





# Phoenix Islands Protected Area

## - Natural Site -



### 1. Site Overview and Description

The Phoenix Islands Protected Area (PIPA) in Kiribati is a vast 408,250 km<sup>2</sup> marine and island habitat, the largest marine protected area in the Pacific. The site has one of the world's largest coral reef systems and a number of large, submerged volcanoes presumed to be extinct. The area includes atolls and reef islands formed by 8 other volcanic mountains. PIPA's remote location supports diverse marine life and approximately 800 known animal species, including about 200 coral species, 500 fish species, 18 marine mammals and 44 bird species. Many migratory species use the area for breeding.

### 2. World Heritage Selection Criteria

- **Criterion (vii):** to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance.
- **Criterion (iv):** to be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals.

### 3. Threats and Protection of the Site

In 2021, Kiribati opened the PIPA to commercial fishing as its protected status caused significant revenue losses for the government. With limited opportunities for economic development in the remote atoll nation, Kiribati is the poorest country in the Pacific Islands region and classified as a least developed country. The monitoring of noncompliant fishing operators in the huge PIPA and overfishing has been a challenge due to limited surveillance resources. Fishing licenses are the main source of income for the country, while commercial fishing disturbing the PIPA's pristine environment and puts the site at risk of a World Heritage in Danger listing.

PIPA is legally protected under the Phoenix Islands Protected Area Regulations 2008, which set-out the boundaries of the protected area and the Phoenix Islands Protected Area Management Committee with the need for site management plan. Kiribati is also part of the Nauru Agreement, which regulates tuna conservation and management among 8 Pacific Island countries, providing management plan that covers the neighboring marine environment around PIPA.

### Think

#### Three pillars of sustainability:

- Environmental pillar: for the maintenance of the ecosystems that are vital to all living beings.
- Social pillar: encompasses concepts such as providing equitable opportunities and a good quality of life.
- Economic pillar: developing and maintaining our global assets for both current and future generations.

*The Brundtland Report: Our Common Future, 1987*

Economics is fundamentally about wants and needs and the opportunity cost of choosing one option over another.

#### Many of the SDG targets are about striking a balance between the three pillars of sustainability:

- **SDG Target 12.2:** seeks to achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources by 2030.
- **SDG Target 14.2:** sought to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans by 2020.
- **SDG Target 14.7:** increase the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism by 2030.

### Share

Examine the opportunity cost of Kiribati's decision through the lens of SDG targets 12.2, 14.2 and 14.7 and the three pillars of sustainability. Identify the positives and negatives of allowing commercial fishing from an environmental, social and economic perspective.

### Act

What do you think individuals like yourselves can do to help governments make good choices that help to implement the SDGs?







# Rock Islands Southern Lagoon

## - Mixed Site -



### 1. Site Overview and Description

The Rock Islands Southern Lagoon in Palau consists of 445 uninhabited limestone islands of volcanic origin. These mushroom-shaped islands sit in turquoise lagoons, hosting over 385 coral species and a wide variety of marine life, including dugongs and 13 species of sharks. The site also has the world's highest concentration of marine lakes, home to native species and providing opportunities for the discovery of new species. Ancient human settlements dating back 950 to 500 years feature defensive walls, terraces, and house platforms. Additionally, cave art and burial evidence highlights the area's historical significance. Climate change and population growth are likely forced inhabitant's relocation to larger islands in the 17th-18th centuries.

### 2. World Heritage Selection Criteria

- **Criterion (iii):** to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared.
- **Criterion (v):** to be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change.
- **Criterion (vii):** to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance.
- **Criterion (ix):** to be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals.
- **Criterion (x):** to contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.

### 3. Threats and Protection of the Site

The main threats to the site include climate change, tourism impact, and potential pollution from nearby infrastructure development on the main island of Koror. Fishing requires constant monitoring to protect the ecosystem. The site protection is maintained through both traditional and governmental systems. Traditional resource management practices govern how marine resources are used, while the Republic of Palau enforces legal

protections under Title 19 of the Historical and Cultural Preservation Act. A "green fee" is paid by departing visitors to fund the conservation efforts of the site. Local and governmental agencies collaborate to manage and research the area, and the Koror State Rangers enforce laws regulating resource use and tourist activities. The Rock Islands Use Act (1997) further regulates tourist operations within the lagoon, ensuring sustainable interaction with this unique environment.

#### Imagine

Read your role and discuss what is important for your character. What do they value? How do you think these values are shaping their perspective on the debate about the 'green' departure tax?

Based on these values, discuss if the \$100 'green' departure tax should be increased, lowered or left at the same rate. If you are changing the fee, state the amount.

#### Think

- **SDG 8:** aims to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

Do you think Palau's Pristine Paradise Environmental Fee helps to achieve this goal? Look at the targets for SDG 8 and identify which of these targets you think the fee is helping to achieve and why.

#### Share

How would someone's values shape how they contribute to their community particularly in trying to achieve the SDGs?







# East Rennell

## - Natural Site -

### *World Heritage in Danger*

## Partnership



### 1. Site Overview and Description

East Rennell, located on Rennell Island in the Solomon Islands, is the largest raised coral atoll in the world covering 370 km<sup>2</sup> and extending 3 km into the sea. It features Lake Tegano, the largest lake in the Pacific Islands region, measuring 27 km long and 9km wide. The lake, with its surrounding dense forest and limestone terrain, is home to diverse species including land and water birds, land snails, and a native sea snake. East Rennell is a significant area of biodiversity, with 11 bat species (one native) and 43 land and water bird species (four land and nine subspecies of water birds). While the island is largely undisturbed, East Rennell faces threats from nearby logging and was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2013.

### 2. World Heritage Selection Criteria

- **Criterion (ix):** to be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals.

### 3. Threats and Protection of the Site

East Rennell's biodiversity faces significant threats from logging activities and environmental contamination, such as a 2019 oil spill from a nearby bauxite mining ship. Climate change exacerbates these threats by increasing the frequency of cyclones, rising lake water levels, salinity, which affect local plant life and the community's ability to grow food. East Rennell is protected under customary ownership acknowledged by the Solomon Islands Constitution and the 1995 Customs Recognition Act. The National Protected Areas Act 2010 focuses on biodiversity conservation and the Lake Tegano World Heritage Site Association oversees coordination of activities. The local ordinances also ensure traditional owners to play a significant role in the site's preservation.

## Think

### Scenario

The school drama club wants to rent out the drama room and equipment bought through fundraising to an outside youth theatre group during holidays. Some club members support this idea to raise funds, while other worry about damage and feel protective of their space and the equipment. You are not in the drama club but this situation is causing great tension and needs to be resolved before school holidays.

How you could assist in resolving this situation without being seen as interfering in something that is not your business? Share your suggestions.

How can countries help each other to develop and maintain environmental, social and economic sustainability in a way that meets present a future needs including the ability to enjoy and share the beauty of nature?

**SDG 17:** strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

- **Target 17.16** aims to enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries, in particular developing countries
- **Target 17.15** reminds us to respect each country's policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development.

How do we protect the world's environmental, social and economic assets without intruding on the sovereignty of a nation state?

## Share

With a partner, create a 2 to 3 minutes short presentation about how individuals, other governments, not-for-profit organisations, international businesses or other corporations could help protect East Rennell without interfering with sovereignty of the Solomon Islands.

## Act

Reflect on how partnerships contribute to sustainability, and share one way you or your community can contribute to the sustainability of your community.







# Levuka Historical Port Town

## - Cultural Site -

### 1. Site Overview and Description

Levuka Historical Port Town, on the island of Ovalau in Fiji, is set along the beachfront, surrounded by lush tropical forests covering rugged mountains. From the 1820s, the American and European settlers developed Levuka into a commercial hub with port facilities, warehouses, residences and institutions around Indigenous Fijian villages. In 1874, Levuka became Fiji's first colonial capital when King Tui Cakobau ceded the country to British. Though the capital moved to Suva in 1882, Levuka remained a thriving commercial port which showcases a unique fusion of colonial structures and Indigenous Fijian influences, reflecting colonial development in the South Pacific.

### 2. World Heritage Selection Criteria

- **Criterion (iii):** to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared.
- **Criterion (iv):** to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.

### 3. Threats and Protection of the Site

Levuka faces significant risks from **climate change**, including cyclones, as seen in 2016 when Cyclone Winston damaged 196 heritage buildings. Tourism development also poses a risk as unchecked growth could harm its cultural landscape. Furthermore, Levuka's aging heritage buildings require sustainable funding and maintenance for preservation, including fire safety and structural integrity, especially the town's sea wall that guards against sea surge.

#### Levuka is protected under various laws and regulations:

- **Fiji World Heritage Decree 2013:** Overseen by the Fiji World Heritage Council in collaboration with the Town Council and Director of Town and Country Planning.
- **National Trust of Fiji:** Manages the National Heritage Register, which includes Levuka, and must be consulted for site-related planning.
- **Levuka Town Planning Scheme:** Ensures that heritage buildings are preserved and that development proposals undergo review by a committee that includes the Town Council, the National Trust of Fiji, and the Director of Town and Country Planning.

In 2023, Fiji drafted a Heritage Bill to update and strengthen the existing Decree to safeguard Levuka's unique cultural heritage while allowing for its sustainable use and development.

## People



### See

Looking at the information and photos of Levuka, what do you see? Based on these observations, what do you think life is like in Levuka today? What else do you wonder about life in Levuka in the past, today or in the future?

### Think

- **SDG Target 1.4:** seeks to ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance by 2030.
- **SDG Target 5.a:** undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

Look at the governance and protection structures of Levuka. What does that say about the influence of local peoples on the site today?

Fiji Government in partnership with the Markets for Change (M4C) project funded the development of the new Levuka market and the rural women's accommodation center. M4C targets market vendors to help improve the working conditions, leadership capabilities and earning power of women.

How does this type of funding support Target 1.4 and 5.a?

### Share

Levuka is a cultural site. What does "culture" mean? Which cultures are represented in Levuka? How is Levuka's classification as a World Heritage site helping to preserve these cultures for future generations?

What did you learn about Levuka today that interested you?





# *Bikini Atoll Nuclear Test Site*

## - Cultural Site -

Peace



### 1. Site Overview and Description

Bikini Atoll, located in the Marshall Islands, was the site of 67 nuclear tests conducted by the United States after World War II from 1946 to 1958, including the first hydrogen bomb in 1952. The power of these nuclear tests is evident in the environmental devastation, such as the sunken ships in the lagoon and the massive Bravo crater from a 1946 test. The nuclear tests had severe impacts on both human health and the local ecosystem. Exposure to radiation caused long-term health problems, and the flora, fauna, and geology of the area were heavily altered. Bikini Atoll illustrates the immense power that humans can wield over nature. The site is historically significant as a representation of Cold War-era nuclear escalation and the displacement of local populations.

### 2. World Heritage Selection Criteria

- **Criterion (iv):** to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.
- **Criterion (vi):** to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.

### 3. Threats and Protection of the Site

Bikini Atoll faces primary threats from climate change, including rising sea levels and stronger storms, which endanger the physical remains of the nuclear tests and the land mass itself. Additionally, unexploded bombs and fuel from the sunken ships pose environmental risks to the lagoon and any potential users of the area. The site is protected under the Marshall Islands Historic and Cultural Preservation Act (1991) and site management plan of traditional landowners and the government, but conservation efforts are minimal. The goal is to allow the site to naturally rehabilitate, with limited human intervention.

#### Think

Why do you think the UN would classify Bikini Atoll of 'Outstanding Universal Value'? Do you think it's important to remember terrible things that have happened in war?

- **SDG 16** seeks to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Do you think having a World Heritage area like Bikini Atoll helps to achieve this goal? If so, how?

#### Share

Why do you think wars start? Think about conflicts over territory, resources, and misunderstandings about differences. Relate this to situations in your life.

*"Peace is not an absence of war, it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice."*

**Spinoza, Political theologian, 1670.**

Do you agree with this idea that peace begins within the individual? How would the situation we just discussed have helped if the individuals involved had a more peaceful, benevolent and justice oriented disposition? What might they have done differently?

#### Imagine

Close your eyes and imagine a place that makes you feel peaceful. After a moment, think about how we can carry that feeling of peace with us every day. Imagine if everyone in the world felt like this. How would a world like that look?

**Complete the sentence:** I used to think peace... Now I think...



Planet

People

Prosperity



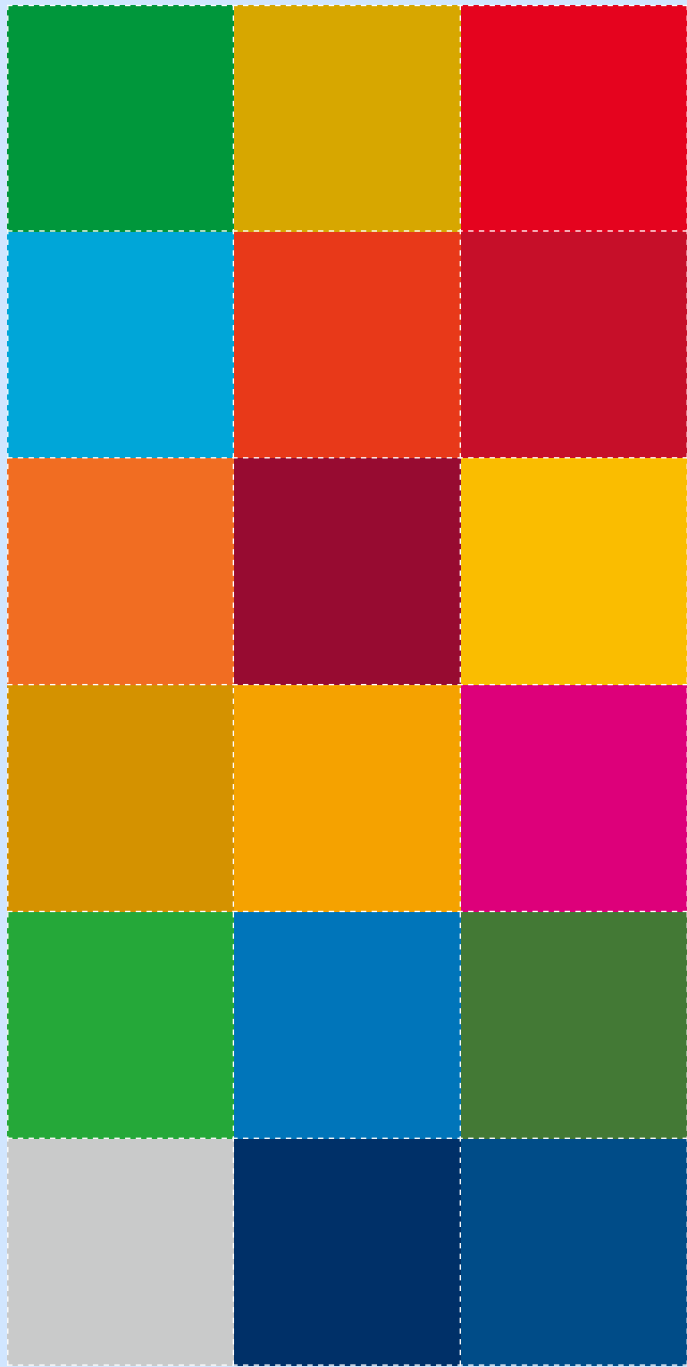
Partnership

Peace











## The Tourist



## The Retailer



## The Marine Biologist



## The Koror State Ranger



