fiji Ministry of Information and National Archives, 2014).

According to Tarte (2013b), the founding of the PIDF is a reflection of a 'new Pacific politics' which emerged out of the frustration of PSIDST with the apparent inability of the existing institutions to find solutions to the PSIDST's development challenges. Whether or not the PIDF will be able to find answers, remains to be seen. It does, however, have a number of advantages over the other organisations. The absence of developed country members means that aid is not used as leverage to push through decisions. It also means that the PSIDST leaders can, if they want to, keep the meetings more informal and that it is easier to get issues on the agenda than it is in the PIF (pers.comm. 3, 9). Finally, rather than just rubberstamping proposals brought forward by the CROP agencies as the leaders to in the PIF, in the PIDF the decision makers participate in the same discussions where new ideas are formed and proposals designed, and thus are part of the entire process of decision making (pers.comm. 1; Taga, 2012).

It is not clear how the PIDF is funded, although the Fijian government did issue a declaration that the funds for the inaugural meeting had been provided by the governments of Kuwait, China and the United Arab Emirates, along with local businesses (Tarte, 2013a). There was no mention of whether or not any of the other PSIDST leaders thought this was a strange choice of donors for the launch of a sustainable development forum.

The PIDF thus appears to be an ambitious and promising new player in the Pacific institutional playing field. It does, however, have a number of weaknesses which make it politically contentious, and which may form an obstacle to its forming successful partnerships with other organisations. The main issue is the fact that from the Fijian government's perspective, the founding of the PIDF is quite openly a response to Fiji's continued suspension from the PIF (Tarte, 2013b), and it is chaired by a man who is still a dictator, even if no longer a military one (FBC, 2014a). This causes unease in the governments of Australia and New Zealand particularly because the two countries imposed extensive sanctions on Fiji after the coup, and had just begun slowly lifting those in the build-up to the promised democratic elections at the end of 2014. The big

prize for returning to democracy was to be readmission to the PIF. At the PIF meeting in 2012, many PSIDST advocated allowing Fiji to return to the Forum, but New Zealand and Australia prevented this from happening (New Zealand Herald, 2012). Since the founding of the PIDF, Bainimarama has frequently, and in increasingly stronger terms, condemned the PIF in general and stated that Fiji has no intention whatsoever of returning to it (ABC News, 2014a; Fiji Ministry of Information and National Archives, 2014). At the opening of the PIDF Secretariat, he openly promoted the PIDF as an alternative to the PIF:

> *"For its part, Fiji wants a fundamental realignment of the Pacific Islands Forum before it considers rejoining that organisation. But in the meantime, we see our future firmly planted in the PIDF. And we are encouraging all Pacific countries and territories – along with their civil society groups and business leaders – to join us." (Fiji Ministry of Information and National Archives, 2014)*

A few days later, Fiji's foreign minister went even further, declaring that Fiji would refuse to rejoin the PIF unless both Australia and New Zealand were expelled as members (Cooney, 2014). Obviously, these statements border on the ridiculous, but they do bring the message home that Fiji has started its own club and Australia and New Zealand are not allowed in.

The PIDF, then, is seen by the governments of Australia and New Zealand as almost a personal insult, and its inaugural meeting was accompanied by rumours of sabotage: Australia's minister of defence was said to have pressured the Prime Minister of East Timor to decline his invitation to the summit. If this is true, it did not work: PM Xanana Gusmao did attend and even gave a keynote address (Radio Australia, 2013b).

Notable absentees at the inaugural meeting were representatives of the PIF, representatives of Samoa, Palau, the Cook Islands and Niue, and the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, who had previously promised to attend (Radio Australia, 2013b; Tarte, 2013a). The absence of representatives from the PIF can be seen as proof that the organisation felt threatened, but it is more likely that they were busy: the inaugural meeting coincided with an important PIFS meeting (Tarte, 2013a). It can be argued that this scheduling was deliberate on behalf of the PIDF, and was an expression of competition with the PIF. Another theory is that the PIF was simply not

invited, though this has not been confirmed (Tarte, 2013a). The governments of the Cook Islands and Niue may have been told by the New Zealand government to stay home, or thought it wise themselves to stay out of a potential dispute. Palau's absence could have been a form of silent protest, though it may be related to the fact that Palau and Fiji have no formal diplomatic relations (Tarte, 2013a). The Samoan Prime Minister called the PIDF a superfluous institution, said that he did not see any point in going to its meetings, and stated that the Fijian government had only itself to blame for its suspension from the PIF (Radio Australia, 2013b). Finally, the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea could not attend because he was on a state visit to New Zealand at the time, which according to some was another attempt at sabotage by the New Zealand government. Other voices say, though, that Papua New Guinea sees itself, rather than Fiji, as the new leader of the PSIDST and does not want to support Fiji's attempt at raising its profile (Hayward-Jones, 2013; Radio Australia, 2013b). The PIDF is not fazed by this lack of interest from some of the PSIDST. Litia Mawi, the roving ambassador of Fiji to 11 PSIDST, recently told a reporter that "many of the countries that didn't come to the inaugural summit in August already indicate their interest to attend the second one" (FBC, 2014b). Which countries she is referring to, is not clear.

Despite these tensions, the inaugural meeting of the PIDF was deemed a success. Most PSIDST attended, and after some compulsory fidgeting and worrying about undermining the PIF and offending Australia and New Zealand, so did all 30 or so invited foreign observer states (Dornan, 2013; Tarte, 2013a). It remains to be seen whether or not the PIDF will manage to challenge the PIF's power in the region. Though officially it is not intended to compete with any of the other regional organisations, it is clear from Bainamirama's words that replacing the PIF is the ultimate goal. The Fijian government seems determined to equip the organisation to do so: the newly appointed interim Secretary General of the PIDF was previously the Deputy Secretary General of PIFS. His appointment is rumoured to not have gone down well with the Pacific Islands Forum (Pacific Islands News Association [PINA], 2014).

3.1.5. The University of the South Pacific

The University of the South Pacific (USP) was founded in 1968, and is jointly owned by its 12 member countries[20]. The main campus is located in Suva, Fiji, and the university has regional campuses in each of its member countries (USP, 2013a). In 2013, around 27,000 students were enrolled in the university in total (MSG Secretariat, 2013b). Like most universities it has a longstanding reputation of being more liberal than the rest of the country. In his book Tuturani (1990) journalist Scott L. Malcomson relates how the Fijian Secretary for Home Affairs explains to him that in order to keep Marxist tendencies under control the military government frequently sent troops to the university to beat or arrest students and faculty members. This practice has ended, thankfully, but the university still faces some difficulties of its own. An AusAID evaluation in 2008 found that the university suffered from leadership instability, financial difficulties and understaffing. It also concluded that in implementing projects, the USP has "difficulties with adherence to timetables; adherence to budgets; recruiting required personnel …; [and] providing direction and oversight for the programs …" (AusAID, 2008, p.24), which seems to cover most aspects of running a project. The university also suffers from corruption in its own organisation and in its member states, where elites and family members of those in government have a higher chance of receiving a scholarship than others. This affects the students and it also affects the university, which receives a lot of under-performing students on supposedly merit-based scholarships (pers.comm. 9; Wilson, 2013).

The main contributions of the USP to climate change adaptation are its graduates in climate change studies (Barnett and Campbell, 2010). The USP also houses the Pacific Centre for Environment & Sustainable Development (PaCE-SD), which collects data and runs post-graduate and PhD degrees in climate change under its Future Climate Leaders Program (USP, 2014c). In 2012, PaCE-SD published a report on the effectiveness of climate change adaptation projects in the PSIDST, at the request of the EU Global Climate Change Alliance (McNamara, Hemstock and Holland, 2012).

When it comes to the implementation of adaptation, the university is usually restricted to carrying out some of the research parts of projects, not because of a lack

[20] The Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Vanuatu and Samoa.

of expertise, but because it does not have the mandate for implementation and therefore has difficulties securing funding (pers.comm. 7, 9; Barnett and Campbell, 2010). According to Barnett and Campbell (2010) the most successful CCA project in the PSIDST to date was carried out by the USP. This was the CCA in Rural Communities of Fiji project, which through extensive consultations with locals, combined with technical follow-ups helped rural communities solve issues related to freshwater and coastal management. The project was thoroughly evaluated, which is not typical for adaptation projects in the PSIDST (pers.comm. 9), and many valuable lessons were learned[21] (Barnett and Campbell, 2010). Though the authors do not expand on why the USP had more success than other organisations, it is likely that this was because it benefits from extensive local knowledge. Most faculty members are from the region and most of those that are not have many years of experience working in PSIDST (USP, 2014b). A great majority of the students, too, are from the PSIDST (MSG Secretariat, 2013b). These people have a much deeper and more natural understanding than outside consultants of how village life in Fiji works, and of the way to engage communities in a project[22].

3.1.6. The sub-regional organisations

There are three sub-regional organisations in the Pacific, which together encompass most of the PSIDST, but not all (for an overview of the memberships, see Table 2 in Appendix I). The oldest and most powerful is the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG), which was founded in 1988 and represents the largest economies and the vast majority of the population of the region (Komai, 2013; Newton Cain, 2014). Inspired by the success of the MSG, Polynesia formed its own Leaders Group (PLG) in 2011. The Micronesian Chief Executive Summit (MCES) first met in 2003, and consists of the Micronesian states affiliated with the USA, so it excludes Kiribati and Nauru (Komai, 2013; Northern Mariana Islands Office of the Governor, 2013). Each of the groups

[21] The most important was possibly that though traditional knowledge of the environment is an important resource for adaptation projects, it is not always correct. Barnett and Campbell (2010) give the example of a village that was cutting down mangroves on the opposite side of the river, in the belief that that would prevent erosion on the village side.

[22] A parallel can be drawn here with the success of the New Zealand army in peacekeeping operations in the region, which is said to be mostly due to the Maori soldiers and the cultural awareness they bring to the table. In Bougainville, the army successfully adopted Maori protocol to engage more effectively with locals. For example, in East Timor the Australian army wore sunglasses. The New Zealand army did not because they were aware of the importance of eye contact in public life, and had much greater success at engaging with locals during the mission (Capie, 2012; Dobell, 2013).

holds meetings of heads of government to discuss common issues and concerns, which frequently include climate change (e.g. Fiji Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011; SPREP 2012b; PLG, 2013).

3.1.6.1. The Melanesian Spearhead Group

Out of the three sub-regional organisations, most observers seem to agree that the MSG is the 'one to watch'. It is increasingly active, organising projects and signing agreements with international organisations in many different fields, from education to climate change (MSG Secretariat, 2013a, 2013b; Newton Cain, 2014). Despite its growing influence, the MSG leadership frequently assures the PIF that it does not intend to challenge its position (Newton Cain, 2014). This loyalty to the Forum was reconfirmed in 2010, when the MSG cancelled the meeting in which the Fijian PM Bainimarama was to become the new chair, knowing that his intention was to expand the organisation to compete with the PIF. In response to that cancellation, Bainimarama called the first EWTP meeting, from which eventually the PIDF was born (Tarte, 2013a).

The MSG is very much engaged with climate change issues. In 2012, the group issued its Declaration on Environment and Climate Change, which lists a number of the threats posed by climate change to the Melanesian countries, and lays the foundation for close regional cooperation in mitigating these threats and adapting to new circumstances using nature-based solutions. The four main initiatives announced in the declaration are the Green Growth Framework, the Melanesia Terrestrial Commitment, which supports landowning communities in managing their resources sustainably and adapting to climate change, the Blue Carbon Initiative, which informs decision makers on the value of mangroves and coastal swamps and strives to conserve them, and lastly the Green Climate Fund, which is to mobilise investments to fund the other three (MSG Secretariat, 2012). A delegation from the MSG attended the Rio+20 conference in 2012 to promote the declaration (Komai, 2012).

In early 2014, the MSG signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Australian Griffith University, with provisions for cultural exchange, cooperative research and other collaborative projects (Griffith University, 2014). A month later, the MSG signed another MoU with the USP to increase Melanesian student numbers at the university (though students from the MSG countries already make up 83% of USP's

student body; MSG Secretariat, 2013b). The MoU with Griffith University shows that the organisation is not afraid to look outside the Pacific and form its own partnerships (since May 2014 SPREP too has an MoU with Griffith University, so this may be a larger regional movement which MSG is part of; SPREP, 2014).

Despite its success, the MSG has been plagued by considerable internal tensions surrounding its membership. Besides its state members (Fiji, PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu), the group also has a member which is a political party from New Caledonia, the pro-independence Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste (FLNKS). Recently, the West Papua National Council for Liberation (liberation from Indonesia; WPNCL) applied to become a member too, but a decision on this application has not yet been made. The decision is made more complicated by the fact that Indonesia has been an observer of the MSG since 2011 (Newton Cain, 2014).

In early 2014, a delegation of foreign ministers from the MSG visited West Papua. Vanuatu decided at the last minute not to join the mission, as the programme for the visit provided by the Indonesian government contained only meetings with Indonesian officials and businesses, and no opportunities to meet with West Papuans, which was the purpose of the mission (Cordell, 2014). Indeed, though a group of West Papuans had prepared a reception for the delegates, the Indonesian government kept them well away from the meetings and many of those who protested were arrested (Cordell, 2014). At the end of their visit, the foreign ministers of Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands issued a joint statement in which they acknowledge Indonesian control of the province. Vanuatu, meanwhile, is still committed to help West Papua achieve independence (Manassah, 2014; Radio Australia, 2014).

Though none of the articles made this observation, the struggle within the MSG seems to be one between old ideals and new rationalism. The MSG was established in 1988 as a group of newly independent Melanesian states, working towards the liberation of those still under colonial rule. It was established in Port Vila, Vanuatu, which is also where its secretariat is based (Newton Cain, 2014). Vanuatu has always been anti-colonial, but was most extremely so in the 1980s. As one of the last PSIDST to gain independence in 1980, its government was determined to follow a course of political non-alignment and support in the UN for any and all liberation movements in the world, from Western Sahara to Palestine and West Papua (Huffer, 1993). It seems that these ideals form an obstacle to the other countries' ambitions for a more

powerful and more well-connected MSG. Allowing separatist parties from other countries to join as full members closes doors on certain partnerships, and being considered an organisation with contentious ideas is not an advantage when trying to raise funds for, for example, a climate fund. If this is indeed what is happening, the MSG would make an interesting example of countries having to 'sell out' to fund climate change adaptation.

Another potential cause of tension is the close relationship of the MSG with China, which funded the construction of its secretariat building in Port Vila. Lanteigne (2012) explains this Chinese influence as a strategy by China to counterbalance Australia's power in the PIF. The MSG cannot establish formal relations with China, though because that would violate China's One-China policy, as Solomon Islands is a diplomatic ally of Taiwan (Lanteigne, 2012). This could cause tensions within the organisation, though not having formal ties could be a more comfortable position since too much financial dependence on China would cause similar power imbalances as the ones which caused the discontent with the PIF.

3.1.6.2. The Polynesian Leaders Group

The Polynesian Leaders Group is young and still very much finding its bearings and focus. Though it has more members than the MSG, its member states have comparatively much smaller populations, much smaller land masses and resource bases, and they are more isolated than the Melanesian countries (Islands Business, 2012). In the communiqué published after its third meeting in 2013, the PLG declared that in its formative years it would have to remain cautious and flexible, taking into account its members limited resources (PLG, 2013). This demonstrates understanding of its member states' capacity issues which other regional organisations often lack or ignore (see section 5.5.), but it also is not very proactive.

The aim of the organisation is to increase cohesion among its member states, and not necessarily to provide a counterweight to the MSG and the MCES (Andrews, 2011). However, the leaders have been engaging in extensive name-dropping of countries and groups which may at one point be invited to the PLG. In 2011, they hinted at a possible membership of New Zealand and Hawaii (Andrews, 2011), though judging by experiences in the PIF, the group should be careful not to invite countries which would skew the power structure within the organisation. Fiji was also said to be

welcome to apply, even though it is already part of the MSG (Ugapo, 2011). Thus far the Fijian government has not expressed any interest in applying, though the reason for that might be that the PLG attached conditions about conformation to democratic values to its offer (if Fiji did not budge to demands from the PIF, it is unlikely to do so to join a group as small as the PLG; Ugapo, 2011). In 2012, Samoan PM Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi said in an interview that rather than New Zealand and Hawaii as a whole, indigenous groups from both states were applying for PLG membership, such as the 56 tribes of New Zealand Maori and the Rapa Nui of Easter Island (Radio Australia, 2012a). It is unlikely that New Zealand, which is an observer already, is disappointed by this new development, as it has not shown much interest in the group. The third PLG meeting was held in Auckland and attended by only two representatives from the New Zealand government: the Minister for Disabilities and Indigenous Health and an MP (PLG, 2013).

The PLG does not yet have a secretariat, and thus its work on climate change adaptation has so far consisted of speaking about it at its meetings (PLG, 2013). Interestingly, one of the few points related to climate change in the 2013 meeting communiqué states that the leaders agree with French Polynesia's concern about "the proliferation of climate change related organisations" and the need for more transparent climate change financing (PLG, 2013). Whether or not this means that the PLG will refrain from becoming another one of those organisations is unclear.

3.1.6.3. The Micronesian Chief Executives' Summit

The Micronesian Chief Executives' Summit is an annual meeting of the government leaders of the US-affiliated Micronesian states and territories. Its main purpose is to coordinate its ten regional strategies and initiatives, which include an initiative to establish a number of protected areas (the Micronesia Challenge) as well as a series of committees and councils for regional cooperation on issues ranging from telecommunications to invasive species (Northern Mariana Islands Office of the Governor, 2013). It does not yet have a secretariat, but has been working for years on transforming the Micronesian Center for a Sustainable Future with the aim of making it into a secretariat (MCES, 2009; Zotomayor, 2013). The MCES has been fairly uncontroversial since its inception, and it does not seem to be considering expanding its membership. In 2011, the MCES leaders expressed interest in forming a committee

for the sub-regional implementation of the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change project (PACC), run by SPREP, but this has not yet happened (SPREP, 2012b).

3.1.7. The 'new Pacific politics'

The sections above have described the traditional regional organisations in the Pacific, as well as some, such as the PIDF and the MSG, which have been founded or are expanding their activities due to discontent in the PSIDST with the functioning of the 'old' organisations. A parallel can be drawn between the shift described in the literature from global to regional action on climate change (e.g. Ostrom, 2012), and this 'new Pacific politics' of organising regional cooperation in increasingly more exclusive groups. Sir Mekere Morauta, who led the review of the Pacific Plan, spoke at the presentation of the reviewed document of a "palpable frustration" in the region with the inability of the regional organisations to provide solutions to the development challenges faced by the PSIDST, which has led to a movement which he calls a 'new Pacific politics' (Tarte, 2013b). It involves a greater focus on the interests and traditions of the PSIDST rather than those of outside actors (Komai, 2013). The reasons for the rise of this 'new Pacific politics' are the same reasons for which regional organisations dealing with climate change have sprung up around the world: frustration with the existing institutions because they are too perceived as too large and slow-moving and because they are dominated by a small number of powerful players which slow down progress (Ostrom, 2012; Jones, Pascual and Stedman, 2009).

According to Young (2002) and Benson (2010) regional organisations and their networks should be non-hierarchical to ensure their effectiveness. As shown above, the traditional regional organisations each show a clear hierarchy in their membership: in the PIF, Australia and New Zealand are the first among equals (Lanteigne, 2012), the SPC is dominated by France (pers.comm. 6) and in SPREP, the five donor countries which are also members dictate the way the organisation functions to a large extent (Turnbull, 2004). The 'new' organisations do not have these inherent hierarchies, though they are still susceptible to being influenced by donor interests (see section 3.3.).

Another cause of discontent with the traditional regional organisations which stems from the hierarchy issue, and which is addressed by the 'new Pacific politics' is the fact that the PSIDST lack a sense of ownership of the organisations themselves and

the decisions which are made (Winder, Lambourne and Vaai, 2012). This is reflected in the leadership and staffing of the organisations: whereas the SPREP and SPC particularly, and the PIF and USP to a smaller extent, are mostly led by expatriates and staffed by foreign consultants, the PIDF and the sub-regional organisations are run exclusively by islanders (e.g. SPC, 2011b; Fiji Ministry of Information and National Archives, 2013; SPREP, 2012f; Winder, Lambourne and Vaai, 2012; USP, 2014d).

3.2. Mandates and Rivalries

Each Pacific regional organisation is granted mandates over certain areas of expertise by the PIF. Roughly speaking, in the case of climate change PIF is in charge of politics, SPC provides technical advice and implementation, USP delivers education and SPREP undertakes climate change advocacy (pers.comm. 3, 7; Tutangata and Power, 2002; CROP, 2012). However, these mandates do not always function well, because in some areas they are vague, the organisations sometimes try to stretch them, and donors do not always adhere to them (pers.comm. 4, 6; Tavola *et al*., 2006).

The respondents in the interviews were rather divided on the functioning of the system of mandates. Two respondents said that it was a clear and well-functioning system, and that organisations who challenge existing mandates are only after the money involved in climate change adaptation in the PSIDST (pers.comm. 3, 7). One respondent said that the mandates are too vague, which encourages competition rather than coordination among the organisations (pers.comm. 4). Another thought the mandates were too clear-cut, which removes competition from the system entirely and reduces the incentive for efficiency in the implementation of adaptation projects (e.g. pers.comm. 9). A fifth stated that the current mild competition between the organisations is good for the projects, but that before the institutional reorganisation there was far too much competition for the system to function (pers.comm. 6).

Climate change adaptation is at least partly responsible for the growing discontent with and confusion about the mandates, since it is a cross-cutting issue which does not neatly fit into any pre-existing boxes (pers.comm. 2, 3). Initially climate change was viewed as a purely environmental issue, which made it SPREP's domain. However, people soon realised that when climate change adaptation means fortifying coastal roads, it is perhaps best not to put an environmental organisation in charge (pers.comm. 4; Bouwer and Aerts, 2006). Especially since donors and PSIDST have

started striving for climate change adaptation projects to become more holistic, with components of health, food security, coastal zone management, education and others all in the same project (e.g. Hobbs, 2013), it has become more and more difficult to strictly adhere to the existing mandates. And so it happens that, despite the fact that some people think SPC should clearly be the only organisation implementing projects, the other organisations implement adaptation projects as well (Barnett and Campbell, 2010; GCCA, 2012; PIFS, 2013a; USP, 2013b).

The reorganisation of the Pacific regional organisational framework which was initiated in 2006 was meant to bring an end to so-called 'mandate creep' (Tavola *et al*., 2006). This was partly successful, as the two organisations which showed the most overlap, SPC and SOPAC, were merged (SOPAC, 2014b). However, there is still a lot of uncertainty about the respective responsibilities of SPC and SPREP (pers.comm. 6; Tavola *et al*., 2006; Barnett and Campbell, 2010).

From the interviews, it has become clear that the organisations to a certain extent see each other as rivals. Two respondents expressed discontent with a certain mandate being given to a different organisation than the one they deemed most qualified (pers.comm. 6, 9). Organisations were frequently compared in terms of the length of their history and their staff numbers (pers.comm. 3, 6). The regional organisations were said to only work together "when it looks good for the donors", and otherwise try to outcompete each other wherever possible (pers.comm. 6, 9). Finally, there were stories about organisations 'stealing' staff from one another (see above; pers.comm. 6).

3.3. Donor-regional organisation relationships

As mentioned above in the descriptions of the regional organisations, they are all influenced to a great extent by their major donors, especially where those are also members (e.g. Turnbull, 2004; Lanteigne, 2012).

In the literature, documents and interviews it was mentioned that the regional organisations sometimes seem to exist more for the convenience of donors than for their member countries, and focus more on their accountability to donors than to the PSIDST (e.g. Herr, 2002; Tavola *et al.*, 2006; Barnett and Campbell, 2010). From the language in some of the reports it can also be deduced that donors have a large

amount of control over the functioning and the configuration of the organisational structures in the PSIDST (AusAID, 2000; Tavola *et al.*, 2006).

According to Barnett and Campbell (2010), the reason why donors prefer to work through regional organisations is that it reduces the costs and efforts of working with many different and diverse countries, rather than for the benefit of those countries. The report on the institutional reform (Tavola *et al.*, 2006) states that stakeholders from PIC governments thought that the work done by regional organisations reflects the views of donors rather than those of the PSIDST. It also states that 'mandate creep' was inconvenient mainly for donors, who were worried that it was a result of competition for their funding, and who often did not know which organisation to work with. The idea that the institutional reform was mainly carried out for the benefit of the donors, or at least that the donors exerted significant influence, is supported by remarks from the interviews. The merger of SOPAC and SPC was forced by donors threatening to withhold funding, and it was after consultations with donors that it was decided that SPREP was to remain independent (pers.comm. 1, 6). The AusAID review of SPREP (2000) contains similar language: one of the reasons SPREP had achieved limited success in implementing projects was that some donors "attached low relevance to a regional program focused narrowly on the environment" (p.5). It also says that PIC governments had stated they would be better off implementing projects themselves, but that donors argued that smaller countries would be unable to do so (see section 6.1 on project design; AusAID, 2000).

It is not surprising that the donors have so much power over the regional organisations. After all, they decide whether to grant or withhold funding, and without funding, the organisations are powerless. Because of a lack of core funding, the organisations need a constant stream of projects to maintain their level of activity and to pay their staff (pers.comm. 6, 8, 9; Turnbull, 2004; Barnett and Campbell, 2010; Winder, Lambourne and Vaai, 2012). This dependence on donors quickly and naturally creates a priority for accountability to donors, rather than to member states which in comparison have little to offer and little leverage to wield. Though evaluations and interviewees all agree that it would be better to adopt a more programmatic approach rather than implement a lot of short-term, disconnected, localised projects (AusAID, 2000; AusAID, 2001; Herr, 2002; Winder, Lambourne and Vaai, 2012), none of the organisations thus far received a sufficient amount of predictable funding to be able to

plan large-scale and long-term programmes (pers.comm. 6, 8; Winder, Lambourne and Vaai, 2012). This is due to both a lack of trust in the organisations, and the fact that donor budget cycles are tied to government terms at home, which prevents long-term planning also on their end (one respondent expressed a slight envy of China, which because can play the 'long game' because the government never changes; pers.comm. 6, 7). At the end of the day, the organisations have salaries to pay and buildings to maintain, and those concerns come first (pers.comm. 6, 8; Barnett and Campbell, 2010).

Often the regional level is bypassed altogether and PSIDST work directly with international organisations or bilateral donors. Tutangata and Power (2002) found that PSIDST governments often have more faith in global organisations than in regional organisations, because the regional organisations do not have the core funding or the capacity to respond to country requests. This directly contradicts the theory that decreasing the scale at which organisations operate increases trust and legitimacy (Adger, Arnell and Tompkins, 2005; Scannel and Gifford, 2013). When the intermediary organisation is viewed as adding little value to the project and merely taking a share of the funding, it loses that legitimacy in its member states (pers.comm. 9; AusAID, 2000). Hay (2013) goes as far as to say that the regional organisations in the Pacific have no comparative advantage at all over international organisations when implementing adaptation projects, because their functioning is so tightly linked with that of their donors that on the ground it is almost like the donors were implementing the projects themselves.

However, in countries where governments have engaged in direct cooperation, communities tend to complain that the governments, too, focus more on accountability to donors than to their citizens, and that citizens cannot hold their governments accountable for the way adaptation funding is spent (Maclellan, Meads and Coates, 2012). Besides, working with bilateral donor countries often brings with it expectations of a favour in return (e.g. Atkinson, 2010; see the part about chequebook diplomacy in chapter 6). Those pressures for reciprocity are deflected when a country receives funds through a regional organisation (Tarte, 1997). Though this may be an overly pessimistic interpretation, this means that in the current system, PSIDST have to

choose at which level to place the accountability to donors with the accompanying neglect of lower levels' interests: the national or the regional.

4. Coordination

The need for coordination and cooperation amongst all these different regional organisations, sub-regional organisations and donors is widely recognised (CROP, 2012; PIFS, 2012; PIFS, 2013c). Though a couple of respondents argued that the entire system is still a complete chaos (pers.comm. 4, 9), others thought that the different bodies in which cooperation is organised are generally successful in the sense that they lead to a unified region-wide approach to CCA, and prevent duplication of efforts as well as large gaps in implementation (pers.comm. 3, 7).

This need for cooperation between the regional organisations is not unique to climate change adaptation. However, as mentioned in section 3.2 on mandates, CCA has caused confusion about the boundaries of mandates, which has made coordination particularly important.

It needs to be pointed out that it is not just the regional organisations and the donors which have an issue with coordination for CCA. On a national level, cooperation is also often lacking. In the Federated States of Micronesia, planning for climate change adaptation is a responsibility which is shared between different departments and offices, without a central authority keeping an overview or enforcing coordination (PIFS, 2013c). Another fact which makes coordination within regional organisations more challenging is that the responsibility for climate change-related activities is placed within a different ministry in every PIC, depending on the approach to climate change the government takes. Out of 14 countries, seven take a technical approach to climate change, grouping it with environment, energy, meteorology or natural resources. Six have chosen for a more policy-oriented approach, making climate change the direct responsibility of the president, or linking it to development, planning or even foreign policy. Palau forms an exception: it has a National Climate Change Country Team where representatives of government and other institutions come together (PCCP, 2012a). This means that when one of the organisations has a climate change-related meeting, the government representatives attending are a mix of energy experts, natural resource specialists, diplomats, policy makers and others. It is likely that this makes it more difficult to find a common focus.

4.1. Coordination among the regional organisations

In its 2000 review of SPREP, AusAID concluded that the Pacific regional organisations do not work well together, are in a constant struggle over power and funding, lack insight in each others' areas of work and each have different approaches to and overarching ideas about the environment which make cooperation difficult (AusAID, 2000). One of the respondents stated that this is still the case now (pers.comm. 4).

Different new and existing mechanisms are working to remedy those shortcomings, and to enable effective coordination among the regional organisations (though the PIDF does not yet seem to be taking part in any coordinating activities). The two most important bodies where interaction with regards to CCA takes place - the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) and the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable (PCCR) - are described below (CROP, 2012). Whether or not it improves matters to maintain at least two separate bodies in charge of coordination remains to be seen. It certainly does not make the structure of the regional framework less confusing. Figure 5 shows the spaghetti-bowl of links of actors attending the main meetings of each organisation. The circles and ovals are all the places in which decisions on CCA can be made on a regional level.

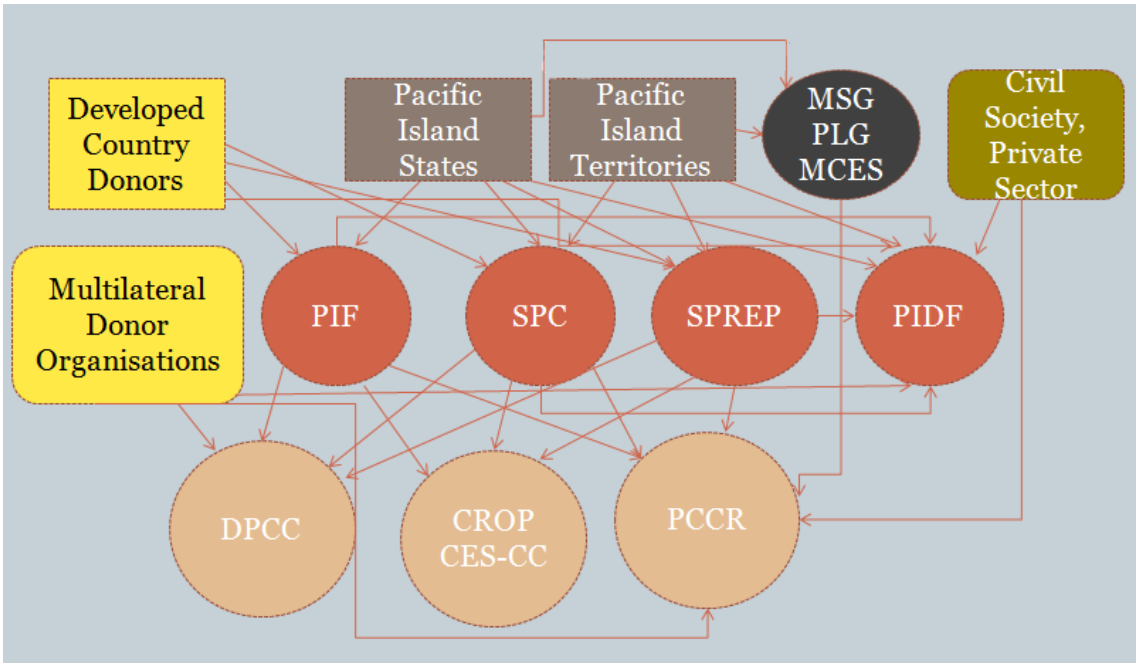

Figure 5: Schematic view of memberships of attendance of regional organisation meetings

Though several respondents emphasised the fact that the coordination between the organisations is well-organised (pers.comm. 3, 7), others commented that it still left a lot to be desired (pers.comm. 4, 9). One respondent said that all coordination activities

are only undertaken to make a good impression on donors, but do not change anything in practice (pers.comm. 9). This echoes what was said about rivalling organisations only working together if it increases their chances of getting funding (See chapter 3.2, pers.comm. 6).

Two respondents found that great improvements had been made with regard to coordination in recent years, and that there is a growing, shared recognition of what matters, which means that in joint meetings less time has to be spent on deciding on definitions and priorities (pers.comm. 2, 7).

A good recent example of increased coordination is the development of the *Integrated Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change*, which in 2015 will replace the two separate, but largely overlapping, strategies which currently exist (SPREP, 2011). The writing of the strategy is a joint effort by PIF, SPC, SPREP, the Regional Disaster Managers Meeting, the PCCR and the Pacific Meteorological Council, along with a number of UN donors (SPREP, 2011). It was discussed in 2013 at the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable (see below), which for the first time was held jointly with the Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management (PP DRM; Joint Meeting of the PP DRM and PCCR, 2013). Though this far-reaching integration is a positive development as it reduces duplication and administrative burdens on PSIDST, it has also brought to light some of the risks of merging different activities. Due to the strict conditions attached to funding, it may well be that an organisation which integrates DRM with CCA in all its activities does not qualify for either DRM or CCA funding (pers.comm. 8). Especially when working with the GEF, which only funds projects implementing measures above and beyond 'normal development' (Barnett and Campbell, 2010), this type of integration may be impossible.

4.1.1. The Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific

The CROP was founded in 1988, to improve collaboration among the regional organisations to achieve sustainable development in the PSIDST (CROP, 2004). That means that though climate change was not initially a main focus of the council, sustainability has always been a goal. The CROP is chaired by the Secretary General of the PIFS, and meets annually. Meetings are attended by the heads of the organisations, and occasional observers (PIFS, 2010a). The CROP currently has nine

members (see the introduction to Chapter 3; CROP, 2012).

The CROP includes a number of topical working groups which bring together experts from different organisations. The outcomes and proposals of the working group meetings go through the CROP meeting to the Pacific Leaders at PIF for approval (pers.comm. 3). Climate change is one of the most important issues in the CROP, and the CEOs have their own Executives Subcommittee on Climate Change (CES-CC), which is chaired by PIFS and SPREP and has a Working Arm on Climate Change (WACC; Hay, 2013). The WACC consists of technical experts from the different CROP agencies and has the special mandate to facilitate cooperation in the implementation of climate-change related projects (a mandate which the CROP itself also has, as does the PCCR; CROP, 2012). In the WACC, too, CCA and RDM are to be integrated in the near future (pers.comm. 7).

To clarify the different roles of the CROP agencies in dealing with climate change, PIFS published a brochure which outlines each organisation's strengths in this area (CROP, 2012). Though comprehensive, it leaves room for confusion in some parts: for example, it places the responsibility for renewable energy with SPREP, but the mandate for energy with SPC and both also with the Pacific Power Association. The brochure also says that it is SPREP's task to organise the cooperation with all the other organisations, "through the established mechanisms", of which there are five for climate change (CROP, 2012, p.5). This means that, as mentioned before, PIF also sees SPREP as the hub in the network of actors working on CCA in the PSIDST.

Coordination within the CROP sometimes fails, as is illustrated by a proposal which was prepared by the CROP agencies and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), for a Strategic Plan for Climate Resilience for the Pacific (SPCR; ADB, 2013). A review of the proposal found considerable overlap with no less than five existing projects, all of which also involved CROP agencies (Government of Germany, 2012). Ironically, the proposal includes the founding of a new coordination secretariat within PIFS which is to "avoid duplication of efforts" (ADB, 2013, p.7). The review rightly states that increasing the number of coordination mechanisms might be counterproductive (Government of Germany, 2012). The latest version of the SPCR proposals stems from after the publication of the review, and none of the comments seem to have been processed.

4.1.2. The Pacific Climate Change Roundtable

The Pacific Climate Change Roundtable is convened by SPREP in cooperation with SPC and PIFS, and serves to coordinate regional action under the Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change (PIFACC; Barnett and Campbell, 2010). According to the website, the meetings take place biannually, though it is possible that it is in fact biennially, since the last meeting was in July 2013, and as of May 2014 the next one has not yet been announced (Joint Meeting of the PP DRM and PCCR, 2013; PCCR, 2013a). The PIFACC runs from 2006 to 2015, and is a general regional strategy for coping with climate change, with attention for adaptation, mitigation, data gathering, education, governance and partnerships. For each of those points, the framework outlines 'national activities' and 'regional activities' (SPREP, 2008). Interestingly, following the framework the regional organisations should not be involved in implementing technical adaptation projects, but rather stick to assistance with the design and funding of, and the capacity building for projects which countries should implement themselves. The only regional activities in the framework involving technical support are for the maintenance of meteorological equipment and the compilation of greenhouse gas inventories (SPREP, 2008).

The PCCR is led by a steering committee which is endorsed at the PCCR meeting for a period of two years. The members of the steering committees are representative from the regional organisations, NGOs, UN agencies, donors and each of the three Pacific sub-regions (PCCR, 2013a).

Though the actions of the PCCR are based on the PIFACC, it has struggled with its identity. The document listing the outcomes of the 2011 meeting states that the role of the PCCR and the function of the meetings need to be further clarified, as does the PCCR's link to PIFACC (PCCR, 2013b). Still, the rest of the document shows that through the PCCR a lot of progress in coordination was made. The group seems to have been successful particularly with regards to collecting and publishing information on climate change: there is now a region-wide experts roster, and an overview of mitigation actions and a general library of climate change information are in preparation (PCCR, 2013b).

The relationship of the PCCR with the CROP, and in fact the difference in function between the CES-CC and the PCCR is unclear. The outcomes document from the 2011 PCCR meeting states that one of the tasks for SPREP is to support the PCCR chair in writing to the CES-CC chairs to establish a formal link between the two organs. The document does not say whether or not this has been done (PCCR, 2013b). The PCCR could be seen as a sort of 'CES-CC+', since all attendees of the CES-CC are also present at the PCCR but not vice versa (PIFS, 2010a; PCCR, 2013a). Still, the usefulness of maintaining two committees which have separate discussions about the same issues is doubtful, especially now that both the WACC and the PCCR are integrating disaster risk management into their mandates.

4.2. Coordination among donors

As recounted above, there are several mechanisms in place to ensure coordination amongst regional organisations implementing CCA projects, even if those mechanisms do not always work. However, even if the organisations and their projects were perfectly coordinated, that coordination would be meaningless unless the donors too are committed to cooperating. In a system where projects are donor-driven, the organisations which implement the projects can only coordinate post-factum. They can share information on what they have been implementing, but they cannot plan future projects together because they do not have the power to do so (AusAID, 2001; Turnbull, 2004). Therefore, donor coordination is as important as coordination among regional organisations. According to PIFS (2011b) the donors' dedication to improving coordination and aid effectiveness is "evident" (p.vii). However, the same report also warns that the mere existence of mechanisms for coordination does not guarantee success.

Coordination between donor countries can be difficult to arrange. In the past decades there have been tensions between the approach to development taken by major donors like Australia and New Zealand, and 'upcoming' donor countries such as China and Japan (Tarte, 1997). These tensions are also played out in climate change adaptation. Since projects funded by donor countries are generally organised bilaterally, without a regional organisation as a facilitator, these projects tend to go under the radar of organisations like CROP (pers.comm. 8).

Most reports and interviewees agree that the best solution would be for every country to have its own implementation structure, with its own experts, translators and technical capacity (pers.comm. 4, 8; SPREP, 2008; PIFS, 2013a). Then each donor and regional organisation could implement its projects through that structure, which means that governments and communities would not have to get used to new people working with different approaches every time a project is implemented. However, those same reports and others also agree that only the largest PSIDST have the national capacity to set up such a structure (see Chapter 5 on effectiveness; PIFS, 2013a).

4.2.1. Paris Declaration and Cairns Compact

The Paris Declaration was the outcome of the 2005 Paris High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, and has, thus far, been signed by 138 countries, 28 international organisations and 14 civil society organisations (OECD, 2014). In the declaration the signatories pledge to strive for increased aid effectiveness by aligning projects with the receiving countries' priorities and development strategies, coordinating with other donors to avoid duplication and where possible work through the country's own systems and institutions. Donors also pledge to provide predictable, long-term aid-flows to partner countries, and to simplify procedures for the recipient countries' benefit (OECD, 2008). Though the declaration applies to all areas of development, donor cooperation is particularly important in CCA, as explained above.

In 2009 the PIF adopted the Cairns Compact in response to the disappointing lack of progress of the PSIDS in working towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs; PIFS, 2009). It is a declaration which calls for more effective coordination, more private sector involvement, more investment in infrastructure, more capacity building, and greater mutual accountability between Forum island members and donors. In order to achieve this, the PIFS would assist countries in meeting their reporting requirements to donors and in writing better national development plans. The PSIDST agreed to submit an annual peer review report of their national development plans, and donors and development partners were urged to submit an annual report to the PIFS, outlining their efforts to comply with the Compact (PIFS, 2009). This can be viewed as an effort by PIF to establish a degree of mutual accountability between the regional organisations and the donors, because it means donors have to justify their actions to

the PIFS rather than just vice versa (PIFS, 2011b). CROP or the other regional organisations are not mentioned, and development coordination is to be organised through the Forum Economic Ministers' Meeting and a Development Partners Meeting (PIFS, 2009).

A report from 2010 shows that a number of development partners did indeed submit progress reports. Since no other instructions were given, the PIFs received reports ranging from 2 (Thailand) to 50 (ADB) pages. The following year, the donors were given a template for their reports, but if any reports were submitted in the years after, they have not been published online (PIFS, 2010b).

There have been complaints about 'emerging' donors not complying with the Cairns Compact and the Paris Declaration (Radio Australia, 2012b), which could be seen as an extension of their policy not to contribute to regional organisations (pers.comm.6; Tarte 1997). One of the interviewees mentioned that also 'traditional' donors still had progress to make, particularly with regards to the extensive and always different reporting requirements burdening PSIDST and regional organisations (pers.comm. 3).

4.2.2. The Development Partners for Climate Change

The main meeting where donors coordinate climate change adaptation programmes is the Development Partners for Climate Change (DPCC) meeting. This is an informal meeting which takes place more or less bimonthly in Suva, and it is attended by representatives of the donors as well as the regional organisations. It is a meeting for sharing information rather than decision-making, though there are ambitions to increase its scope and importance (pers.comm. 2; Maclellan, Meads and Coates, 2012). The meeting is taken very seriously by the regional organisations, as can be concluded from the presence at the meeting in March 2014 of several representatives who had had to fly in especially from other countries. The meeting suffers from the high turnover of staff both in regional organisations and donors, which causes low consistency in attendance. Along with its informal structure, this causes a lack of organisational memory in the DPCC, which in turn causes the same subjects to be repeatedly brought up and discussed with the same outcomes each time (pers.comm. 2). Occasionally the DPCC cooperates with PACE-SD at the USP and invites students from the Young Climate Leaders programme to join and contribute to the meetings (USP, 2012).

If the DPCC were to transform into a meeting with a strategic as well as an information-sharing function, that would increase the overlap with both the CES-CC and the PCCR, as most attendees, or at least the participating organisations of the three meetings already coincide. The PIDF is a regional organisation, but it has thus far not attended any of the coordinating bodies' meetings and seems to be taking on the role of coordinator too, judging by the comprehensive collection of actors invited to the inaugural summit (Tarte, 2013a). The organisations should be careful not to replace the issue of coordination among a large number of partners with the issue of coordination amongst a just slightly smaller number of coordinating bodies. Instead, it may be more effective to have one large meeting for coordination, such as the PCCR, where subgroups like the donor organisations or the CROP agencies could meet separately in side events, but still within the same summit.

4.2.3. The Choiseul Integrated Climate Change Programme

One of the respondents mentioned the Choiseul Integrated Climate Change Programme (CHICCHAP) in Solomon Islands as the best example of successful coordination among donors and regional organisations (pers.comm. 7). This project was initiated by the national government of Solomon Islands, which decided to put a stop to the piecemeal approach to adaptation taken by the many different organisations working in the country. It is a long-term programme aligned with all relevant national strategies, and it is managed by the provincial government of Choiseul. Donors and regional organisations wishing to work in Choiseul can apply to assist with a part of the larger programme, and projects which were already ongoing were integrated. The provincial government ensures that the collective effort results in long-term resilience and adaptation to climate change (pers.comm.7; SPC, 2013a). Currently, seven partners are working on the programme: two regional organisations (SPC, SPREP), three donor countries (Australia, USA, Germany), an international organisation (UNDP) and an NGO (The Nature Conservancy; UN Conference on Small Island States, 2014). The benefits of the approach are clear. The communities are provided with more holistic projects which address several issues related to CCA at once, and the programmatic approach ensures that follow-up can be organised where necessary. For the government, leading one large project incurs a much smaller administrative burden than participating in several small projects (SPC, 2013a). The

project is only in its initial stages, but it has already been heralded as the example for the way all PSIDS should be organising their adaptation projects. The hope is that, if it works in Solomon Islands, one of the poorer PSIDS, it can work anywhere (Hobbs, 2013). And indeed, Tuvalu and Kiribati have already been working on their own versions of the CHICCHAP (pers.comm. 7). Greater national ownership of adaptation projects would be a positive development because it increases legitimacy and government commitment, but of course a condition for those projects to then succeed is that the government should not be corrupt. This is something that cannot be taken for granted in the PSIDS. In fact, in the 2011 perceived corruption index published by Transparency International, Solomon Islands ranked 120 out of 183, with a score of 2.7 out of 10 (Transparency International, 2011). In the World Governance Indicators, the country has shown improvement in the past decade with regards to government effectiveness, among others factors, but its percentile rank is still only 23%[23] (World Bank, 2013). In the coming years, the CHICCHAP will have to show whether or not government ownership of a programme can be successful even if that government is corrupt.

[23] The percentile rank compares the country's score to the highest score granted.

5. Effectiveness issues of climate change projects in the PSIDST

The previous chapters have highlighted some of the problems with the institutional framework for the implementation of climate change adaptation projects in the PSIDST. The main issues are overcrowding of the system with too many organisations, combined with a lack of effective cooperation, excessive control of donor countries and organisations, and a lack of accountability towards member countries and communities. Chapter 2 also outlined some of the specific challenges connected to implementing projects in Pacific small island states. This chapter will look at how those problems and challenges have affected the effectiveness (the degree to which the projects help people on the ground cope with climate change) of climate change adaptation projects in the PSIDST.

In 2012, the USP published a report on good practices in adaptation, evaluating 31 community-based projects implemented by different organisations in different countries (McNamara, Hemstock and Holland, 2012). It found that the impacts of the different projects varied but were overall small, which was mainly due to the short-term nature of the projects. For example, when implementing agencies were asked to score on a scale of 1 (disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) whether or not after the project the community would face less difficulties related to climate change, they gave a score of 1.52 on average. The highest scoring 'improvements' were an increased appreciation of local knowledge, improved understanding of climate change and its impacts, and an increased feeling in the community of being part of the decision making about their future (McNamara, Hemstock and Holland, 2012). This suggests that technical results are lacking, which is something also noted by Barnett and Campbell (2010). The report concludes that the most successful projects involve culturally appropriate education, local ownership of the entire project, use of local knowledge and the implementation of common sense solutions without trying to make scientific projections based on poor data (McNamara, Hemstock and Holland, 2012).

Despite these positive lessons there are still several issues which can form an obstacle to the effectiveness of climate change adaptation projects in the PSIDST. Many of these are due to the nature of the organisational system, but others are due to factors in the PSIDST themselves. Further detail is provided below.

5.1. Project design

This first section focuses on the way climate change adaptation projects are set up in the PSIDST. Despite the wide recognition of the importance of community ownership of CCA projects (Barnett and Campbell, 2010; Maclellan, Meads and Coates, 2012), the project design process usually begins with the donors (pers.comm. 9, Hemstock and Smith, 2012). Though the Paris Declaration and the Cairns Compact ask for projects to be aligned with national strategies, donors do not always comply. One example is the energy project implemented by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in Tuvalu, where it installed 3 generators. Though the Tuvaluan government asked for generators which would be able to run on coconut oil, which would be improve the country's energy security and comply with the national sustainable development strategy, JICA decided those would be too expensive and installed diesel generators instead. The agency also provided USD 1 million per year in subsidies to cover the fuel costs for the generators (Hemstock and Smith, 2012). This gives fossil fuels an unfair advantage in the Tuvaluan market, and it also proves how for an aid-dependent country like Tuvalu, it is very difficult to follow its own plans if the donors refuse to cooperate (Hemstock and Smith, 2012).

Generally, a donor will devise a project and either work through a regional organisation or go directly to a country government. If it is a community-based project, the national government decides which communities will participate (pers.comm.7). The implementing organisation visits the communities for consultations to determine what projects have already been carried out (since there is no overview on a national level) and where the vulnerabilities of the community lie (pers.comm. 7, 8). This process is effective only when national priorities align with community priorities (which is rarely the case, pers.comm. 9), and when the visiting consultants have at least a working knowledge of the cultural context of the communities. Often the consultants come unprepared, and local officials have expressed frustration at having to provide consultants with basic information which they could easily have found themselves (Wrighton, 2010).

Some of the regional organisations also have joint strategies with countries, such as the Joint Country Strategies (SPC) and the Joint National Action Plans (SPC and SPREP; PCCP, 2012c; SPREP, 2012c). These outline the ways in which the services offered by

the regional organisation can help each country, though they do not always align with the country's priorities (pers.comm. 3). One respondent said that an important task for the regional organisations is to help PSIDST with activities they do not see as priorities, such as publishing regular reports on the situation of human rights in the countries (pers.comm 3).

It is important to acknowledge that though donors provide the much needed money to implement projects, the value of the in-kind contributions to those projects by the PSIDST, in the form of staff hours, government buildings or land, often match or exceed that of the funds coming from outside (Barnett and Campbell, 2010).

5.1.1. Hard versus soft projects

Adaptation projects can be divided into 'hard' projects (climate-proofing infrastructure, building water tanks, etc.) and 'soft' projects (policy writing, capacity building etc.; Fankhauser and Burton, 2011). Where the PSIDS generally prefer hard projects with tangible results, or a combination of both types, donors have a preference for soft projects[24] (pers.comm. 4, 9). As is described in section 2.5, technical projects, particularly those in outer islands, are prone to failure. A tropical storm or problem with transportation can quickly undo any progress or cause a project to go over budget. Writing a report or policy is a far more predictable process (pers.comm. 9). This at least partly explains the preference of some countries for working with bilateral donors (see section 6.3); bilateral donors are much more likely to implement concrete projects than multilateral donors or regional organisations (Hemstock and Smith, 2012). When Tuvalu was facing a waste problem, a regional organisation wrote an expensive feasibility study outlining several possible solutions, but did not provide funds for implementation. JICA installed a large number of bins in the capital and provided a collection vehicle and an incinerator (pers.comm. 9). As mentioned above in the example of the diesel generators, these practical solutions do not always align with the country's long-term strategies, but they do solve problems in

[24] For example, the Australian International Climate Change Initiative (ICCAI) implemented two climate change adaptation programmes in the PSIDST, the Pacific Adaptation Strategy Assistance Program (PASAP) and the Pacific-Australia Climate Change Science and Adaptation Planning Programme (PACCSAP). PASAP assisted countries in writing vulnerability assessments and mainstreaming adaptation into policy, and PACCSAP raised awareness of climate change impacts. AUD 44 million was spent on the two projects together, and neither included plans for actual implementation of adaptation measures (Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade [DFAT], 2013b).

the short term. For this reason, people on the ground often have a much better idea of what bilateral donors have done for their country than of what the regional organisations are or do (pers.comm. 9; Tavola *et al.*, 2006). The review of SPREP by AusAID concluded that regional processes have very little impact on the lives of people in member state countries (AusAID, 2000).

Thus far most adaptation projects implemented in the PSIDST are of the soft variety (pers.comm. 9; Barnett and Campbell, 2010). The problem with these projects is that the resulting policies, strategies and feasibility studies have very little impact, for several reasons.

Firstly, the projects are generally short-term, which means that the budget only covers the publishing of the report. There is no funding for implementation or follow-ups, so that most policies are never implemented, and strategies are not followed (Hemstock and Smith, 2012). Though producing feasibility studies is a large part of what the organisations do, these studies do not contain any clauses on whether a project will be implemented if it is found feasible. Hemstock and Smith (2012) describe this practice as organisations "feed[ing] themselves" (p.98), and it results in countries having piles of reports on projects that could be implemented if there was funding for them. This issue is not unique to climate change adaptation: Turnbull (2004) found that in Fiji, half of the country's sporadic and piecemeal paragraphs of environmental policy written by foreign consultants had not even been officially approved by the government. A progress report on development coordination in Papua New Guinea stated that "legislative and procedural frameworks are adequate to good but … there is a problem with practice and compliance" (PIFS, 2013c, p.7). Besides, as mentioned above, it is difficult for countries to implement national strategies and frameworks for CCA if they have limited influence on the project design (PIFS, 2011b).

Secondly, the policies and reports are written by external consultants, which can cause ownership issues in governments and a disconnect with cultural traditions on the ground. A plan on establishing national parks in Fiji was ignored by the government because it did not pay attention to Fijian landownership traditions (Turnbull, 2004). Similarly, though a capacity building project teaching Fijian officials how to carry out Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) was found to be very successful in terms of the knowledge transferred, the Fijian government does not find

EIAs useful and thus rarely commissions any (Turnbull, 2004). These are examples of situations where the regional organisation's practice of hiring of foreign consultants undoes any benefits in terms of local knowledge that working with a regional rather than a global organisation might provide in the first place (Cash *et al.*, 2006).

Thirdly, since the regional organisations (SPREP and SPC particularly) see climate change adaptation as a technical issue with technical solutions, they tend to try to implement the same solutions in the entire region (pers.comm. 9; AusAID, 2000; Turnbull; 2004). The resulting overarching regional strategies are not only too general (pers.comm. 9), they are also easy for governments to ignore when that is deemed convenient. An example of this practice is the above-mentioned attempt by SPREP to introduce EIAs in Fiji without taking into account the socio-political factors which lead the Fijian government to use the EIAs much differently from how SPREP had intended (sporadically, only when donors showed interest and never for activities by indigenous Fijians on native land; Turnbull, 2004).

Member countries of SPREP were found to dislike the organisation's tendency to organise large, multi-country projects, even if they brought economies of scale (AusAID, 2000). Improved economies of scale are part of the reason why the PSIDST organised themselves in regional organisations in the first place. However, when donors fund projects the countries do not benefit from economies of scale, and most would rather have the projects be more tailored. For the regional organisations, large projects are attractive because they bring in a lot of money and because they require less administration than many separate small projects would (pers.comm. 8). For the SPC, the new ACP-EU *Building Safety & Resilience in the Pacific* project has a budget of close to EUR 20 million. However, that budget has to be divided among 15 countries over 4.5 years, which means that after SPC and national governments each take a share for administration, it is doubtful whether or not any of that money will end up funding projects on the ground (see also section 5.4; pers.comm. 8; SOPAC, 2014a). Here again the reality does not match the literature: according to Cash *et al.* (2006), regional organisations are less likely to impose one-size-fits-all solutions on their members. However, because of this combination of a technical approach to CCA and the fact that though small in size and population, the PSIDST are very diverse, the regional organisations end up implementing generic region-wide projects after all.

Donors and countries do agree, however, on the usefulness of capacity building. Fankhauser and Burton (2011) argue that in the short term capacity building projects provide the greatest benefits, and respondents agreed, because a lack of human capacity is one of the main problems particularly the smaller PSIDST face (see section 5.5; pers.comm. 3, 4; PIFS, 2013c). Precisely because of this weak human capacity and the strain frequent workshops can put on small governments, capacity building projects should be well-coordinated to avoid duplication (pers.comm. 9). Barnett and Campbell (2010) warn that capacity building projects often just build capacity to comply with the administrative demands of the organisations which fund them, rather than capacity to cope with the effects of climate change. An example of this was the first large climate change project implemented in the PSIDST, the Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Program. It was funded by the GEF and built capacity in the PSIDST to fulfil their reporting requirements to the UNFCCC. Though it had many positive side effects (for example, officials learned about the causes and effects of climate change, climate change teams were established in the PSIDST and it demonstrated the PSIDST' commitment to the global climate regime which paved the way for more projects), reporting was not the first priority of any of the national governments, and most would have preferred to have spent the time and money on implementing concrete projects instead (Barnett and Campbell, 2010).

5.1.2. National level versus local level

Most experts and the respondents in this study agree that the only level at which climate change adaptation can and should be implemented is the community level (pers.comm. 7, 9; Barnett and Campbell, 2010; Maclellan, Meads and Coates, 2012). However, despite growing pressure by donors for the regional organisations to implement more projects on the ground (pers.comm. 8, 9), community-level adaptation projects are still implemented mostly by NGOs (pers.comm. 7, 8). One of the reasons for this is that the members of the regional organisations are governments, and national priorities often differ from community priorities (pers.comm 9). Another reason is that the regional organisations and their foreign consultants often have difficulty getting the same kind of access to communities that small NGOs have (pers.comm. 8). NGOs often engage in longer-term commitments with communities, so they have more local knowledge and they have the trust of the

local people (e.g. Hemstock, forthcoming). According to Voccia (2012) the private sector should also play a larger role in working with local governments.

Another actor which is increasingly recognised as a crucial partner in ensuring the success of community-based adaptation is the church (pers.comm. 8). Most of the PSIDST are strongly religious, and churches are at the forefront of awareness-raising and education with regards to sustainability and climate change. A report by the University of New South Wales in Australia goes so far as to argue that "any sustainable development efforts undertaken by donors and development partners need to take the Church seriously as an agent for change." (Gero, Méheux and Dominey-Howes, 2010, p.15) The UNDP has also recognised this, and the Samoa Red Cross has begun organising its workshops through local churches, because that allows for the inclusion of women. In non-church contexts, women are often expected to prepare refreshments for the guests, which prevents them from participating (Gero, Méheux and Dominey-Howes, 2010). The Pacific Conference of Churches said that Pacific islanders need to be told by their church leaders that climate change is not a curse from God (Emberson, 2012). On the other hand, Caritas notes that a message of "God helps those who help themselves" (Gero, Méheux and Dominey-Howes, 2010, p.34) is important to prevent people relying on divine intervention to save them from sea level rise – a reliance which was found by Mortreux and Barnett (2009) to stand in the way of successful climate change adaptation in Tuvalu. One proposal asked churches to call on reverends to include information on climate change in their sermons (Prabha-Léopold, 2012). The report by the Gero, Méheux and Dominey-Howes (2010) did also contain a cautionary note about working with the church, though: it excludes non-Christian groups, such as the Indo-Fijians in Fiji, thus potentially enhancing an already far-reaching segregation.

5.1.3. The 'One Night Stand' Problem

A third issue with the way adaptation projects are set up in the PSIDST is what one of the respondents called the "one-night-stand" issue (pers.comm. 4). It is an issue which is seen in all areas of development: a team of foreigners arrives in a village, builds a water tank or a waste compactor and leaves, after which the locals do not have the means to operate or maintain their new facility and it quickly falls in disuse (e.g. Ostrom, 2010). An example is the Kosrae Shoreline Management Plan, which climate-

proofed the coastal road on the Micronesian island Kosrae. The project plan acknowledges that building coastal defences is not a long-term solution, and states that "Kosrae will need to ensure that substantial financial commitment is made to ensure that existing coastal defences are maintained and upgraded" (Ramsay *et al.*, 2013, p.15). The document includes no advice as to how Kosrae, an island with just over 6,500 inhabitants who are mostly subsistence farmers, is to achieve this (Pacific Small Business Development Center, no date; FSM Division of Statistics, 2010). This is the community equivalent of writing a policy in which the government has no interest, or for the implementation of which it has no money. This type of short-term, small-scale, discrete project is characteristic of climate change adaptation in the PSIDST (pers.comm. 4, 9; Maclellan, Meads and Coates, 2012). One respondent described this situation as adaptation still being in the pilot stage, and another commented that though adaptation should be a continuous process, in the PSIDST it currently is not (pers.comm. 4, 9). As mentioned before, project running times are limited because they are tied to government terms in donor countries (pers.comm. 7), and because the regional organisations lack core funding, they do not have the ability to adopt a more programmatic approach and fill in gaps left by donors themselves (pers.comm. 6, 8; AusAID, 2001; Barnett and Campbell, 2010).

The fact that projects usually last only three to four years affects their effectiveness and the countries in which they are implemented in several ways. Firstly, it reduces the scope for the organisation to gain understanding of local traditions and to make use of traditional ecological knowledge, and it means that it is difficult to build up trust in the community (pers.comm. 9). The description of the USP CCA project in Fiji by Barnett and Campbell (2010) gives examples of both of these problems: the project found that it was significantly more difficult to work with communities which had previously had negative experiences with development projects, and it discovered that despite previous efforts by others to raise awareness of climate change, many people did not understand what it meant because the word for 'climate' in Fijian iTaukei is the same as the word for 'weather'. Secondly, when a government department is involved in the implementation of a project, project consultants often end up performing core functions in that department much in the same way as they do in the regional organisations (pers.comm. 8). The Tongan Ministry for Environment and Climate Change depends on project funding for 80% of its budget (Maclellan, Meads

and Coates, 2012). The national statistics division of the Federated States of Micronesia would not exist if it were not granted continuous technical support by different donors (PIFS, 2013c). When a project ends or funding is cut, the consultants leave, and the country loses most of its division for climate change (pers.comm. 8). In this way, the design of the projects also prevents the building up of human capital in national governments.

Though most respondents agreed that a more integrated approach taking a more holistic view of CCA was necessary (pers.comm. 4, 6, 7, 8), one argued that the only organisations which have had a positive impact on communities have been those with a strong focus on a specific issue, such as health. Therefore, the issue of climate change adaptation should be broken up into small pieces and each piece should be tackled by a different expert organisation (pers.comm. 9). This view that more rather than fewer organisations should be involved seems to oppose everything else in this thesis, though perhaps it could be part of the solution when all specific projects together make up an overarching programme such as the CHICCHAP in Choiseul (Hobbs, 2013).

That would also prevent another issue of piecemeal adaptation, which is that for the same function different organisations often install different systems in the same country. In the case of renewable energy systems, for example, this means that in order to maintain these systems each village would need a differently trained electrician. If each organisation used the same system, it would be easier for the country to develop the capacity for self-sufficient maintenance (Hemstock and Smith, 2012).

5.2. Learning, evaluation and accountability

As mentioned above, projects generally do not include funding for monitoring or follow-ups. Regional organisations and donors alike usually do not evaluate their projects after they finish, nor do they have data on project outcomes (pers.comm. 6, 9). Even just finding out which adaptation projects have been implemented in a certain country can be an enormous task, because so far there is no complete central database of projects. Most projects organised bilaterally or carried out by NGOs slip under the radar of the regional organisations and even governments, because reporting is only done if a donor demands it (pers.comm. 3, 4, 8). One implementing

organisation even had trouble getting an overview of its own projects, as their records only contained information on proposed projects and activities, but it was found impossible to find out what exactly was done unless one contacted the people involved in implementation (pers.comm. 5). SPREP was criticised by AusAID (2000) because it submitted formal plans and reports for large donor projects, but carried out smaller activities in a much more informal manner, without a clear plan or any evaluation. Regional organisations are said to still do only as much reporting as strictly necessary to satisfy donors, and not all seemed to see any inherent value reporting (pers.comm. 3).

This lack of evaluation makes it difficult to learn from past mistakes and to establish which types of projects are the most successful. It also reduces accountability for the success or failure of projects. If a project turns out to have negative rather than positive impacts, who is responsible for this failure? The donor, the regional organisation or the national government (pers.comm. 9)? An example of a project which could have gone wrong was the climate proofing of coastal infrastructure in the Cook Islands. A proposed climate-proof raised dock was found after consultations with experts to be sea level rise-proof, but with current the sea level it would have been highly impractical and even dangerous to unload small vessels (PACC, 2006). If the project had been carried out in its original form, it is not clear who would have been responsible for practically making a port impossible to use.

5.3. Favouritism

The regional organisations do more work in some countries than in others. Sometimes this reflects demand, such as when larger PSIDST prefer to work directly with donors rather than go through a regional intermediary (pers.comm. 3; AusAID, 2000; Morita, 2009). At other times, though, the regional organisations show favouritism in a way which puts some countries at a disadvantage (pers.comm. 4). It is often easier to work with countries which have good infrastructure and a well-educated population, which is why the Cook Islands get so many projects (pers.comm. 6). Judging by their GDP (SPC, 2013b), though, the Cook Islands is not the country which needs the help most. This issue reflects the critique by some developing countries of the Green Development Mechanism: it encourages donors to choose projects which are relatively

easy to implement, leaving the countries to solve their worst problems themselves (Masters, 2011).

5.4. Where does the money go?

This topic has been touched upon briefly in the previous sections of this chapter but merits more elaboration. Two respondents expressed frustration with the fact that money for adaptation projects rarely or never reaches communities in PSIDST (pers.comm. 4, 9). For example, funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), first goes through a project partner such as the UNDP, then through a regional organisation and finally through a national government. By the time each of these organisations has taken a share for administration costs, there is little to nothing left, especially if the government has a problem with corruption (e.g. GEF, 2011b; pers.comm. 4).

On the way down through the different levels and organisations, a lot of the money gets spent on salaries of consultants from the countries the funds came from in the first place. Aid makes up 50% of Tuvalu's GDP, and a third of that 50% goes directly to foreign consultants, which are expensive, especially when compared to average salaries in the PSIDST (pers.comm. 9; Hemstock and Smith, 2012). An advertisement for a job opening for a data specialist to be based in the SPC office in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, included the promise of a monthly salary of between 5,000 and 7,000 USD, or roughly twice the Micronesian annual GDP per capita (Pacific Island Jobs, 2010; SPC, 2013b).

Most of the time, foreign consultants are needed because of a lack of capacity in the PSIDST. Sometimes, though these hiring policies are due to the strings attached to the funding, and to donor preferences for consultants from their own countries (a practice also described in Ellmers, 2011). In 2006, an AusAID official told a hearing at the Australian Senate that 80 to 90% of the money the Australian government invests in aid returns to Australia, because only Australian consultancy firms are considered for contracts (Banham, 2006). This practice has been described as 'boomerang aid' (Hawksley, 2009). This frustrates the PSIDST, and a Tuvaluan official told a researcher that he thought that projects should be designed to spend more money in communities, which would lead to "[an] increased amount of money actually benefiting Tuvalu rather than the consultants' pockets," and that donors should ask

themselves who they are working for: “The good of Tuvalu or to meet your own systems?” (Wrighton, 2010, pp. 109-110). The Tuvaluan Minister for Natural Resources told a reporter that regional organisations should help small countries access funding, but that they instead prioritise “big staff with big salaries”, so that funds are often spent before they reach their target (ABC News, 2014b).

This issue is increasingly recognised by donors. In 2009, the Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd made the following statement about Australia’s aid programmes in Papua New Guinea: “Too much money has been consumed by consultants and not enough money was actually delivered to essential assistance in teaching, in infrastructure, in health services on the ground, in the villages, across Papua New Guinea” (Maclellan, 2009, p.403). The Chair of a New Zealand government committee for foreign aid (among other matters) made a similar statement: “[T]he hundreds of millions of dollars spent by donors like New Zealand has [sic] not lifted the prosperity of the region in a sustained way…” (Maclellan, 2009, p.403). Though this recognition of the issue by two of the major donors in the region was promising, in practice nothing seems to have changed in the past five years.

The money that the regional organisations do not spend on foreign consultants or their own staff goes mainly to the organisation of meetings and workshops. In the PSIDST meetings revolve around food and drinks, on which a large share of the budget is spent (pers.comm. 9). Transporting people to and from meetings is also costly (pers.comm. 9). As mentioned before, the GEF also commented on a lack of institutional efficiency in its evaluation of SPREP, though that could be at least partly explained by the lack of core funding which means that sometimes project funding has to go towards core tasks (GEF, 2012). At other times, SPREP has been known to dedicate part of its scarce core funding to complementing projects, where the organisation deemed its member states’ requests were not being met (Barnett and Campbell, 2010).

However, it is not just the regional organisations which are to blame for money failing to reach communities. Maclellan, Meads and Coates (2012) stated that it can be very difficult for the PSIDST to trace the money for a project from when it is pledged until it reaches the ground. Pledges are usually made on very public occasions, but what happens after can be hard to follow. There is also a lot of ‘double counting’ of pledges, such as when US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton pledged USD 21 million to CCA in the

PSIDST in 2010, and then the same funding was re-announced by the US at the PIF meeting in 2011 (Maclellan, 2011; Maclellan, Meads and Coates, 2012).

The amount of money which is being invested in climate change projects in the PSIDST - "a disgusting amount of money"- as one respondent said (pers.comm. 6) attracts many NGOs, and new ones appear often. They all do "something with climate change"; some of them succeed, and some disappear after a short while (pers.comm. 6). This high number and turnover of NGOs (there are currently more than 1000 NGOs active in the region; Hay 2013) further complicates the task of getting an overview of CCA projects. According to some, the money is also the reason why all major regional organisations now implement climate change adaptation projects (pers.comm. 6, 7). It is likely that with the rise of the resilience discourse, according to which factors such as education and health increase resilience to climate change and therefore all education and health projects are now also climate change projects, the number of actors 'doing something with climate change' will grow even further (pers.comm. 6).

5.5. Institutional capacity and capability in the PSIDST

The greatest problem in the PSIDST themselves (particularly the smaller states) is a lack of institutional capacity in national and regional governments. The large number of discrete projects carried out by different actors, and the many meetings and workshops abroad put enormous pressure on the handful of people who make up a small PSIDST's climate change department (pers.comm. 9). This issue has been studied most extensively in Tuvalu (e.g. Wrighton, 2010), but there are also examples from other countries.

The problem is exacerbated by the rates of 'brain drain' (highly educated people emigrating) in the PSIDST, which are the highest in the world (Chand, 2008; Gibson and McKenzie, 2010). However, as Chand (2008), Gibson and McKenzie (2010) and Tisdell (2006) point out, it is possible that in the PSIDST the value of the remittances sent back by citizens working abroad is greater than the added value of those people working in the country itself, and for this reason some governments actively encourage skilled citizens to emigrate. The government of Kiribati, in fact, has established an education programme to teach people skills which will increase their chance of successfully emigrating to Australia and New Zealand. This programme is presented as a way to start the mass evacuation of the islands, with people who want

to leave encouraged to do so, and expected to provide support for those left behind in the form of remittances (Kiribati Office of the President, 2014).

Donors and regional organisations organise frequent missions to the countries they work in, to inspect current projects and plan new ones. The governments do not have any influence on when these missions take place, and there have been complaints that particularly multilateral organisations often fail to announce their missions before their arrival (PIFS, 2013c; Wrighton, 2010). In Tuvalu, this means that the permanent staff of the Ministry of the Environment, which consists of "four people, one of whom is the tea lady" (pers.comm. 9), spend so much of their time wining and dining donor representatives, that they can barely do any other work at all (PIFS, 2013c, Wrighton, 2010). In 2008, 900 visitors to Tuvalu stated that the official purpose of their visit was development-related, a number which corresponds to almost 10% of the Tuvaluan population (Wrighton, 2010). Siegel (2012) compares this to a hypothetical situation in which 30 million people visit Washington annually, "hoping to meet with Cabinet-level officials." In order to prevent these visits from holding up important government processes, several PSIDST governments now ask each of their partners to send mission schedules ahead of time, and instate a 'mission-free period' during the government budget review (PIFS, 2013c). The missions, though, are only a small part of the problem. Government ministries are frequently involved in the implementation of projects, but project timelines and deadlines are determined by donors without regard for the other duties of the ministries (Vize, 2012).

Sometimes poor planning on the part of the country itself also exacerbates the capacity issues. In Tonga it was reported that "a considerable capacity gap" was left when three senior officials in the Planning and Policy Division took study leave at the same time (PIFS, 2013c, p.9).

Another problem is posed by workshops and meetings abroad, which keep officials out of the country for extended periods of time (pers.comm. 9; Wrighton, 2010). The climate change-related organisations in the Pacific and beyond organise so many events which PSIDST representatives are expected to attend to show goodwill, that officials are sometimes gone for months on end. In Tuvalu, there are times when not a single member of government is in the country (Siegel, 2012). Besides the number of meetings, the distances and lack of transportation links also contribute to

the problem. For Tuvaluan officials, a meeting of four days in Nadi, Fiji, means leaving the country for at least nine days, even though there is a direct flight from Tuvalu's capital Funafuti to Nadi (Wrighton, 2010). A report on aid harmonisation counted 120 different meetings in 11 months which were attended by members of the Samoan Aid Coordination Unit (AusAID and the New Zealand Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade [NZ MFAT], 2001).

Due to the circumstances described above, government officials in the smallest PSIDST hardly ever manage to dedicate time to performing their core tasks (pers.comm. 9; Wrighton, 2010). This is one of the reasons why governments do not manage to take charge or even keep an overview of all CCA projects which are implemented in their countries. Though their main problem is a lack of time and human capacity rather than a lack of core funding, PSIDST governments just like the regional organisations are forced by donors into adopting a piecemeal approach to CCA.

The capacity problems go further than this. The Tuvaluan government cannot manage to complete the complicated application processes for funding, so the donors or regional organisations need to send technical assistants to help apply for funding which more often than not is then denied (Wrighton, 2010; Hemstock and Smith; 2012). To prevent wasting time and resources, countries often only start preparing an application for funding after assurance from a donor that it will be accepted. However, the deadline set by the donor for the submission of the application once the assurance is given is often so tight that it is then missed (Maclellan, Meads and Coates, 2012). For most funding applications, the project has to be shown to fit into a national plan or strategy, which at times need to be written especially for a project. This is how Nauru, a country of 21 km² with a population of 10,500 (SPC, 2013b), ended up with a climate change plan, a disaster plan, a drought strategy, a water plan, and an energy action plan (pers.comm. 8; SPREP, 2012e). The disproportionate burdens on PSIDST from application processes and reporting demands are mentioned frequently, but though donor organisations know about the issues, they have thus far refused to be more flexible (pers.comm. 3; Tavola *et al.*, 2006; Barnett and Campbell, 2010; Maclellan, Meads and Coates, 2012). In Tuvalu, it was found that the amount of time and effort spent applying for funding was inversely related to the amount of funding received, as

the UN agencies and the GEF are particularly demanding but do not grant as much funding as bilateral donors do (Wrighton, 2010). This could be related to the fact that these large donors tend to fund region-wide projects such as the EU-ACP project mentioned earlier.

In conclusion, effective climate change adaptation in the PSIDST is hindered by the combination of a myriad of organisations working on the same issue with governments so small that they cannot even manage all donor visits (let alone take charge of the coordination and monitoring of projects), along with donors which design and plan projects without considering the convenience and priorities of the governments. A combination of increased regional coordination, donor awareness and national capacity building could go some way to improving this situation (pers.comm. 4; Maclellan, Meads and Coates, 2012; PIFS, 2013c). Chapter 6 describes the way the regional system is currently developing, as well as visions for the future from respondents and the literature.

6. Current and future developments in the regional institutional framework

The previous chapters have described the regional institutional framework for the implementation of climate change adaptation in the PSIDST, and some of the issues which prevent it from providing the countries with effective climate change adaptation projects. This chapter outlines current developments in the system, and proposals for improving the system from the interviews and the document analysis. It will also answer the question of whether or not a large overhaul of the system, granting the full mandate for climate change adaptation to one organisation, would be an improvement, and whether it would be possible.

6.1. Climate change: What has changed?

Many of the problems with the regional institutional framework for CCA, such as the competition amongst organisations, the donor control and the lack of in-country capacity, are not unique to climate change adaptation (Turnbull, 2004; PIFS, 2013c). However, climate change has brought about some changes in the way the system functions.

Firstly, it has made coordination among actors more important than ever. Climate change adaptation has inspired growing attention to the links between different, previously viewed as separate, sectors of development. Climate change and CCA are issues which cut across the boundaries of the mandates of not only the regional organisations but also donors and multilateral organisations (pers.comm. 2, 3; Maclellan, Meads and Coates, 2012).

Secondly, the perceived urgency of climate change adaptation in the PSIDST is very high, not just in the countries themselves but also in donor countries (e.g. pers.comm. 4, 6, 7; PACE-SD, 2011; United Nations Environment Programme [UNEP], 2013). It has attracted a lot of attention. Out of all peer reviewed articles on the PSIDST in the University of Manchester online library, over 25% is about or refers to climate change (University of Manchester Library, 2014). Funafuti in Tuvalu is so overrun by researchers and journalists wishing to talk about climate change that Barnett and Mortreux (2006) found that the locals showed clear signs of researcher fatigue. Barnett and Campbell (2010) note that the western media often describe the Pacific islands as endangered species, 'Titanic states' or 'canaries in the coalmine'. Even disregarding their questionable scientific accuracy, there are problems with such

depictions, as they spread an image of hopelessness which can discourage investment and convince islanders that using resources sustainably is pointless as the islands soon will no longer exist (Barnett and Adger, 2003).

Thirdly, climate change has brought more funding into the region than ever before (pers.comm. 6). This could be due partly to the images of 'Titanic states', though climate change has also brought about a general shift in the aid discourse. Rather than altruism or political interest, climate change-related funding is increasingly framed as paying off a climate debt or compensating for injustice (Tanner and Alouche, 2011). As mentioned before, this unprecedented availability of funding inspires the creation of numerous new NGOs (pers.comm. 6) and causes convergence in the activities of regional organisations. This is not just because the organisations are opportunistic; funding has also shifted from other issues towards climate change, which means that the ROs have had to adapt or shrink (pers.comm. 6, 7). According to one of the respondents, the only real difference between climate change adaptation and other development issues, such as gender equality, is that it is so well-funded (pers.comm. 6).

6.2. Further fragmentation

When asked about the future of the institutional framework for CCA, most respondents agreed that it was likely to become further fragmented, with more actors appearing because the funding flows are still growing (pers.comm. 6, 9), because the private sector will play an increasingly larger role (pers.comm. 6) or because traditional donors (such as Australia, see section 6.4) are becoming more unreliable which leads countries to look elsewhere for funding (pers.comm. 4).

It is unlikely that the number of regional organisations will grow, as the existing organisations have with the reorganisation proven that they are dedicated to avoiding the overlap of mandates (Tavola *et al*., 2006). However, existing regional organisations which have thus far played a limited role in CCA, such as the PIDF and the MSG, are expected to expand their activities in the future, making for a more crowded regional system (Dornan, 2013).

6.3. The role of bilateral funding

This section describes the other major source of funding for CCA in the PSIDST besides the regional organisations: bilateral donors. As mentioned before, there are several

advantages to the PSIDST of working with bilateral donors. They usually require less paperwork, more funds end up in the country itself (Wrighton, 2010) and more practical solutions are delivered (Hemstock and Smith, 2012). Donor countries such as China and Japan are known to have used environmental and climate change projects in the region to 'soften' their global image as polluters and destructive tuna fishers, and to present themselves as alternatives to Australia's climate-scepticism (Tarte, 1997; Hayward-Jones and Brant, 2013).

The PSIDST and their bilateral donor partners have frequently been accused of engaging in chequebook diplomacy, which usually means trading aid for votes in the United Nations (Poling and Larsen, 2012; Australia Network News, 2013b). Though they each have a UN vote, due to their smallness and isolation the PSIDST generally have very little interest in the issues which are voted on in the UN General Assembly. This has created a market for the 12 Pacific 'floating votes', which are usually not enough to change the outcome of a UN vote, but they do help make a statement (Poling and Larsen, 2012). For example, in the vote on granting UN observer status to Palestine in November 2012, four out of the eight countries which voted against along with Israel were PSIDST (UN GA, 2012). Three of those were the countries in free association with the USA, which would not vote against Israel for that reason, and the fourth was Nauru, which receives generous amounts of development funding from the Israeli government (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010; Cheslow, 2013). A year before, the Israeli press reported on the United Arab Emirates allegedly offering the Palauan government USD 50 million to side with them against Israel (Jones, 2011). In another example Russia paid Nauru USD 50 million in exchange for its recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, two regions which declared their independence from Georgia (Poling and Larsen, 2012).

This chequebook diplomacy is not a new phenomenon, though it has attracted attention in recent years. In the 1980s, the PSIDST cunningly exploited Western Cold War concerns (Tarte, 1997). More recently they made large profits from the rivalry between China and Taiwan, by repeatedly changing alliances or even just expressing interest in relations with one or the other (Poling and Larsen, 2012). The PSIDST are in a unique position to do so, since they are so small that they are immune to China's power: their import and export markets are small enough so that a boycott by China

would not make a significant difference to their economies (Atkinson, 2010). Though China is much larger and more powerful than Taiwan, Taiwan takes very good care of the few allies it has. The PSIDST therefore have little strategic incentive to choose either one, so that they can let their allegiance depend solely on which offers the most money in return (Atkinson, 2010).

China and Taiwan have been engaged for decades in an intense aid rivalry in the PSIDST to convince the other's diplomatic allies to switch allegiances. In 2008 the two rivals agreed on a truce, but in practice this has not changed much (Atkinson, 2010; Poling and Larsen, 2012). In most cases Taiwan and China fund projects in allied countries to strengthen ties. These projects are designed to leave lasting, and sometimes unsubtle, proof of the countries' generosity. Other donor countries have expressed concerns that, since China and Taiwan provide funding with the purpose of satisfying governments, the funding generally benefits politicians rather than communities. Since governments prefer direct grants without strings attached, there are hardly any reporting requirements on how the funds are spent (Yang, 2009, Atkinson 2010). When implementing projects, neither Taiwan nor China engages in capacity building or other soft projects. Both fund mostly the construction of government buildings in their allied PSIDST (pers.comm. 6, 7; Field, 2006). For example, Taiwan built the parliament of Tuvalu, which is the largest building in the country (Field, 2006; Atkinson 2010). The projects directly implemented by Taiwan and China do not benefit climate change adaptation significantly. However, governments are free to spend the direct grants as they wish, which creates potential for nationally implemented adaptation projects.

Sometimes this chequebook diplomacy directly fuels corruption and violence. Documents leaked through Wikileaks in 2011 noted that Taiwan paid government ministers in Nauru a monthly stipend of AUD 5,000 in return for maintaining the alliance with Taiwan (Dorling, 2011). When governments cannot be convinced to switch alliances, China has been known to pay voters to elect a pro-China government, and both countries have been accused of using grants to funnel violence against existing governments (Atkinson, 2010; Poling and Larsen, 2012). Chinese aid is said to have paid at least partly for the 2006 coup in Fiji, and even if that cannot be proven, China increased its aid-pledges seven-fold in the year after the coup, to compensate

for the income the country lost as it was boycotted by Australia and other western countries (Hanson and Hayward-Jones, 2009; Poling and Larsen, 2012). Also in 2006, Chinese bribes helped re-elect the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands, who was widely viewed as corrupt. Angry Solomon Islanders responded by destroying Honiara's Chinatown (Field, 2006). A similar situation led to riots in Nuku'alofa, the capital of Tonga, during which the city's Chinatown was burned down (Dobell, 2007). Aid from Taiwan has also been linked to such events (Poling and Larsen, 2012).

The growing presence of China in the Pacific islands region does not only upset Taiwan, it also causes disquiet in the 'traditional' donor countries (Australia Network News, 2013a), particularly in Australia, which owes its reputation as a global middle power to its dominance in the Pacific (Hawksley, 2009). The PSIDST leaders are expected to use the traditional donors' concerns about China's influence as leverage to negotiate more aid from them (Hayward-Jones and Brant, 2013).

However, Australia is still the largest donor to the region, followed by the United States and China (Poling and Hansen, 2012; Australia Network News, 2013a). China is unlikely to replace Australia as the most important power in the PSIDST because it is unlikely to be willing and able to match Australia's contributions to the region. Currently, most of China's aid consists of soft loan packages, but the PSIDST which qualify for those loans are already so heavily in debt that they are unlikely to want to incur more (Dobell, 2007; Poling and Larsen, 2012). China also suffers from severe image issues in the PSIDST, partly due to its poor human rights record (Yang, 2009). China has been trying to improve its image by speaking about the severity of climate change impacts at a time when Australia is becoming increasingly climate-sceptic (see section 6.4), though whether or not this has helped is unknown (Hayward-Jones and Brant, 2013).

Increasingly, Australian, American and Chinese leaders use the Pacific Islands Forum meetings as platforms for their posturing. In 2012 then US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton attended the PIF meeting in Rarotonga, Cook Islands, in a move which was widely interpreted as part of Washington's plan to provide a counterweight to China's growing influence in the region (Lanteigne, 2012; O'Keeffe, 2012). The Chinese delegation in response scheduled a press conference for the exact time Clinton arrived, and the Chinese media reported the trip was aimed at "stirring up disputes"

(Osnos, 2012). After the meeting in 2011, which was attended by among others the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso, PSIDST leaders complained about their voices being lost amongst all those more powerful leaders fighting their own battles in a Forum which should be serving the interests of the PSIDST (Maclellan, 2011; Oxfam, 2012). This shows a further disconnect between the PSIDST and their developed country partners, where the media wrote about the countries "relish[ing] their moment on [the] diplomatic stage" (Flitton, 2012), and about the situation as an opportunity for the PSIDST to "cash in" on global tensions (Grubel, 2012).

6.4. Political developments in Australia

As mentioned before, Australia has large interests in the PSIDST not only for military or strategic reasons but also because it owes its reputation as a middle power to its dominance in the region (Hawksley, 2009). After a number of Australian faux-pas which upset PSIDST leaders in the late 1990s and early 2000s, such as a report personally attacking PSIDST politicians being leaked in 1997 and the Foreign Minister referring to the PSIDST as "busted arse countries" in 2001 (Dobell, 2012, p.33), the Australian government managed to create more goodwill in the countries during the time when Kevin Rudd was Prime Minister (Hawksley, 2009). Canberra even went so far as to change its rhetoric on the PSIDST from referring to the 'arc of instability' (its very own axis of evil) to speaking of the 'arc of responsibility' (Dobell, 2012). Australia currently provides more than 50 % of all donor funding to the PSIDST (O'Keeffe, 2012), and is also an important contributor to the budgets of the regional organisations (e.g. Winder, Lambourne and Vaai, 2012). This means that the PSIDST rely for a large part of their climate change adaptation funding on a country with a Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, who once referred to the science behind climate change as "crap" (Marks, 2013). Abbott later declared he had changed his mind and that climate change is real, though abolishing the carbon tax remained one of the spear points of his election campaign (McDonald, 2013; Marks, 2014). Abbott's government also abolished AusAID as a separate organisation and integrated its functions into the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, to improve the alignment of aid with Australia's diplomatic and trade interests (Australian DFAT, 2013a). On the other hand, Minister for Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop announced that the new government's foreign policy would be

more focused on the region, or "more Jakarta, less Geneva" (Taylor, 2013), which is likely to work in the favour of the PSIDST. Australia is said to already be pulling funding out of projects in Africa, which will be redirected to the region (pers.comm. 6).

If CCA funding by Australia becomes unreliable, even if just in the perception of PSIDST governments, the PSIDST will probably start looking for sources of funding elsewhere, which could lead to an intensification of the chequebook diplomacy in the region (pers.comm. 4). In 2012, Fiji demonstrated the readiness of the PSIDST to pursue new avenues when donors fail to provide the requested support. The Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda announced a new aid package to the PSIDST during a meeting in Tokyo, but failed to personally invite the Fijian Prime Minister. In response to this, no representatives of the Fijian government attended, and PM Bainimarama announced in the same week that Fiji would be opening an embassy in the United Arab Emirates, which was explained in the press as a warning to Japan (Radio Australia, 2012b).

The respondents held widely divergent opinions on the impact of Australia's new approach to aid and climate change on adaptation in the PSIDST. One respondent said the Pacific leaders were "still hoping they will come to their senses" and predicted it would cause further fragmentation of the regional institutional system as countries would start exploring other sources of funding, just in case (pers.comm. 4). Others said that the difference would be barely noticeable overall, as the disinterest of Abbott's government in climate change would be compensated for by its increased interest in deep sea mining in the PSIDST (pers.comm. 9). Also, as one respondent pointed out, though the Australian government may cut funding for CCA, it will still fund projects for economic development. In the same manner in which most development projects in the PSIDST can now be called CCA projects under the guise of building resilience, CCA projects can be carried out as 'regular' development projects (pers.comm. 6).

6.5. Visions for the Future

6.5.1. Would one organisation be a solution?

As discussed in Chapter 1, according to the literature climate change adaptation should be the mandate of one regional organisation rather than many, as is the case in the PSIDST (e.g. Barnett, 2001). However, both the document analysis and the interviews

proved that this would not be a good solution for the PSIDST. Several decades ago it might still have been a possibility, and in fact the founders of the PIF in 1971 initially thought it made the SPC redundant and that the SPC should be abolished[25] (PIDP, 2001). The report on the Institutional Framework Reform contains an alternative proposal which is to merge all CROP agencies into one, but besides the membership problems which would still be an issue (see footnote 25), none of the stakeholders interviewed for that report thought it was a viable option (Tavola *et al.*, 2006).

The respondents gave many different reasons why one regional organisation for climate change adaptation in the PSIDST would not work, though some agreed that it would be ideal (pers.comm. 4, 6, 8). Several respondents said that the issue is far too large to be handled by any one of the existing organisations (pers.comm. 4, 6, 8; Jon Barnett, e-mail correspondence, Feb 23, 2014). Establishing a new organisation would be counter-productive, and it is unlikely that the existing organisations would be willing to give up their mandates for CCA. One respondent commented that even just logistically one CCA organisation would be impossible, in terms of housing and staff movement (pers. comm. 8). Finding a location for the headquarters of the one organisation would also be problematic: though Suva is the regional hub and (due to the existence Fiji Airways) has the best transport connections, many officials in other PSIDST are already worried that the gravitation of regional services towards Fiji threatens Pacific regionalism (Tavola *et al*., 2006). Several people also emphasised that climate change adaptation should not be seen as an environmental issue, but rather that it should be recognised as an issue which cuts across many different fields (pers.comm. 3, 4, 6), as is also argued by Bouwer and Aerts (2006). Other objections mentioned were that even one regional organisation would still not have a complete overview of adaptation projects as it would fail to register bilaterally and NGO-funded projects (pers.comm. 8), that the organisation would become unfocused and complacent due to lack of competition (pers.comm. 6), and that there is no time for a large overhaul in the system with climate change already causing severe problems (pers.comm. 4).

[25] It was decided that the PIF and the SPC should coexist only because the new PIF did not accept territories among its ranks. The SPC would be allowed to exist to give non-independent countries a voice in regional affairs until all had achieved independence (PIDP, 2001).

6.5.2. Alternative solutions

Granting the entire mandate for CCA to one regional organisation, then, is not the solution. Most respondents agreed that what is necessary is improving the existing system rather than establishing an entirely new one (pers.comm. 4, 6, 8; see also Tavola *et al*., 2006). Better coordination and cooperation (pers.comm. 4), more monitoring and sharing of adaptation project outcomes (pers.comm. 6, 9) and attempting to adopt a more programmatic approach with long-term commitments rather than piecemeal projects (pers.comm. 4, 6, 8, 9) were among the proposed improvements. Though the regional organisations could implement the first two, the latter depends entirely on the donors.

An alternative solution which was brought up frequently, both in reports and in interviews, is to move the responsibility for coordination down to the national level. In that way, adaptation projects by all donors implemented at all levels could be followed (provided governments keep track of NGO activities in their countries; pers.comm. 4, 8; PIFS, 2013a; SPREP, 2013c). This could be achieved by establishing National Implementing Entities (NIEs) which would effectively perform the roles the regional organisations play now, but at a national level (pers.comm. 4, 8; PIFS, 2013a). The regional organisations would provide information, facilitate contacts with donors and at times help relieve the administrative burden on countries, but the implementation would be left to the countries themselves, using national and local institutional infrastructure rather than donors and regional organisations providing their own (pers.comm. 4; PIFS, 2013a). The NIEs could also apply for accreditation with global funds, such as the Adaptation Fund (AF; PIFS, 2013a). However, for such a system to function, the capacity issues in the PSIDST would have to be resolved first, and donors and regional organisations would have to have enough trust in the capacity and honesty of country governments. While the PSIDST work on establishing their NIEs, SPREP's accreditation by the AF serves as an interim solution (PIFS, 2013a; SPREP, 2013c). Bringing the responsibility for implementation down to the national level would provide some of the benefits promised in the literature for regional organisations, such as increased local knowledge, trust and legitimacy (Adger, Arnell and Tompkins, 2005; Cash *et al*., 2006). This approach would align with the subsidiarity principle of organising adaptation on the lowest scale which has the capacity to do it

(as championed by the European Commission, 2013). It may well be found, though, that for the smallest PSIDST that lowest level is the regional one. In fact, the reason why the regional organisations are still needed is that the PSIDST themselves lack the capacity for implementing projects or even for communicating with all different donors (PIFS, 2013c).

Other proposals include establishing trust funds for CCA at the national level or for regional organisations. However, experience with national trust funds has taught that they have mostly failed to lead to more self-reliance (Le Borgne and Medas, 2007). In 2010, the Cook Islands set up a trust fund for CCA and DRMA, though one of the officials in charge said that some of the obstacles which still needed to be overcome were "identifying the source of funding to establish the Trust Fund and identifying further funding to grow the Trust Fund" (SPREP, 2012d). The Trust Fund has now been established with initial funding of NZD 200,000 from the New Zealand government, though commitments for annual contributions had not yet been made (Preventionweb, 2012). A trust fund structure to provide more reliable core funding to the regional organisations could also be an option, though its success would depend heavily on donor cooperation.

It seems that future developments in the Pacific Regional Institutional Framework for CCA can only be controlled by the regional organisations to a limited extent. Proposed solutions to the ineffectiveness of the system tend to run into insurmountable obstacles either at the donor- or at the national level, if not both. Perhaps the way forward, then, should be one of small tweaks rather than large changes. Facilitating successful links between small PSIDST and large demanding donors is not an easy task, and it is currently made harder by the problems within the regional system itself. If the regional organisations manage to improve their coordination and cooperation, increase the monitoring and sharing of adaptation outcomes, convince the donors to be more considerate of national priorities and constraints, and overcome their accountability issues and intra- and inter-organisational tensions, they can become much more effective hubs in the network of actors in PSIDST climate change adaptation.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1. Conclusions

Throughout this thesis, many reasons are described why climate change adaptation projects in the Pacific small island developing states and territories have thus far had little impact on the actual capacity of communities to cope with climate change. None of the reasons given are related to scientific uncertainty. Despite the lack of reliable scientific data on the impacts of climate change in the PSIDST, many common sense adaptation activities have been identified which increase community resilience regardless of the precise extent of future climate change impacts: building rainwater tanks, stabilising shorelines, protecting wells and agricultural land from saltwater intrusion, introducing salt-tolerant crops and water-efficient farming methods, reducing the vulnerability of buildings to extreme weather events, etcetera (McNamara, Hemstock and Holland, 2012). The problem is not that countries and regional organisations do not know what to do; the problem is that socio-political factors stop them from taking action. Some of these factors lie within the regional organisations, and some lie on other levels, with donors or the PSIDST. Though the regional organisations do not have control over the entire system, they can make certain improvements. If the donors are also willing to change their practices, effective climate change adaptation is definitely within the realm of possibility.

The literature on regional organisations working on climate change, which is mainly based on developed country organisations dealing with mitigation (e.g. Benson, 2010; Ostrom, 2012), is not directly applicable to climate change adaptation in the PSIDST. This is not because the PSIDST are developing countries, but because climate change adaptation requires different institutional arrangements than mitigation does: it is less about national or regional regulations or carbon markets, and more about education and technical solutions in communities. In the PSIDST, where climate change is expected to impact all aspects of life and society, climate change adaptation consequently includes measures ranging from enhancing infrastructure resilience to extreme weather events, to helping people cope psychologically with forced emigration (pers.comm. 3, 4). Besides sea level rise, these needs are not new to climate change; islands have been evacuated before and cyclones have always been a threat (Barnett and Campbell, 2010). Climate change has made the need to find

solutions more pressing, but in many cases it has not significantly changed the technical aspects of these solutions. That means that the same organisations which dealt with disaster resilience before climate change became an issue, should still be dealing with it now, rather than moving the responsibility for disaster resilience to an environmental organisation because suddenly, because of climate change, it is an environmental issue. This is why even just from a technical perspective, making SPREP the only organisation for CCA project implementation, as proposed by Barnett and Campbell (2010) and Hay (2013), among others, does not make sense. SPREP could be the information and facilitation hub of the regional organisations, though, and to a certain extent it already is. It convenes the PCCR and is co-chair of the CES-CC (CROP, 2012), but the effectiveness of both organs is disputed (pers.comm. 3, 4, 7, 9).

Despite the fact that one organisation for CCA is not the right solution for the PSIDST, the literature does contain some useful tools for analysing the regional organisations. It also raises questions about why these organisations do not provide the benefits regional organisations should provide (greater knowledge of local cultures and traditions, the provision of tailored rather than one-size-fits-all solutions, and enhanced trust and legitimacy, among others; Adger, Arnell and Tompkins, 2005; Cash *et al*., 2006; Scannel and Gifford, 2013). The answer to these questions lies partially in the fact that the organisations do not fulfil the criteria for successful regional organisations. Rather than a non-hierarchical system (Cash *et al*., 2006; Benson, 2010), the regional institutional framework for CCA in the PSIDST is a system with a very clear hierarchical structure, where the donors wield great power in the regional organisations (partly because many of them are members and can exercise this power from within; Turnbull, 2004). Individual countries have very little opportunity to influence adaptation projects. The donor dominance of the system and the donor practice to grant almost exclusively project-specific funding results in the lack of core funding in regional organisations, which in turn causes their lack of local knowledge, as projects are implemented by foreign consultants (pers.comm. 9; AusAID, 2001; Wrighton, 2010). This donor dominance also results in a lack of accountability of the regional organisations towards the PSIDST, which decreases trust and legitimacy to the extent that the countries tend to trust global organisations more than the regional ones (Tutangata and Power, 2002). The use of foreign consultants for the

implementation of projects also reduces the capacity of the organisations to build up trust and social capital in the governments and communities they work with (Brondizio, Ostrom and Young, 2009). The fact that the regional organisations often resort to one-size-fits-all solutions can be partially explained by donor preference for such projects, but is also due to the great variety of cultures in the PSIDST which makes it almost impossible to provide all communities with specially tailored projects (Barnett and Campbell, 2010).

The notion of the need to build physical, human and social capital (Brondizio, Ostrom and Young, 2009) is useful too, for identifying flaws in project design. The type of technical adaptation project which has thus far been implemented provides physical capital (material goods) and human capital (expertise). However, the human capital does not remain in the community; once the project is finished, the experts leave. As Brondizio, Ostrom and Young (2009) warned, in the long term physical capital is only useful when human capital is available to maintain it. This is the main issue with the Kosrae Shoreline Management Plan mentioned in Chapter 5 (Ramsay *et al.*, 2013). However, even when both physical and human capital are present a project can still fail to provide long-term benefits if there is a lack of social capital. Social capital means not only trust in the organisation which implements the project, but also commitment to the project and a sense of ownership in the community so that it will be continued when the project team leaves. This was what was lacking in the rainwater harvesting project mentioned by one of the respondents (pers.comm. 6): the community did not keep the rain gutters clean and so they became useless in a matter of months.

As mentioned before, the objections by the PSIDST to the existing regional organisations are similar to the objections raised to the global climate regime. The PIF is seen as overly bureaucratic and all organisations are dominated by a small number of powerful players (pers.comm. 6; Turnbull, 2004; Lanteigne, 2012; Seneviratne, 2013). There are still concerns about one-size-fits-all solutions (AusAID, 2000), and because the donors for projects are global organisations, the PSIDST are faced with the same reporting demands as they would if the regional organisations did not perform the role of intermediary (pers.comm. 3). Does this mean that CCA should be organised on a smaller scale still? The subsidiarity principle, which is one of the guiding principles for decision making in the EU, states that decisions should be made on the smallest

scale where there is sufficient capacity to make them (Europa, 2010). That seems to make sense, particularly when dealing with a subject as community-specific as climate change adaptation. Considering the lack of institutional capacity in a number of the PSIDST, though, it may well be that the lowest level with sufficient capacity is the regional one (AusAID, 2000; PIFS, 2013a). The sub-regional organisations could form an intermediary level between the regional organisations and the countries, though of these only the Melanesian Spearhead Group has thus far shown sufficient capacity, and the members of that group are the largest countries in the region, which were not suffering from capacity issues to begin with (Komai, 2013). It seems that at least for the foreseeable future, the regional level is where most CCA will be organised.

7.2. Recommendations

Below follow some conclusions and recommendations for priorities specific to the three main groups of actors in the regional institutional framework: the regional organisations, the donors and the countries.

7.2.1.The regional organisations

The regional organisations each have their own problems which at times prevent them from taking effective action on climate change adaptation. The Pacific Islands Forum is overly bureaucratic and dominated by New Zealand and Australia, and thus does not accurately represent the PSIDST's interests (Lanteigne, 2012; Winder, Lambourne and Vaai, 2012). The Secretariat of the Pacific Community is disproportionately influenced by France, lacks the core funding to adopt a programmatic approach to adaptation and hires foreign consultants for the implementation of projects, which reduces benefits of local knowledge and trust in communities (pers.comm. 6, 9; Wrighton, 2010). The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme is too small, and has limited expertise mostly related to the environment (pers.comm. 3, 6, 9). The University of the South Pacific struggles with corruption and lacks a mandate for CCA (pers.comm. 7, 9; Wilson, 2013). The Pacific Islands Development Forum is a promising alternative but suffers from the political squabbles surrounding its founding and its founder (Poling, 2013; Tarte, 2013a); its future significance will most likely depend on whether or not Fijian PM Bainimarama wins the Fijian elections in September 2014. If he does, suspicions will persist that the PIDF is a political gimmick to punish New Zealand, Australia and the PIF for Fiji's suspension. As long as promoting the PIDF can

be interpreted as an open challenge to New Zealand and Australia, the PSIDST are likely to refrain from doing so. Finally, the sub-regional organisations are either too small and cautious (MCES, PLG; Komai, 2013; PLG, 2013) or too divided (MSG; Newton Cain, 2014).

A number of improvements should ideally be made by the regional organisations, though most of them require the support of their donors. Firstly, coordination among the organisations and among the coordinating bodies needs to improve. Though some interviewees expressed content with the PCCR and the CES-CC, others stated that there was still very little cooperation in practice, and that this was a typical case of a system looking very organised from the outside (through documents published on the internet) but in practice "it's a mess!" (pers.comm. 3, 4, 7, 9). A closer cooperation or at the very minimum a clear definition of the relation between the CES-CC and the PCCR would also be beneficial.

The regional organisations (SPC and SPREP in particular) should also focus on acquiring more core funding, though as said before, or not they succeed in this depends entirely on the donors. Core funding is needed so that the organisations can be more responsive to PSIDST requests and priorities, which will increase the legitimacy of both organisations and projects in the member countries (AusAID, 2000 and 2001; Barnett and Campbell, 2010). More core funding would also mean that the organisations could hire permanent, preferably regional staff to implement their projects. Hiring more staff from the region, provided the right skills are available, would be a good idea even if it is still on a project basis. Though a Fijian implementing a project in the Solomon Islands is still a foreigner, local communities respond better to people from similar cultural backgrounds. No other organisation has used this fact more successfully than the New Zealand army, which adopted Maori rather than traditional western protocol on its peace keeping missions in the region in the 1990s and 2000s. The presence of Maori soldiers gave the army more of a cultural connection to the locals than for example the Australians had, and it greatly helped building trust in communities (Capie, 2012; Dobell, 2013).

7.2.2. The donor level

The main practice the donors should change is that of only providing the regional organisations (and in the case of bilateral projects, the relevant government ministries) with project-specific funding. Though the section on bilateral donors and chequebook diplomacy showed that funding to PSIDST without strings attached frequently disappears in politicians' pockets (Atkinson, 2010), the regional organisations have shown over the years to be committed and reliable project partners and as such deserve to be trusted with long-term core funding (pers.comm. 6, 8). Though demands can be made for the funding to be spent on some issues rather than others, clauses on funding needing to be spent on consultants or other services from the donor country (Hawksley, 2009) should be avoided as much as possible.

With regards to the PSIDST themselves, it would be good if the donor organisations were less stringent with their application and reporting requirements, which at the moment put an unreasonable amount of pressure on small governments' time and resources (Wrighton, 2010; Maclellan, Meads and Coates, 2012; PIFS, 2013c). The donors should also be more considerate of capacity issues in the PSIDST in general, for example by adjusting project timelines to government schedules (Vize, 2012). Donors should also coordinate missions, meetings and workshops which require the presence of PSIDST officials in such a way that the burden on small country governments remains manageable (Wrighton, 2010; PIFS, 2013c).

Finally, the donors should take a step back in project design and pay more attention to both the PSIDST and the regional organisations, to increase the sense of ownership of projects both on the national and the community level (Maclellan, Meads and Coates, 2012). The donors have to acknowledge that adaptation to climate change needs to be a continuous, grassroots process; communities cannot 'be adapted' from the outside.

7.2.3. The national level

The PSIDST need to work on resolving their capacity issues where possible. A first step would for governments to attempt to put a stop to the brain drain from their countries, rather than encourage well-educated citizens to move abroad and send back remittances (Chand, 2008; Gibson and McKenzie, 2010). Though for the smallest countries establishing a full national implementing entity is probably not achievable, every country should be able to put in place the mechanisms to keep an overview of

the projects being implemented in the country (pers.comm. 8; PIFS, 2013a). For this purpose any agencies implementing projects should be required to report all activities to the national government, a rule which in some PSIDST currently does not exist and in others is not enforced (pers.comm. 4, 8).

Another issue which the PSIDST have to focus on is to show a real commitment to combating corruption to increase donor trust in the countries (Maclellan, Meads and Coates, 2012). They should also consider diversifying their sources of donor income, so as to reduce dependence on Australia. The PSIDST should be selective in choosing new diplomatic allies as much as they can afford. Fiji's recent tight relationship with the United Arab Emirates (Radio Australia, 2012b; Tarte, 2013a) for example, could undermine the country's credibility and its freedom to maneuver in global climate change negotiations. On the other hand, Australia has a similar track record in climate change mitigation and has allegedly tried to bribe PSIDST to change their stance in negotiations in return for adaptation money (Barnett and Campbell, 2010; Maclellan, 2009).

Most of the issues described in the conclusions are not new or unique to climate change. As mentioned before, in the regional institutional framework climate change has caused the escalation of issues which had been brewing for decades (e.g. Barnett and Campbell, 2010; Maclellan, Meads and Coates, 2012). Just like the technical measures proposed for climate change adaptation, which will benefit food and water security even if the impacts of climate change turn out less severe than projected, the proposed political solutions will also have positive spill over effects on other fields of development. Greater coordination among regional organisations will also benefit education programmes, and enhanced donor consideration for community ownership will make public health projects more effective too. These proposed changes are ambitious and require the commitment of many actors which have thus far been less than flexible. However, they can be achieved, and as mentioned at the start of this conclusion, effective climate change adaptation is possible. The future of the Pacific islanders may seem bleak at times, but it is important to remember that they themselves tend to be optimists. A study of happiness in Vanuatu found that citizens overwhelmingly declared that they were happier than in the past, and that they

expected to be much happier still in the future, despite the prospect of climate change (Malvatumauri National Council of Chiefs, 2012).

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Appendix I: Tables

Country	Independence	Population (2013)	Area (km²)	Area EEZ (km²)	GDP per capita (USD)	Official ODA 2011 (USD)	GDP % from ODA	Life Expectancy (avg)	Overseas visitors (2011)	% pop younger than 15(2012)
American Samoa	Territory of USA	56,500	199	404,391	9,333			72.6	28,403	n.a.
Cook Islands	1965 - Free Association with NZ	15,200	237	1,960,135	17,565	26,000,000	9.53%	76.6	113,114	n.a.
FSM	1986 - Free Association with USA	103,000	701	2,992,597	3,031	134,000,000	43.20%	70.25	21146 (2007)	36%
Fiji	1970 – from UK	859,200	18,333	1,281,122	3,639	79,000,000	2.55%	67.45	675,050	29%
French Polynesia	Territory of France	261,400	3,521	4,767,242	26,667			74.3	162,776	23%
Guam	Territory of USA	174,900	541	221,504	25,420			73.6	1,159,152	27%
Kiribati	1979 – from UK	108,800	811	3,437,345	1,651	64,000,000	37.53%	62.15		32%
Marshall Islands	1979 – Free Association with USA	54,200	181	1,992,232	3,158	83,000,000	47.78%	69.95	4,559	n.a.
Nauru	1968 – From UN Trusteeship	10,500	21	308,502	8,379	38,000,000	44.53%	60.35	n.a.	n.a.
New Caledonia	Territory of France	259,000	18,576	1,422,543	36,405			76.05	352,721	23%
Niue	1974 – Free Association with NZ	1,500	259	316,629	15,807	21,000,000	91.88%	69.45	6,094	n.a.
Northern Mariana Islands	Territory of USA	55,600	457	749,268	11,622			75.3	340,957	n.a.
Palau	1994 – Free Association with USA	17,800	444	604,289	10,314	28,000,000	13.15%	69.2	63,590	n.a.
Papua New Guinea	1975 – from Australia	7,398,500	462,840	2,396,214	18,437	611,000,000	0.48%	54.25	165,000	38%
Samoa	1962 – from NZ	187,400	2,934	131,812	3,680	121,000,000 (2012)	17.91%	74.15	134,690	38%
Solomon Islands	1978 – from UK	610,800	28,000	1,597,492	1,676	305,000,000 (2012)	32.89%	70.2	24,952	40%
Tokelau	Territory of NZ	1,200	12	319,031	n.a.			69		n.a.
Tonga	1970 – from UK	103,300	749	664,853	4,557	94,000,000	19.97%	70.65	68,373	37%
Tuvalu	1978 – from UK	10,900	26	751,797	3,407	24,000,000	62.86%	66.3	1,232	
Vanuatu	1980 – from France and UK	264,700	12,281	827,891	3,099	101,000,000	13.29%	71.15	225,493	37%
Wallis and Futuna	Territory of France	12,100	142	258,269	12,324			74.3	14,755	

Table 1: Statistics about the PSIDST. Source: SPC, 2013 except: Barnett and Campbell, 2010 (Political status), Central Intelligence Agency, 2014c (Independence dates), Sea Around Us, 2014 (EEZs), BBC, 2011 (Tokelau life expectancy), FSM Division of Statistics, 2010 (Visitor numbers FSM), World Bank, 2012 (Papua New Guinea visitor numbers)

Table 2: Memberships of the regional organisations, the sub-regional organisations and the United Nations. Sources: Official organisation websites.

Country	UNSD MDG Database	SPC Database	WHO 2010 Progress Report	Pacific 2011 Tracking Report (PIF)
Cook Islands	17	25	16	16
FSM	44	49	45	
Fiji	25	22	19	17
Kiribati	64	65	65	65
Marshall Islands	40	63	39	63
Nauru	32	26	8	19
Niue	12	12	31	
Palau	27	25	18	25
Papua New Guinea	65		67	77
Samoa	23	21	40	33
Solomon Islands	36	38	31	31
Tokelau		30		
Tonga	21	10	19	12
Tuvalu	44	41	42	57
Vanuatu	31	45	23	33

Table 3: Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000 live births) in 1990 or the closest available year according to different sources. Source Haberkorn, 2011.