



Government of Samoa

## MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

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Faamolemole faatuatusi uma mai fesootaiga  
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### **Samoa Releases Plan to Fully Protect 30% and Sustainably Manage 100% of Ocean by 2030** *Created by and for the people of Samoa, the Marine Spatial Plan safeguards its 120,000 square kilometer EEZ to bolster ocean health and support sustainable economic development.*

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#### **24 October 2024—Apia, Samoa,**

As an important milestone in Samoa's Ocean Strategy, today the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) released a plan to protect, conserve, and manage marine resources for the benefit of the Samoan people. The Marine Spatial Plan (the Plan) establishes an ocean management system for 100% of Samoa's waters, fully protecting 30% in a network of Marine Protected Areas to improve biodiversity and ocean resilience.

The Plan was announced by Hon. Toeolesulusulu Cedric Schuster, Samoa's Minister of MNRE, at a side event of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Apia, Samoa, in the presence of global and community leaders. The event showcased Samoa's commitment to ocean protection on the world stage.

The Prime Minister Hon. Afioga Fiamē Naomi Mata'afa said, *"Samoa's Marine Spatial Plan reflects our deep commitment to sustainably managing our ocean and marine resources for the benefit of all Samoans. Our ocean has been a source of life and prosperity for generations. With the Marine Spatial Plan, we ensure that this vital resource continues to support our livelihoods, economy, and culture for years to come. The recent impacts to our ocean and ongoing threats from climate change, further underscore the dire importance of proactively protecting and managing our ocean"*

Hon. Minister Schuster, said, *"Through a deeply consultative process, the Plan was developed by the people of Samoa. It will ensure that Samoa's ocean remains healthy by protecting vital marine habitats while allowing for sustainable economic activities like fishing and tourism. By better managing our ocean resources, this Plan will improve the resilience of our economy, people, and way of life, which are deeply connected to our ocean."*

MNRE led the development process in partnership with relevant ministries across the Government of Samoa and in collaboration with Conservation International, the Waitt Institute, International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Samoa Umbrella for Non-Governmental Organizations (SUNGO), and communities.

Incorporating the best available science and extensive feedback from nationwide community and sector consultations, the Plan aims to strengthen economic growth as well as the protection and conservation of its unique and rich marine life. Community consultations were conducted across all 52 electoral districts in Savaii, Upolu, and Manono Island.

**Dr. M. Sanjayan, CEO of Conservation International** added, "Samoa joins a select group of countries, most of which are Small Island Developing States, with a full plan to protect 30% of their ocean area by 2030, delivering the urgent action needed to sustain the world's ocean as committed at COP15. Ahead of COP16, and here on the world stage at CHOGM, we at Conservation International are glad to support Samoa in fulfilling this global commitment through effective ocean management, providing a model for other island nations to follow."

Protections include the establishment of nine new fully protected Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), which will conserve 36,000 square kilometers of Samoa's ocean. It also incorporates existing nearshore community-managed areas.

Hon. Minister Schuster continued, *"By balancing conservation with sustainable economic activities, the Plan aligns with our cultural values of Fa'asamoa, emphasizing respect for our natural resources. We are establishing Marine Protected Areas and careful ocean management to safeguard the health of our marine ecosystems and the future prosperity of Samoa's people."*

*"Today, Samoa has shown bold action in sustainable ocean management. We applaud the visionary leadership and significant strides our partners have made to secure a healthy ocean, thriving communities, and prosperous future for the people of Samoa and our global community. We look forward to continuing this successful collaboration that will make a lasting impact on our ocean and our shared future,"* remarked Ted Waitt, Founder and Chairman of the Waitt Institute and Foundation.

The Plan is one of thirteen Samoa Ocean Strategy Integrated Management Solutions (IMS) to address factors that threaten the integrity and health of Samoa's marine environment. The Samoa Ocean Strategy is a national policy framework that seeks to sustainably manage Samoa's vast ocean and marine resources for the well-being of all Samoans. It aims to achieve 30% full marine protection and 100% sustainable management of Samoa's ocean.

This Plan is a critical step in Samoa's ongoing commitment to ocean management. It is the first version, designed as an adaptive framework that will evolve in response to new knowledge, changing environmental conditions, and emerging human activities. It will be legally operational pending the passage of the *Biological Diversity Management and Conservation Bill 2024* and its associated regulations.

To learn more about the Samoa Ocean Strategy and the updated Marine Spatial Plan, visit <https://www.samoaocean.org/>.

### **Samoa Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment**

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) is committed to promoting sustainable management of Samoa's natural resources, protecting its rich biodiversity and addressing environmental challenges to ensure the well-being of current and future generations. Through strategic policy development, environmental monitoring and community engagement, MNRE plays a vital role in safeguarding Samoa's land, water, marine ecosystems and natural heritage. For more information, please visit our [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [Website](#)

### **Conservation International**

Conservation International protects nature for the benefit of humanity. Through science, policy, fieldwork and finance, we spotlight and secure the most important places in nature for the climate, for biodiversity and for people. With offices in 30 countries and projects in more than 100 countries, Conservation International partners with governments, companies, civil society, Indigenous peoples and local

communities to help people and nature thrive together. Visit [Conservation.org](https://www.conservation.org) for more, and follow us on [Conservation News](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [TikTok](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

### **Waitt Institute**

The Waitt Institute is a non-profit that partners with committed governments and local communities to create and implement sustainable ocean plans to benefit people, the economy, and the environment. The Waitt Institute brings technical expertise, funding, and tools to support each country's vision related to marine spatial planning, blue economy, and sustainable fisheries. The Waitt Institute is the founding member and organizing body of the Blue Prosperity Coalition, which currently has Blue Prosperity partnerships with the Azores, Barbuda, Bermuda, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, the Maldives, Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu. Visit [waittinstitute.org](https://waittinstitute.org) for more, and follow us on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Twitter](#).

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