

**COOK ISLANDS**  
**NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**  
**MANIHIKI NBSAP REPORT**

**MANIHIKI COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS**  
**Tauhunu and Tukao**

**30<sup>th</sup> October 2024**



**TAUHUNU COMMUNITY**



**Facilitators:** Halatoa Fua, Rima Moeka'a, Kura Moeka'a, Sandee Cook and Kas Silk  
**Participants:** Island Council, and Community members

Report written by Karen Silk, NES  
November 2024

## Summary

On the 30th of October 2024, the National Environment Service (NES) Team arrived in Tauhunu, Manihiki, by barge from Rakahanga and were warmly welcomed by the Island Council. This marked the start of a vibrant series of workshops in the villages of Tauhunu and Tukao. The first workshop in Tauhunu saw 24 enthusiastic attendees actively engaging in group activities, followed by a boat trip to Tukao, where a further workshop was conducted with 33 attendees. At both locations, the NES team facilitated in-depth discussions on the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), the new Environment Bill, and Project ISLANDS. Site visits were also conducted on both islands, providing valuable insights into local environmental challenges and opportunities.

The workshops emphasized the integration of traditional knowledge, community engagement, and sustainable practices as key elements for addressing biodiversity conservation, waste management, and resilience to environmental challenges. These discussions laid the foundation for developing a future Island Plan tailored to the unique needs of Manihiki. This report captures the outcomes of the council meeting, workshops, and site visits, organized by village and aligned with the five NBSAP strategic goals. After an overnight stay, the NES team departed for Penrhyn, continuing their vital work in the Pa Enea.



**TUKAO COMMUNITY**

## Participants

Signed registers attached as Annex A

## Workshop Agenda

Attached as Annex B

## NBSAP 2002 Presentation

### NBSAP Background

Rima Moeka'a provided an overview of the NBSAP's history and development, emphasizing the 2002 NBSAP's alignment with national, regional, and international frameworks. She highlighted its relevance to the broader goals of biodiversity conservation and protection.



Manihiki Island Council

### Importance of Biodiversity

The presentation underscored biodiversity's vital role in ecosystem stability, human well-being, and climate regulation, stressing the need for a robust biodiversity plan to ensure food security, clean water, medicinal resources, and environmental resilience.

### Rapid Review of the 2002 NBSAP

Consultant Rima Moeka'a presented a rapid review of the 2002 NBSAP, evaluating its effectiveness and identifying gaps, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. While strengths included broad community involvement and comprehensive coverage of biodiversity issues, the review also highlighted the need for updates after 22 years and the establishment of financial mechanisms for implementation.

### Success Stories

Several success stories were shared, such as the development of the National Invasive Species Strategy, rat eradication efforts on selected islands, and the coordination with various stakeholders on biodiversity issues.

### National Targets

The new guiding national biodiversity targets were introduced, focusing on five key strategic goals:

- Area management and restoration
- Species management

- Threats management
- Integrating knowledge
- Mainstreaming policies and legislation

## MANIHIKI Community Workshops

### Tukao Village

#### 1. Area Management and Restoration



Tukao Community

- **Raui Zones:** Strengthening Raui areas was prioritized, focusing on protecting resources such as paua, koura (crayfish), and coral reefs. Proposed actions included community monitoring, clearer boundaries, and seasonal closures.
- **Waste Management:** The GEF Waste Project was highlighted, with a focus on sorting, removing, and managing household rubbish, particularly plastics and tyres. The community identified a need for 32 sorting bins and education on composting and green waste chipping. Burning plastics and tyres was flagged as a health risk, with a recycling center deemed a priority.
- **Coastal Erosion:** Addressing coastal erosion near schools and other vulnerable areas was a significant concern. Proposed solutions included planting tamanu trees, constructing sea walls, and conducting coastal assessments with expert guidance.
- **Motu Management:** Maintaining motu ecosystems through tree planting and clearing excess vegetation was suggested to enhance biodiversity and prevent habitat degradation.

#### 2. Species Management

- **Pearl Farming:** King tides affecting pearl farming infrastructure were noted as a challenge, with calls for enhanced protection and water quality monitoring.
- **Invasive Species:** Rats, wild pigs, and stray cats were flagged as threats to biodiversity. Coordinated pest control programs and biocontrol measures were recommended.
- **Paua Size Regulations:** Community members discussed defining size limits for paua (14–16 cm) to ensure sustainable harvesting.
- **Traditional Practices:** Preserving and revitalizing traditional fishing methods, including size restrictions for key species, was emphasized to sustain marine resources.

#### 3. Threats Management

- **Plastic Pollution:** Accumulation of plastic waste and tyre burning were identified as pressing issues, with participants advocating for systematic rubbish sorting, recycling, and community-led cleanup efforts.

- **Climate Resilience:** Rising sea levels, coral bleaching, and high surges were significant challenges, prompting replanting native species and lagoon protection as proposed mitigation strategies.

#### 4. Integrating Knowledge and Learning for Sustainability

- **Community Education:** Workshops, school programs, and practical activities, such as mangrove planting and reef monitoring, were proposed to teach conservation and sustainability.
- **Traditional Knowledge:** Preserving vairakau (medicinal plant) knowledge and traditional practices like weaving and fishing was emphasized to maintain cultural heritage.
- **Youth Engagement:** Activities aimed at involving youth in conservation efforts were highlighted as a key priority.

#### 5. Mainstreaming Policies and Financial Mechanisms

- **Funding Needs:** Securing funding for rat eradication, waste management, and coastal protection initiatives was identified as critical for progress.
- **Policy Updates:** Participants suggested revising local bylaws to include stricter waste and resource management measures.

### Tauhunu Village

#### 1. Area Management and Restoration

- **Fish Ponds:** Seasonal cleaning and maintenance of fish traps were discussed as strategies to sustain fish stocks.
- **Replanting Initiatives:** Planting tamanu and other native species was highlighted as critical for preventing coastal erosion and supporting biodiversity.
- **Rubbish Management:** The community stressed the importance of consistent rubbish removal efforts to improve public health and environmental quality.

#### 2. Species Management

- **Marine and Land Species:** Declines in fish species such as tomore and fapuku, and crops like rukau viti, ninita, and maniota, were highlighted. Restoration and protection strategies were discussed.
- **Bird Conservation:** Efforts to protect native bird species such as maui, kotaha, and tavake (tropicbirds) were identified. Reintroduction of medicinal plants was also proposed to enhance habitat diversity.
- **Tree Planting:** Coastal protection included planting tamanu, nганie, and other native species to stabilize the shoreline and promote biodiversity.
- **Invasive Pests:** Rats, ants, and other invasive species were flagged as threats requiring coordinated eradication programs.

### 3. Threats Management

- **Waste Pollution:** Managing waste, including the burning of plastics and tyres, was identified as a priority to reduce health risks and environmental degradation.
- **Lagoon Health:** Concerns over declining lagoon health and coral reef degradation prompted discussions on stricter conservation measures and habitat restoration.
- **Health Risks:** Issues like pig pens near households and the buildup of black smoke from waste burning were raised as concerns requiring immediate attention.



**Tauhunu Community**

### 4. Integrating Knowledge and Learning for Sustainability

- **Workshops and Education:** Community workshops and school-based programs were suggested to promote environmental awareness and conservation practices.
- **Traditional Practices:** Preserving traditional knowledge, including fishing techniques and weaving, was seen as vital for cultural and environmental sustainability.

### 5. Mainstreaming Policies and Financial Mechanisms

- **Policy and Collaboration:** Reviewing and updating bylaws to incorporate waste management and biodiversity conservation was recommended.
- **Funding Support:** Financial assistance was requested to support conservation projects, improve waste management, and build capacity for biodiversity management.

## Conclusion

The Manihiki workshops in Tauhunu and Tukao successfully brought together community members, Island Councils, and stakeholders to discuss pressing biodiversity issues, waste management, and strategies for resilience to environmental challenges. Through engaging discussions, and group activities, the workshops provided a platform for integrating traditional knowledge with modern conservation practices. These efforts emphasized the importance of community engagement and collaboration in shaping a sustainable future for Manihiki.

The insights and recommendations gathered during the workshops will guide the development of a comprehensive Island Plan tailored to the unique needs of both villages. This plan will align with the National

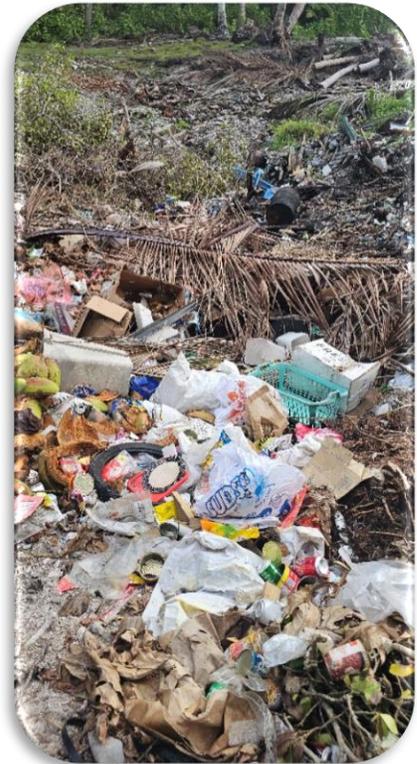
Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) goals and support the implementation of the new Environment Bill and Project ISLANDS initiatives. Continued collaboration, funding, and support from stakeholders will be critical for translating these strategies into actionable outcomes, ensuring the protection of Manihiki's biodiversity, the well-being of its residents, and the resilience of its environment for generations to come.

## Acknowledgement

A sincere thank you to the Manihiki Island Council for their outstanding organization and support in planning our visit. Your dedication to arranging site visits and facilitating our activities played a crucial role in making our time on the island productive and meaningful.

## Attachments:

- **Annex A:** Signed Registers of Participants
- **Annex B:** Workshop Agenda



## Annex A. Signed Registers of Participants

Manihiki Island Council  
Wed 30 Oct 2024  
11:30am




Name	Gender	Contact details: Phone or Email *optional	Signature
JOSEPH HANO	M	Joseph.joseph@cookislands.gov.ck	<i>[Signature]</i>
PEPE MAKIRA	M	pepe.makira21@gmail.com	<i>[Signature]</i>
TRINCE SAMSON	M	MOBILE 682.833.88.	<i>[Signature]</i>
JAMES KARGROA	M	MOBILE 70413	<i>[Signature]</i>
Wireless - Zepuke	M	MOBILE 56018	<i>[Signature]</i>
TOKA TOKA	M	MOBILE 56839.	<i>[Signature]</i>
TARAP. KAINA.	M	" 50968	<i>[Signature]</i>
DANIEL TUTERU	M	" 51274	<i>[Signature]</i>
TANA TOKA	M	" 51069.	<i>[Signature]</i>
JOHN MCKEOD	M	" 52409.	<i>[Signature]</i>
JUSTINE WILLIAM	F	MOBILE 74252	<i>[Signature]</i>

Manihiki Community Workshop  
30 Oct 2024  
TU'ANGA  
6pm-8pm




**Cook Islands National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) Workshop**

Attendance Sheet

#	Name	Gender	Contact details: Phone or Email *optional	Signature
1	JOHN MCKEOD	M	MB 52409	<i>[Signature]</i>
2	JOHNSONE NAPARA	M		<i>[Signature]</i>
3	SIRIOWA MAINIA	M	54494	<i>[Signature]</i>
4	Carol Tepano	M	87652	<i>[Signature]</i>
5	Loane Elisa	M		<i>[Signature]</i>
6	Peter William	M	79738	<i>[Signature]</i>
7	Hannah William	F	71932	<i>[Signature]</i>
8	JERON MAEWA WICKIAMS	M	78783	<i>[Signature]</i>
9	HAUMATA TEPAHIA	F	71534	<i>[Signature]</i>
10	HERE TEPAHIA	F		<i>[Signature]</i>
11	EMMA JOHN	F		<i>[Signature]</i>
12	William KAITARA	M	89339	<i>[Signature]</i>
13	Ki Tuteru	F	81963	<i>[Signature]</i>

Manihiki Community Workshop  
Tuhunu Village  
30/10/24  
6:10pm

**Cook Islands National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) Workshop**  
Attendance Sheet

Name	Gender	Contact details: Phone or Email *optional	Signature
14 BERNARDINE B. Kamea	M	Pa. 43307. MB. 74674. (Police)	<i>[Signature]</i>
15 JANE KAINA	F	mob: 79255	<i>[Signature]</i>
16 Nimie Williams	F	mob: 50116	<i>[Signature]</i>
17 Angela Tobias	F	angela.tobias@cookislands.gov.ck	<i>[Signature]</i>
18 Clesta Brown	M	Students	<i>[Signature]</i>
19 Tuhine Samson	M	Students	<i>[Signature]</i>
20 CECILIA KAITARA	F	Students	<i>[Signature]</i>
21 Christina Johnson	F	Students	<i>[Signature]</i>
22 PETE MAKIAT	M	Mob: 51393	<i>[Signature]</i>
23 Reni Karaponga	F	reni.karaponga@cookislands.gov.ck	<i>[Signature]</i>
24 Muriel Karaponga	F	renimkara@gmail.com	<i>[Signature]</i>

Page 2

Manihiki Community Workshop  
Tuhunu Village  
30/10/24

**Cook Islands National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) Workshop**  
Attendance Sheet

Name	Gender	Contact details: Phone or Email *optional	Signature
1 Nga Tiro Johnson	F	MB 76537	<i>[Signature]</i>
2 Vainu Donna Teke	F	MB 72557	<i>[Signature]</i>
3 Tūru Umurua	M	" 52732	<i>[Signature]</i>
4 Helen WOKENZIE	F	43327	<i>[Signature]</i>
5 RUMU TAMAUHU	M	MB-58210	<i>[Signature]</i>
6 PAVIN JOHNSON	M	#Phone 43329	<i>[Signature]</i>
7 UMURUA TUHE	M	PHONE NO: 43313	<i>[Signature]</i>
8 P. T. RUPATA	M	888-12	<i>[Signature]</i>
9 JAMES KAREOT	M	70413	<i>[Signature]</i>
10 PAPA WILIAMS	M	43354	<i>[Signature]</i>
11 LUKA KAITARA	M	70723	<i>[Signature]</i>
12 KA KAITARA	F	89924	<i>[Signature]</i>
13 Ngastipuna Iona	M	73131	<i>[Signature]</i>

page 1



## Annex B. Workshop Agenda

DATE	TIME	ORGANIZATION/GROUP/DEPARTMENT	ACTIVITY	VENUE
Wed 30 <sup>th</sup> Oct	11 am	Arrive Manihiki	Boat from Rakahanga	
	11:30 am	Island Council Meeting	NBSAP Intro	Council chambers
	1:30 pm	Welcoming at Tauhunu Presentation with the Community Discussions on the NBSAP Rapid Review on NBSAP 2002 Group work	NBSAP Presentation	Tauhunu Community Hall
	5:40 pm	Boat transfer to Tukau		
	6:14 pm	Welcoming at Tukau Presentation with the Community Discussions on the NBSAP Rapid Review on NBSAP 2002 Group work	NBSAP Presentation	Tukau Community Hall
Thu 31 <sup>st</sup> Oct	8 am	Site visits	Assessment	Waste sites, Milkfish ponds
	11 am	Depart Manihiki		