

**Seventy-fourth session**

Item 19 (b) of the preliminary list*

Sustainable development**Follow-up to and implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States****Report of the Secretary-General***Summary*

The present report has been prepared in response to the United Nations General Assembly resolutions [72/307](#) and [73/228](#). It provides a review of the implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway over the period 2015–2019, including a focus on stocktaking and an analysis of the progress made and continuing challenges faced by small island developing States. It also includes a summary of observations made and an outline of actions taken and planned to strengthen the coordination and complementarity of the work of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and the Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States in support of the sustainable development of small island developing States.

* [A/74/50](#).



I. Introduction

1. The present report was prepared in response to General Assembly resolutions [72/307](#) and [73/228](#) and, on an exceptional basis, is being made available early in 2019, so that it may support the intergovernmental consultations for the midterm review of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and be considered by the Assembly at its seventy-fourth session. The report is divided into ten sections: section I contains an introduction; sections II to VIII provide a review of the implementation of the Samoa Pathway over the period 2015–2019, including a focus on stocktaking and an analysis of the progress made and continuing challenges faced by small island developing States; section IX contains a summary of the observations made; and section X provides an outline of actions taken and planned to strengthen the coordination and complementarity of the work of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States in support of the sustainable development of small island developing States.

2. The information and analyses contained in the report were drawn from multiple sources, including literature reviews, regional reports on small island developing States,¹ the outcome documents of the preparatory meetings in which small island developing States articulated their views and priorities for the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway (see [A/73/382](#), [A/73/658](#), [A/73/710](#) and [A/73/765](#)), as well as from information and data submitted by Member States, United Nations system agencies and relevant national, subregional, regional and international organizations in response to a questionnaire sent by the Secretariat.² For complete details of reported contributions and of implementation efforts for the period 2015–2018, the present report should be read in conjunction with previous reports of the Secretary-General ([A/70/269](#), [A/71/267](#), [A/71/267/Add.1](#), [A/72/214](#) and [A/73/226](#)).

¹ See the report of the preparatory meeting on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway in the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea region, 2018, available at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20866SAMOA_Pathway_MTR_Regional_Report_for_AIMS.pdf; the Caribbean regional report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway, 2018, available at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20949Caribbean_SAMOA_Pathway_Midterm_report_18_Oct.2018_final_draft1.pdf; the draft Pacific regional report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway, 2018, available at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20868Samoa_Pathway_MTR_Pacific_Regional_Report.pdf; and Pacific Islands Forum, *First Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report 2018* (Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, 2018).

² Complete, unedited versions of the submissions received in response to the questionnaire used for the preparation of the present report are available at <https://sidsnetwork.org>. Responses and inputs were received from the following agencies and organizations: the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Labour Organization, the International Maritime Organization, the International Renewable Energy Agency, the International Telecommunication Union, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the Pacific Islands Development Forum, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; the following small island developing States: Fiji, Tuvalu, Samoa, Solomon Islands; and the following additional Member States: Austria, Australia, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Qatar, Russian Federation and United States of America. Financial contributions are reflected in section VII of the present report.

II. Global overview

3. Global economic growth appears robust and there is renewed optimism that the world economy may be turning a corner, as it is projected to expand at a steady pace of 3 per cent in 2019 and 2020.³ A closer look at the data, however, reveals significant shortcomings in the foundations and quality of economic growth across countries. The figures conceal an uneven pace of economic progress especially for small island developing States, where gross domestic product (GDP) growth remains well below the 7 per cent per annum prescribed in target 8.1.⁴

4. When the human development index is examined, 4 small island developing States (Bahamas, Barbados, Bahrain and Singapore) rank very high; 20 are ranked high, 7 medium and 5 are in the low human development group.⁵ Despite those rankings, data gathered on socioeconomic progress remain uneven for many such States. Important social indicators point to social fissures, revealing high levels of unemployment, substantial incidences of poverty, high rates of crime and persistent income inequality. Children and adolescents remain overrepresented in the poor population and are more vulnerable to the consequences of poverty and inequality.

5. The close linkages between development and the state of the environment in many small island developing States is directly associated with their heavy dependence on a limited natural resource base, susceptibility to the vagaries of international trade, high transportation and communication costs, grave exposure to natural hazards, small national markets, high import content and dependence on a narrow range of export products. Visible across all regions of small island developing States are situations relating to the overexploitation of local resources, poor land use, unplanned coastal development, uncontrolled mining, pollution from land- and marine-based sources and other factors that are driving changes, such as the loss of biodiversity, the spread of invasive alien species, deforestation, the loss of soil productivity, food insecurity, diminishing sources of freshwater, coastal erosion and the spread of vector-borne diseases.

6. The climate outlook for small island developing States differs considerably depending on their topography and location. Local and regional meteorological changes associated with global climate change are already having significant impacts and are unlikely to abate. Impacts such as sea-level rise, extreme weather events, droughts, coastal erosion, floods, saltwater intrusion, coral bleaching, ecosystem destruction and ocean acidification intensify the vulnerability of most small island developing States and place undue pressure on virtually all sectors of development, including tourism, financial services, agriculture, fisheries, water supply, sanitation, infrastructure and ecosystem health, jeopardizing efforts and progress made towards sustainable development and poverty eradication.

7. With regard to official development assistance (ODA), when compared with other developing countries, support for small island developing States has waned and even stagnated.⁶ In 2018, while their average external debt reached 60 per cent of gross national income, exacerbated by the need to borrow for the cost of natural disaster recovery,⁷ ODA flows to small island developing States declined. Between

³ *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2019* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.19.II.C.1), p. 1.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 6–7.

⁵ UNDP, *Human Development Indices and Indicators, 2018 Statistical Update for Small Island Developing States* (New York, 2018), p. 3. Data for Tuvalu and Nauru were not available.

⁶ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), “Small island developing States (SIDS) and the post-2015 finance agenda” (Addis Ababa, July 2015).

⁷ OECD, *Development Cooperation Report 2018: Joining Forces to Leave No One Behind* (Paris, 2018).

2011 to 2016, ODA totals fell by nearly 30 per cent (excluding debt relief).⁸ In 2017, total net ODA for all members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development combined, as a percentage of gross national income, stood at 0.31 per cent, compared with 0.32 per cent in 2016, thus continuing the downward trend.⁹

8. On a more positive note, climate finance to small island developing States has increased over the past decade. The share of climate finance targeting adaptation activities that help these States to deal with many of their key development challenges has also progressively increased. The Global Environment Facility, for instance, invested close to \$1 billion on Samoa Pathway priorities, including climate finance (see table 1).

Table 1
Global Environment Facility investments in Samoa Pathway priorities, 2014–2018

(United States dollars)

<i>Samoa Pathway priorities by Global Environment Facility focal area</i>	<i>Investment in small island developing States^a (July 2014–June 2018)</i>
Biodiversity	327 460 290
Climate change mitigation	172 565 085
Climate change adaptation (including disaster risk management)	74 562 975
International waters	18 998 940
Land degradation	35 517 621
Chemical and waste management	14 851 070
Multi-focal area (cross-cutting)	270 869 394

^a Amounts include funding for some regional and global projects that include some States that are not small island developing States.

9. Achieving sustainable and climate-resilient development as envisaged under the Samoa Pathway, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other internationally agreed development agendas will come at a high cost for small island developing States. While natural and climatic disasters have been a feature of life in small island developing States for centuries, the effects of climate change are exacerbating the intensity and frequency of such disasters, posing an existential threat to these States. As a result, their climate vulnerabilities add up to large development challenges drawn from their structural characteristics.

10. Investing in resilience-building initiatives will assist small island developing States to achieve sustainable development. It is necessary to adopt and invest in new development models and solutions that can address vulnerabilities and turn weaknesses into strengths. Exploiting natural resources such as solar and wind energy, a path on which many of these States have already embarked, demonstrates their ambition to minimize an overdependency on fossil fuel consumption. Efforts to innovatively utilize their vast marine resources in a sustainable manner to create employment opportunities, improve food security and enhance economic growth should be further supported.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ OECD, complete data tables for official development assistance in 2017, 9 April 2018. Available at www.oecd.org/development/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-data/ODA-2017-complete-data-tables.pdf.

11. Despite being a vital source of development financing for many small island developing States, access to concessional resources from the international community remains a significant challenge. Development partners can play a better role by supporting approaches that will help these States to secure, channel and invest resources where they are most needed, including towards breaking the dependence on non-renewable sources of energy, enhancing infrastructure, managing debt and building resilience.

III. Samoa Pathway and the 2030 Agenda

12. In the Samoa Pathway, the sustainable development aspirations and priorities of small island developing States are set out for the period 2015–2025. Building on previous sustainable development agendas for these States,¹⁰ the Pathway is a stand-alone regime that serves to reaffirm the situation of small island developing States as a special case for sustainable development. The Samoa Pathway is consistent with the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the Paris Agreement and the New Urban Agenda.

13. The need to design a monitoring and accountability framework and tools adapted to the capacity of small island developing States to monitor and report on the implementation of the Samoa Pathway and other sustainable development related global mandates, while also avoiding the burden of multiple reporting frameworks, was recognized and recommended in 2016.¹¹ The governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations that were to formulate such a design responded by noting that the monitoring and accountability frameworks for reporting on progress made with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals should be adapted to all contexts, including those of small island developing States (A/72/119/Add.1, para. 11).

14. In the absence of a specific monitoring and evaluation framework, in order to exhibit a more measured analysis of implementation progress, the priority areas of the Samoa Pathway were aligned with the Goals under the three dimensions of sustainable development. Data collected from the Sustainable Development Solutions Network,¹² in addition to data from the sources mentioned in paragraph 2 of the present report, were used to provide a visual indication of overall progress. Nevertheless, it must be noted that, owing to overlaps in categorization and focus, several priorities in the Samoa Pathway require their own measuring tools to ensure accurate assessment.¹³

IV. Implementation of the economic dimensions of the Samoa Pathway

15. The present section contains a review of the implementation of the economic dimensions of the Samoa Pathway, measured against their Sustainable Development Goal equivalents, as shown in table 2.

¹⁰ The Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

¹¹ JIU/REP/2016/7, para. 152 (recommendation 8).

¹² Jeffrey Sachs and others, *SDG Index and Dashboards Report 2018: Global Responsibilities – Implementing the Goals* (Bertelsmann Stiftung and Sustainable Development Solutions Network, New York, 2018).

¹³ These include sustainable tourism; culture and sports; management of chemicals and waste, including hazardous waste; desertification, land degradation and drought; forests; and invasive alien species.

Table 2
Priorities of the Samoa Pathway economic pillar, aligned with their Sustainable Development Goal equivalents

<i>Samoa Pathway economic pillar priority</i>	<i>Sustainable Development Goal</i>
Sustained and sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth with decent work for all	8
Development and poverty eradication	1
Sustainable tourism	8
Sustainable energy	7
Sustainable transportation	9

A. Sustained and sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth and decent work

16. While progress is ongoing, the pace of economic growth among the least developed small island developing States in the Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region has been slow,¹⁴ development among Caribbean States has been restrained¹⁵ and economic trends in Pacific States, while positive, have been inconsistent.¹⁶

17. The above trends are attributable to a variety of factors, including a lack of critical mass and economies of scale, geographic isolation, trade and external dependency, structural unemployment and falling labour productivity, limited financial resources and their classification as middle-income countries, which has generally limited their access to grants and concessional funding.

18. Two thirds of Caribbean small island developing States have debt-to-GDP ratios above the 60 per cent threshold, which is generally regarded as the benchmark for debt sustainability, with debt servicing accounting for an average of 29 per cent of government revenue in 2016.

19. Small island developing States need to rebalance and broaden their economies for sustained growth; promote macroeconomic stability; protect core services and their most vulnerable populations through strong public financial management; and pursue economic and financial reforms to improve competitiveness. They also need to collaborate and take a coordinated approach with their development partners, including on concessional finance access, to weather future shocks.

B. Sustainable tourism

20. Tourism accounts for less than 5 per cent of GDP in other developing countries but represents over 20 per cent of GDP for most small island developing States.¹⁷ In the Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region, tourism contributed to 50 per cent of the GDP of Maldives in 2016, 23 per cent for Seychelles, 11 per cent for Mauritius and just over 4 per cent for Comoros. Caribbean States received approximately 8.2 million visitors in 2017, representing an increase of 4

¹⁴ Report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway in the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea region, 2018, para. 7.

¹⁵ Caribbean regional report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway, 2018, p. 25.

¹⁶ Pacific Islands Forum, *First Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report 2018*, para. 75.

¹⁷ OECD, *Making Development Cooperation Work for Small Island Developing States* (Paris, 2018), p. 31.

per cent over 2016,¹⁸ despite competition from new and/or cheaper markets and setbacks from natural disasters. In the Pacific region, the World Travel and Tourism Council estimates that tourism contributes more than 60 per cent to the total GDP of Vanuatu, over 40 per cent for Fiji and more than 30 per cent on average to the Pacific region as a whole. In that regard, the development and implementation of national sustainable tourism strategies and policies as promoted under Sustainable Development Goal 12 are key for the sustainability of the industry.

C. Sustainable energy

21. Access to electricity in small island developing States in the Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region in terms of percentage of population grew over the period 2014–2016. Bahrain, Maldives, Seychelles and Singapore have already achieved 100 per cent access, while other countries continue to demonstrate consistent progress, with the exception of Guinea-Bissau.¹⁹ The Caribbean States have set ambitious renewable energy targets, and countries in the region are well on their way to achieving many of them. Renewable energy represented 9.7 per cent of installed generation capacity in 2017, and a target of 47 per cent has been set for 2027.²⁰ The percentage of the population with access to off-grid systems such as solar photovoltaic home systems increased in the Pacific, and many countries are set to achieve universal access to electricity, albeit at different rates of progress.²¹

22. High petroleum fuel dependency, oil price volatility, high initial investment costs, a lack of appropriate private investor regulatory frameworks, weak or independent power producers and power purchase agreements, land use competition, monopolies in transmission and distribution, low technical capacity and grid stability issues are among the factors that continue to affect sustainable energy consumption and project development in these States.

D. Sustainable transportation

23. Small island developing States continue to improve upon their transportation connectivity (air, sea and land). Among States in the Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region, Mauritius is investing in a new transport system project, while Singapore continues its investments in infrastructure, with a view to further enhancing transportation efficiency and logistics services. Caribbean States are promoting the import of electric, hybrid and fuel cell vehicles and encouraging investments to improve road transport connectivity. While the cost of international transport for the average country is approximately 9 per cent of the value of imports, it is closer to 10 per cent in Pacific small island developing States, where, in 2017, it amounted to \$3 billion. Existing maritime transport services in many Pacific region States are becoming increasingly unaffordable and unsustainable, with fossil fuel being the largest single operating cost for shipping operators.

24. Table 3 shows that 11 small island developing States are either devoting efforts to or on track in implementing the development and poverty eradication priority of the Samoa Pathway (corresponds to Sustainable Development Goal 1). Twelve

¹⁸ World Tourism Organization, “2017 International Tourism Results: the highest in seven years”, 15 January 2018.

¹⁹ Report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway in the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea region, 2018, para. 64, including figure 3 and table 3.

²⁰ Caribbean regional report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway, 2018, p. 48.

²¹ Pacific Islands Forum, *First Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report 2018*, paras. 100–102.

countries lack appropriate data to measure performance in at least one of the four Goals that fall under the economic pillar of the Samoa Pathway. On sustainable energy (Goal 7), 10 are on track and most (36) have the appropriate data to measure progress. Sustainable transportation (Goal 9) lags far behind, and more data are required to accurately measure progress in sustainable tourism (part of Goal 8).

Table 3
Progress table for the economic pillar of the Samoa Pathway

<i>Countries (by region)</i>	<i>Sustained and sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth, with decent work for all (Goal 8)</i>	<i>Development and poverty eradication (Goal 1)</i>	<i>Sustainable tourism (Goal 8)</i>	<i>Sustainable energy (Goal 7)</i>	<i>Sustainable transportation (Goal 9)</i>
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Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region

- Bahrain
- Cabo Verde
- Comoros
- Guinea-Bissau
- Maldives
- Mauritius
- Sao Tome and Principe
- Seychelles
- Singapore

Bahrain	Black	Black	Black	Black	Black
Cabo Verde	Light Gray	Dark Gray	Light Gray	Dark Gray	Light Gray
Comoros	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray
Guinea-Bissau	Dark Gray	Light Gray	Dark Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray
Maldives	Light Gray	Dark Gray	Light Gray	Black	Dark Gray
Mauritius	Dark Gray	Black	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray
Sao Tome and Principe	Light Gray	Dark Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray
Seychelles	White	Black	White	Black	Light Gray
Singapore	Black	Black	Black	Black	Black

Caribbean region

- Antigua and Barbuda
- Bahamas
- Barbados
- Belize
- Cuba
- Dominica
- Dominican Republic
- Grenada
- Guyana
- Haiti

Antigua and Barbuda	White	Dark Gray	White	Dark Gray	Dark Gray
Bahamas	Light Gray	Dark Gray	Light Gray	Black	Dark Gray
Barbados	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Black	Dark Gray
Belize	Light Gray	Dark Gray	Light Gray	Dark Gray	Light Gray
Cuba	Black	Black	Black	Dark Gray	Light Gray
Dominica	White	White	White	Black	Dark Gray
Dominican Republic	Dark Gray	Black	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray
Grenada	White	Dark Gray	White	Dark Gray	Dark Gray
Guyana	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Light Gray
Haiti	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray

<i>Countries (by region)</i>	<i>Sustained and sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth, with decent work for all (Goal 8)</i>	<i>Development and poverty eradication (Goal 1)</i>	<i>Sustainable tourism (Goal 8)</i>	<i>Sustainable energy (Goal 7)</i>	<i>Sustainable transportation (Goal 9)</i>
Jamaica					
Saint Kitts and Nevis					
Saint Lucia					
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines					
Suriname					
Trinidad and Tobago					

Pacific region

Fiji					
Kiribati					
Marshall Islands					
Micronesia					
Nauru					
Palau					
Papua New Guinea					
Samoa					
Solomon Islands					
Timor-Leste					
Tonga					
Tuvalu					
Vanuatu					

Note: The shading in the progress table shows each country's average performance or progress on Sustainable Development Goals. Black denotes that the country is on track to Goal achievement, while darker to lighter shades of grey denote decreasing distance from Goal achievement. No shading indicates that the country has achieved less than 50 per cent of the indicators for a Goal or that insufficient data are available to measure progress.

V. Implementation of the social dimension of the Samoa Pathway

25. The present section contains a review of the implementation of the social dimensions of the Samoa Pathway, measured against their Sustainable Development Goal equivalents, as shown in table 4.

Table 4

Priorities of the Samoa Pathway social pillar, aligned with their Sustainable Development Goal equivalents

<i>Samoa Pathway social pillar priority</i>	<i>Sustainable Development Goal</i>
Food security and nutrition	2
Water and sanitation	6
Health and non-communicable diseases	3
Gender equality and women's empowerment	5
Social development	10
Culture and sports	
Promoting peaceful societies and safe communities	16
Education	4

A. Food security and nutrition

26. One initiative for improving food security and nutrition in small island developing States in the Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region is the Infrastructure Rehabilitation for Food Security Support Project for the period 2016–2020, implemented in Sao Tome and Principe.²² A Regional Framework for Accelerating Action on Food Security and Nutrition in Pacific Small Island Developing States has been developed on the basis of the Global Action Programme on Food Security and Nutrition in Small Island Developing States of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), which specifies, inter alia, the region's priority actions.²³ FAO and the Caribbean Development Bank have been training countries in Caribbean States to reduce their food import bill by, inter alia, tackling value chain gaps.

27. Threats identified in small island developing States in the Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region include land degradation, poor management of marine ecosystems and fisheries, a lack of support for sustainable agriculture and other impacts of natural and human-induced disasters. In the Caribbean, challenges include limited investment in commercial agriculture and agricultural technology and the low nutritional value of imported food (80 per cent of available food is imported), which poses health risks, including from non-communicable diseases. In Pacific States, challenges include limited land mass and population, fragile natural environments, a lack of arable land and high dependence on food imports.

²² Report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway in the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea region, 2018, para. 79.

²³ The Pacific Islands Forum, *First Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report 2018*, para. 59.

B. Water and sanitation

28. A notable example of progress in small island developing States in the Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region is the integrated water resources management project of the United Nations Office for Project Services, supporting Cabo Verde, Comoros, Maldives, Mauritius, Sao Tome and Principe and Seychelles. The project's long-term goal is to enhance capacity to plan and manage aquatic resources and ecosystems on a sustainable basis.²⁴ Most Caribbean States have made some progress on integrated water resources management, having either policies, programmes or plans already in place.²⁵ Sanitation coverage levels in the Pacific region had stagnated at 31 per cent, while drinking water coverage dropped from 51 per cent to 48 per cent between 2000 and 2015. An estimated 1.3 million people still do not have access to proper sanitation facilities.²⁶

29. Water and sanitation challenges in small island developing States include damage and disruption of infrastructure due to water-related hazards; increasing demand, inefficient water use and leakage; ineffective management of water resource quantity and quality; and escalating costs of flood-related damage and losses. Institutional deficiencies such as fragmented governance frameworks, insufficient data, poor coordination between responsible agencies, inadequate technical competencies and low levels of investment to replace ageing infrastructure compound those challenges.

C. Health and non-communicable diseases

30. Mortality rates for infants and children under 5 years of age and maternal mortality rates in Comoros, Guinea-Bissau and Sao Tome and Principe have improved. Together with the World Health Organization (WHO), Sao Tome and Principe has developed an action plan to fight against non-communicable diseases.²⁷ Many Caribbean countries have taken concrete steps toward the provision of universal health coverage. In 2017, members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) endorsed the Pan American Health Organization/WHO Caribbean Roadmap on Human Resources for Universal Health. The secretariat of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) has established a health unit and has included a chapter on health in its Growth and Development Strategy.²⁸ WHO recently adopted a draft global plan of action on climate change and health in small island developing States, aimed at providing the overarching support needed to deliver on regional action plans. Non-communicable diseases are at crisis levels in Pacific small island developing States: the region has some of the highest rates of non-communicable diseases, which account for up to 84 per cent of deaths in Fiji and Samoa.

²⁴ See <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnership/?p=7480>.

²⁵ UNEP, *Global Environment Outlook (GEO6): Regional Assessment for Latin America and the Caribbean* (Nairobi, 2016), pp. 64–66.

²⁶ Pacific Islands Forum, *First Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report 2018*, para. 52.

²⁷ Report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway in the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea region, 2018, paras. 117–121.

²⁸ Caribbean regional report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway, 2018, p. 80.

D. Gender equality and women's empowerment

31. Progress has been achieved in many small island developing States in the Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region with respect to the formulation, finalization and implementation of national gender policy frameworks.²⁹ Notwithstanding, parliamentary representation of women remains below the average for Africa as a whole, although it is increasing in Comoros and Guinea-Bissau. While Caribbean countries have made commendable progress in some fields, including on improving access for women to health, productive employment and education, other areas, such as eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls and participation at all levels, still require attention. With the exception of Cuba, Grenada and Haiti, women still account for less than 20 per cent of cabinet members in most countries.³⁰ Almost all of the small island developing States in the Pacific region have adopted gender policies and strategies, including disability policies, and some progress in achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls has been realized, in particular in education and health. Notwithstanding, resources for integrating and implementing gender equality priorities are limited, and gender inequality manifests itself in the high prevalence of violence against women. In some Pacific countries, women experience the highest rates of intimate partner violence in the world.³¹

E. Social development

32. Some progress was made in small island developing States in the Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region, through the formulation and implementation of national plans and policies addressing poverty and social exclusion (the Marshall Plan against poverty instituted by Mauritius); respect for human rights, civic participation and gender equality (the strategic plan for sustainable development of Cabo Verde); the needs of socially vulnerable people (Maldives); and social protection measures (the national social protection policy adopted by Comoros).³²

33. In Caribbean small island developing States, improvements made in the education sector led to an overall upward trend in youth development. Social development, through the promotion of inclusion, autonomy and empowerment, in particular among the most vulnerable, has been constrained by a lack of analysis and monitoring and inadequate investment in areas such as education, sanitation, health care, housing and the provision of safety nets. The region continues to be challenged by high levels of youth unemployment, poverty and teenage pregnancy and a high risk of HIV infection.³³

34. In Pacific small island developing States, while extreme poverty remains relatively low, household surveys in seven countries indicate that the elderly and other vulnerable groups are more often likely to fall into hardship and poverty, with an estimated one in every four living below their national poverty lines. There is increasing inequality among marginalized population groups and for people living in remote communities. Youth unemployment in these States averages 23 per cent, compared with the global average of 13 per cent. Inequality is increasing, and the gap

²⁹ Report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway in the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea region, 2018, para. 128.

³⁰ Caribbean regional report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway, 2018, p. 87.

³¹ Pacific Islands Forum, *First Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report 2018*, paras. 39–40 and 204–205.

³² Report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway in the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea region, 2018, paras. 136–148.

³³ Caribbean regional report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway, 2018, p. 96.

between urban and rural areas is more pronounced. Persons with disabilities in Pacific small island developing States are among the poorest and most marginalized in their communities.³⁴

F. Culture and sport

35. Culture and heritage are both enablers and drivers of sustainable development. Protecting tangible cultural heritage, safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, promoting responsible sustainable tourism, boosting creative industries and transmitting traditional knowledge are crucial to small island developing States and their people.

G. Promoting peaceful societies and safe communities

36. Crime and violence, including conflict, gang and youth violence, piracy, trafficking in persons, cybercrime, drug trafficking and transnational organized crime, negatively affect the sustainable development efforts of small island developing States. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has been tackling corruption and crime in all three regions, through the United Nations Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption Project, phase II (2016–2020); the UNODC Regional Programme for the Caribbean in Support of the CARICOM Crime and Security Strategy for the period 2014–2020; and the Global Maritime Crime Programme, which provides support for the Western Indian Ocean Piracy Prosecution Model.

37. Among small island developing States in the Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region, the national narrative of Singapore is founded upon a commitment to the rule of law as the cornerstone of development that contributes to a sense of justice and security, engendering business confidence where contracts and property rights are respected and protected.

38. Small island developing States in the Caribbean region have sought to tackle the illegal arms trade and remain strong advocates for the universalization of the Arms Trade Treaty. The CARICOM Counter-Terrorism Strategy was adopted in 2018, and a regional Counter Trafficking Strategy has been established to increase transborder intelligence and information-sharing.

39. Under the Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific,³⁵ 13 countries in the Pacific region underwent a peer review of their national planning, budgeting, public financial management and aid management systems and processes. A unique feature of the Cairns Compact is the way it empowered Pacific small island developing States, as a collective, to find, celebrate and replicate home-grown good practices and acknowledge existing expertise in the Pacific region.

H. Education

40. The number of years of schooling among children in small island developing States in the Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region has increased. Maldives is well on track to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4, all children are guaranteed 14 years of free education starting at age 4. There has been progress in recent years in Comoros, through its 10-year education and literacy

³⁴ Pacific Islands Forum, *First Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report 2018*, p. viii.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, paras. 176–186.

development plan for the period 2017–2026, which is aimed at addressing challenges and stimulating efforts in the education sector.³⁶

41. CARICOM countries have been guided by several strategic policies, including the Regional Technical and Vocational Education and Training Strategy for Workforce Development and Economic Competitiveness and the Regional Framework for Action for Children, as well as regional mandates in such fields as health and family life education, culture in education and health in education. The Caribbean Development Bank and the United Nations Children’s Fund have partnered to produce a Caribbean Early Childhood Development Good Practice Guide in order to improve the quality of early childhood education in the Caribbean.³⁷ Progress in the region has also been made in areas such as certification and benchmarking for secondary education and vocational training.

42. While access to education has improved in Pacific small island developing States, quality remains a challenge. There is a need to focus on improving the quality and relevance of education and cognitive learning outcomes, where results in areas such as literacy and numeracy have not made the expected gains for all. There is also a renewed focus on lifelong learning, with early childhood education and post-secondary education and training needing priority attention. Changes in approaches to learning will require new ways of teaching.³⁸

43. Table 5 shows that overall progress in the social dimensions of the Samoa Pathway lags behind progress in the environment and economic dimensions. Exacerbating the challenge is the fact that data for monitoring and evaluation are limited or unavailable. No formal information was available for the culture and sport priority, as it has no equivalent among the Sustainable Development Goals.

Table 5
Progress table for the social pillar of the Samoa Pathway

<i>Countries (by region)</i>	<i>Food security and nutrition (Goal 2)</i>	<i>Health and non-communicable diseases (Goal 3)</i>	<i>Education (Goal 4)</i>	<i>Gender equality and women's empowerment (Goal 5)</i>	<i>Water and sanitation (Goal 6)</i>	<i>Social development (Goal 10)</i>
Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region						
Bahrain						
Cabo Verde						
Comoros						
Guinea-Bissau						
Maldives						
Mauritius						
Sao Tome and Principe						
Seychelles						

³⁶ Report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway in the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea region, 2018, paras. 158–169.

³⁷ Caribbean regional report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway, 2018, p. 114.

³⁸ Pacific Islands Forum, *First Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report 2018*, p. ix.

<i>Countries (by region)</i>	<i>Food security and nutrition (Goal 2)</i>	<i>Health and non-communicable diseases (Goal 3)</i>	<i>Education (Goal 4)</i>	<i>Gender equality and women's empowerment (Goal 5)</i>	<i>Water and sanitation (Goal 6)</i>	<i>Social development (Goal 10)</i>
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Singapore

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Caribbean region

Antigua and Barbuda

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Bahamas

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Barbados

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Belize

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Cuba

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Dominica

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Dominican Republic

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Grenada

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Guyana

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Haiti

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Jamaica

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Saint Kitts and Nevis

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Saint Lucia

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Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

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Suriname

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Trinidad and Tobago

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Pacific region

Fiji

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Kiribati

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Marshall Islands

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Micronesia

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Nauru

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Palau

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Papua New Guinea

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Samoa

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<i>Countries (by region)</i>	<i>Food security and nutrition (Goal 2)</i>	<i>Health and non-communicable diseases (Goal 3)</i>	<i>Education (Goal 4)</i>	<i>Gender equality and women's empowerment (Goal 5)</i>	<i>Water and sanitation (Goal 6)</i>	<i>Social development (Goal 10)</i>
Solomon Islands						
Timor-Leste						
Tonga						
Tuvalu						
Vanuatu						

Note: The shading in the progress table shows each country's average performance or progress on Sustainable Development Goals. Black denotes that the country is on track to Goal achievement, while darker to lighter shades of grey denote decreasing distance from Goal achievement. No shading indicates that the country has achieved less than 50 per cent of the indicators for a Goal or that insufficient data are available to measure progress.

VI. Implementation of the environment dimension of the Samoa Pathway

44. The present section contains a review of the implementation of the environmental dimensions of the Samoa Pathway, measured against their Sustainable Development Goal equivalents, as shown in table 6.

Table 6
Priorities of the Samoa Pathway environment pillar, aligned with their Sustainable Development Goal equivalents

<i>Samoa Pathway Priority</i>	<i>Sustainable Development Goal</i>
Climate change	13
Disaster risk reduction	11
Oceans and seas	14
Sustainable consumption and production	12
Management of chemicals and waste, including hazardous waste	6
Biodiversity	
Desertification, land degradation and drought	15
Forests	
Invasive alien species	

A. Climate change

45. Significant efforts have been exerted by small island developing States in the Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region to address their vulnerability to climate change. Mauritius has pledged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30 per cent by 2030; Guinea-Bissau intends to increase protected areas from 15 per cent to 26 per cent of its national territory; and Singapore designated 2018 as the Year of Climate Action in order to raise national awareness of climate

change and, as from 2019, is implementing an economy-wide, exemption-free carbon tax.³⁹

46. Much of the funding and efforts to address climate change and natural hazards in Caribbean small island developing States have been directed at the development of national and sectoral policies and plans and hard infrastructure solutions. However, Governments face persistent constraints in implementing their climate change priorities as a result of limited or unreliable climate information collected from sector agencies; inadequate technology or institutional capacity to collect, interpret or analyse information from sector agencies; and high dependence on international donors as the main source of climate finance.⁴⁰

47. All Pacific small island developing States have established national climate change units; those in Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu have become full-fledged ministries. Considerable progress has been made in both mitigation and adaptation, and valuable lessons have been learned from regional projects such as the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change Programme, the Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project and the Global Climate Change Alliance. Pacific leaders have shown their commitment to the Paris Agreement through ambitious nationally determined contributions.⁴¹ While some progress has been made, challenges remain in accessing resources, owing to capacity constraints.

B. Disaster risk reduction

48. Some notable initiatives undertaken in small island developing States in the Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region include the development of national roadmaps and strategies and the alignment of national development plans and programmes with the 2030 Agenda. In Comoros, Guinea-Bissau and Mauritius, such initiatives have included mainstreaming risk considerations into implementation efforts.⁴²

49. To build resilience, Caribbean governments have updated their disaster risk management legislation and recovery plans. Several national and regional entities have adopted the guidelines of the Sendai Framework to facilitate integration of the disaster risk management agenda. Other disaster risks initiatives in the region include the Regional Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy and Programming Framework 2014–2024 of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency.⁴³

50. Response efforts to recent disasters in the Pacific region have highlighted the need for increased capacity to improve coordination with international and regional humanitarian partners and donor Governments. The establishment of multi-hazard end-to-end early warning systems remain a challenge.

C. Oceans and seas

51. In many small island developing States, marine and coastal ecosystems are under pressure, in part owing to rapid coastal development, pollution increase and

³⁹ Report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway in the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea region, 2018, paras. 25, 49 and 54.

⁴⁰ Caribbean regional report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway, 2018, p. 40.

⁴¹ Pacific Islands Forum, *First Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report 2018*, para. 119.

⁴² Report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway in the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea region, 2018, para. 71.

⁴³ Caribbean regional report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway, 2018, p. 52.

climate change. Maldives is undertaking several initiatives to protect its ocean ecosystem, including a national campaign to progressively phase out the use of non-biodegradable plastics. The fisheries sector of Mauritius accounted for about 1.4 per cent of GDP in 2016. About 80 per cent of the labour force in the fish processing sector are women, thus promoting the economic empowerment of women and fulfilling Sustainable Development Goal 3.⁴⁴

52. Ocean governance has been given prominence in the Caribbean, through the establishment of the OECS Eastern Caribbean Regional Ocean Policy and its three-year strategic action plan. In fisheries management, CARICOM has developed the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy, and six countries are party to the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing.⁴⁵

53. Pacific small island developing States were instrumental in the establishment of Sustainable Development Goal 14 and the holding of the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. The region has a good record in ending overfishing by its largest fishers and is making progress towards achieving 10 per cent marine protection and conservation.

D. Sustainable consumption and production

54. Among States in the Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region, Mauritius is implementing the SWITCH Africa Green programme, which is aimed at achieving sustainable development through the adoption of sustainable consumption and production practices, focusing on micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to provide the skills and environment necessary to enable the transition to greener and more sustainable production patterns, while Singapore is pursuing a national “zero waste” strategy.⁴⁶ In the Caribbean, many countries have introduced policies and education and awareness-raising activities aimed at promoting more sustainable consumption patterns and have adopted regulations on trade and import controls on single-use plastics and other non-biodegradable materials.⁴⁷

E. Management of chemicals and waste

55. In Guinea-Bissau, chemical and waste management is underway under the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal. Mauritius has ratified the Minamata Convention on Mercury and is currently preparing its draft Minamata Initial Assessment report. Maldives has a national waste management policy targeting waste reduction and is developing a legal framework to reduce marine pollution.⁴⁸ All small island developing States in the Caribbean region are parties to and in compliance with the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and have been successful in completely phasing out the consumption of chlorofluorocarbons. Most are also signatories to the

⁴⁴ Report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway in the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea region, 2018, paras. 74–75.

⁴⁵ Caribbean regional report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway, 2018, pp. 56–61.

⁴⁶ Report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway in the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea region, 2018, paras. 103 and 105.

⁴⁷ Caribbean regional report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway, 2018, pp. 73–75.

⁴⁸ Report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway in the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea region, 2018, paras. 111 and 114–115.

Basel Convention, and many have ratified the Minamata Convention.⁴⁹ There are several initiatives in Pacific small island developing States to improve waste management. The Cleaner Pacific 2025: Pacific Regional Waste and Pollution Management Strategy (2016–2025) is aimed at improving the management of waste and pollution. The strategy seeks to strengthen institutional and human capacity, promote public-private partnerships, implement sustainable best practices and promote regional and national cooperation.⁵⁰

F. Biodiversity: desertification, land degradation and drought, forests and invasive alien species

56. Among small island developing States in the Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region, actions by Sao Tome and Principe on biodiversity include an integrated ecosystem approach project for biodiversity management and conservation. Maldives has designated 42 protected areas, with Baa Atoll designated as a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization biosphere reserve.⁵¹

57. In the Caribbean, the environmental and natural resources policy framework being developed by CARICOM addresses the protection and sustainable use of the Community's natural resources in accordance with the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas. OECS developed a regional action plan for invasive alien species in 2015 and has established three distinct working groups on mitigating invasive alien species.⁵²

58. Biodiversity in Pacific States is under intense pressure from natural and human-induced disturbances, invasive species, population growth and other threats. The Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Islands Region (2014–2020) guides conservation efforts in the region. Ecosystem-based approaches are being integrated into national and sector plans, including national adaptation programmes of action, national biodiversity strategies and action plans, national adaptation plans and joint national adaptation plans. The ratification of major multilateral environmental agreements and the establishment of the Pacific Ocean Alliance have provided support to countries in the development of an instrument to address their biodiversity priorities.

59. Implementation of the environment pillar of the Samoa Pathway is perhaps the most advanced, with 10 States on track on climate change, as seen in table 7. Serious efforts are also being exerted on water and sanitation, with 13 States registering progress in that area. Data and information are required of several small island developing States to monitor their implementation of disaster risk reduction (Goal 11) and sustainable consumption and production (Goal 12). Data on water and sanitation are also required for several States in the Pacific region.

⁴⁹ Caribbean regional report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway, 2018, pp. 75–76.

⁵⁰ Pacific Islands Forum, *First Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report 2018*, para. 146.

⁵¹ Report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway in the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea region, 2018, paras. 173–174.

⁵² Caribbean regional report on the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway, 2018, p. 118.

Table 7
Progress table for the environment pillar of the Samoa Pathway

<i>Countries (by region)</i>	<i>Sustainable cities and communities (Goal 11)</i>	<i>Sustainable consumption and production (Goal 12)</i>	<i>Climate change (Goal 13)</i>	<i>Oceans and seas (Goal 14)</i>	<i>Life on land (Goal 15)</i>
Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region					
Bahrain	Dark Grey	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Dark Grey	Dark Grey
Cabo Verde	Dark Grey	Dark Grey	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Dark Grey
Comoros	Dark Grey	Dark Grey	Black	Light Grey	Dark Grey
Guinea-Bissau	Light Grey	Dark Grey	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Dark Grey
Maldives	Dark Grey	Dark Grey	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Dark Grey
Mauritius	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Light Grey
Sao Tome and Principe	Dark Grey	Dark Grey	Dark Grey	Dark Grey	Dark Grey
Seychelles	White	Light Grey	Light Grey	Light Grey	Light Grey
Singapore	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Light Grey	Light Grey	Light Grey
Caribbean region					
Antigua and Barbuda	White	White	Light Grey	Dark Grey	Dark Grey
Bahamas	White	White	Light Grey	Dark Grey	Light Grey
Barbados	White	Light Grey	Light Grey	Light Grey	Dark Grey
Belize	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Light Grey
Cuba	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Light Grey
Dominica	White	Light Grey	Black	Light Grey	Dark Grey
Dominican Republic	White	Dark Grey	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Light Grey
Grenada	White	White	Dark Grey	Dark Grey	Dark Grey
Guyana	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Dark Grey
Haiti	Light Grey	Light Grey	Black	Light Grey	Light Grey
Jamaica	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Dark Grey
Saint Kitts and Nevis	White	White	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Dark Grey
Saint Lucia	Dark Grey	White	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Dark Grey
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	White	White	Black	Light Grey	Light Grey
Suriname	Dark Grey	Light Grey	Light Grey	Dark Grey	Dark Grey

<i>Countries (by region)</i>	<i>Sustainable cities and communities (Goal 11)</i>	<i>Sustainable consumption and production (Goal 12)</i>	<i>Climate change (Goal 13)</i>	<i>Oceans and seas (Goal 14)</i>	<i>Life on land (Goal 15)</i>
Trinidad and Tobago					
Pacific region					
Fiji					
Kiribati					
Marshall Islands					
Micronesia					
Nauru					
Palau					
Papua New Guinea					
Samoa					
Solomon Islands					
Timor-Leste					
Tonga					
Tuvalu					
Vanuatu					

Note: The shading in the progress table shows each country's average performance or progress on Sustainable Development Goals. Black denotes that the country is on track to Goal achievement, while darker to lighter shades of grey denote decreasing distance from Goal achievement. No shading indicates that the country has achieved less than 50 per cent of the indicators for a Goal or that insufficient data are available to measure progress.

VII. Means of implementation

60. The focus of the present section is on the Small Island Developing States Partnership Framework, financial support and data and statistics, which remain key priorities for small island developing States.

A. Partnerships

61. Genuine and durable partnerships play an important role in advancing sustainable development at all levels and in enhancing international cooperation and action to address the unique characteristics and vulnerabilities of small island developing States.

62. The Small Island Developing States Partnership Framework was formally established by the General Assembly in 2015 (resolution 70/202, para. 11), to monitor and ensure the full implementation of pledges and commitments, to promote the

effective and efficient follow-up to existing partnerships for those States, including those launched at the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, held in Apia in 2014, and to encourage genuine and durable new partnerships for the sustainable development of small island developing States. The Partnership Framework consists of the Steering Committee on Partnerships for Small Island Developing States, an annual global multi-stakeholder dialogue, a partnership reporting template and the organization of national and regional partnership dialogues.

63. Recent achievements under the Partnership Framework include the production of an in-depth analysis of existing partnerships with small island developing States, identifying trends and gaps, among other things; the adoption of norms and criteria specifying the nature of such partnerships; and the formulation of a partnership toolbox.⁵³

64. Going forward, the Partnership Framework may wish to strengthen its collaboration with stakeholders at all levels, including regional and subregional organizations, with a view to incentivizing the creation of new partnerships and addressing the gaps identified through the in-depth analysis. The Steering Committee, with the support of the Secretariat, including through the annual global multi-stakeholder dialogue, should continue to monitor, encourage and advocate the launch of partnerships that advance the sustainable development of small island developing States.

B. Development financing

65. Small island developing States rely heavily on private finance from national and international capital markets to meet fiscal deficits and provide aid-related support. Some attract foreign direct investment, while others do not. Despite those differences, most small island developing States share several key challenges with regard to development financing. Negotiating solutions with creditors on an ad hoc basis has not adequately addressed their problems. In addition, their ability to leverage climate finance has been hindered by several factors: their inability to effectively access and absorb climate resources, which are typically administered via complex funds; unfulfilled donor commitments; and a donor bias towards mitigation rather than adaptation.

66. Furthermore, many small island developing States continue to experience severe structural constraints in their efforts to mobilize national resources for development. Savings rates are low when compared with other developing countries. When combined with high climate adaptation costs and infrastructure investment needs, these factors mean that international finance continues to be indispensable to small island developing States.

67. Building on the momentum of discussions on financing for small island developing States in various forums, consideration could be directed towards whether an initiative for heavily indebted small island developing States or the expanded use of debt-for-climate change adaptation and debt-for-nature swaps are viable alternatives for alleviating and restoring debt sustainability in severely indebted countries.

68. The eligibility criteria for small island developing States to access concessional financing from bilateral and multilateral donors have also been the subject of recent conversations. A basket of indicators to be used to determine the most appropriate financial instruments and levels of concessional finance for different countries has

⁵³ See <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sids/partnershipframework>.

been proposed. The indicators include income per capita, vulnerability to shocks, capacity to mobilize national and international finance, level of debt, social indicators and type of programme being funded. Going forward, an international dialogue on the issue will be extremely beneficial to these States, most of whom are classified as middle-income countries and are therefore ineligible for concessional finance.

C. Data and statistics

69. National statistical agencies in most small island developing States are characterized by a limited number of human resources trained to address statistical requirements pertaining to core economic, social, demographic and environmental statistics or to monitor national, regional and international development frameworks. Their budgets cover mainly staff and very few operating costs, implying an ongoing dependence on international financial support for major statistical collection, and they have limited statistical capacity in other government agencies, such as those responsible for education, health, social affairs, natural resources and the environment.⁵⁴ Five years into the Samoa Pathway, this situation continues for at least half of all small island developing States, and the formulation of national strategies for the development statistics remains slow and is most urgent.

D. Financing the Samoa Pathway

70. The present section contains an examination of the level of financial expenditure directed towards small island developing States, including towards the implementation of the Samoa Pathway, by international institutions, small island developing States and other Member States and United Nations system agencies and other regional and subregional organizations.

Support from international institutions

71. The total financial expenditure directed by international institutions towards small island developing States for the period 2015–2018 was \$18 billion, \$2.4 billion of which went to States in the Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region, \$9.1 billion to Caribbean States and \$6.3 billion to Pacific States. The institutions listed in table 8 are the biggest contributors, responsible for approximately 70 per cent of total financial flows to small island developing States.⁵⁵

Table 8

Financial contributions by international institutions

(United States dollars)

<i>Top five partners by region</i>	<i>Expenditure for 2015–2018</i>
Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region (61 partners in all)	
Netherlands Development Finance Company	954 980 000
European Union institutions	380 182 400

⁵⁴ Gerald Haberkorn, “NSDS Guidelines for SIDS 2018” (Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century, 2018), p. 9.

⁵⁵ For additional information, see “Partners and partnerships of SIDS: Samoa Pathway interregional preparatory meeting”, presentation for the partnership dialogue on small island developing States held on 30 October 2018. Available at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/27975UNDP_Samoa_MCO_Office.pdf.

<i>Top five partners by region</i>	<i>Expenditure for 2015–2018</i>
African Development Bank	238 011 100
UNDP	156 306 600
World Bank Group	124 154 500
Total	2 476 310 041
Caribbean region (105 partners in all)	
Inter-American Development Bank	2 387 109 000
Belgium	1 145 967 000
European Union institutions	1 043 385 000
United States Agency for International Development	929 426 000
World Bank Group	731 299 400
Total	9 162 158 203
Pacific region (61 partners in all)	
Australia	3 026 621 000
Asian Development Bank	603 630 700
World Bank Group	492 127 000
United States of America	490 810 140
European Union institutions	372 886 100
Total	6 371 072 412

Source: International Aid Transparency Initiative

Support from Member States other than small island developing States

72. Information on the financial support provided by Member States as recorded in table 9 was gathered from data supplied in response to the questionnaire circulated by the Secretariat.

Table 9

Financial contributions by Member States that are not small island developing States

(United States dollars)

<i>Priorities identified in the Samoa Pathway</i>	<i>Support</i>			<i>Budget allocation</i>
	<i>Australia^a (2014–2018)</i>	<i>New Zealand^a (2015–2018)</i>	<i>United States of America (2015–2017)</i>	<i>Italy (2015–2018)</i>
Sustained and sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth	564 747 000	427 144 584	6 935 600	–
Climate change	115 977 000	258 172 262	35 892 660	800 000
Sustainable energy	–	34 432 636	16 975 960	15 000 000
Disaster risk reduction	132 334 000	100 813 019	49 712 390	2 270 000
Oceans and seas	–	52 218 939	–	1 500 000
Food security and nutrition	211 640 000	42 532 926	90 515 470	483 000
Water and sanitation	41 497 000	27 104 070	24 517 440	–
Sustainable transportation	–	32 645 672	23 165 830	–

<i>Priorities identified in the Samoa Pathway</i>	<i>Support</i>			<i>Budget allocation</i>
	<i>Australia^a (2014–2018)</i>	<i>New Zealand^a (2015–2018)</i>	<i>United States of America (2015–2017)</i>	<i>Italy (2015–2018)</i>
Sustainable consumption and production	34 664 000 (including biodiversity)	–	114 795 680	–
Chemical and waste management		6 832 959	–	–
Health and non-communicable diseases	516 664 000	48 223 629	221 522 930	–
Gender equality	1 935 840 000	472 133 005	47 521 160	–
Social development	692 715 000	142 773 859	41 469 910	–
Biodiversity	–	68 783 860	39 866 940	1 100 000
Means of implementation	1 158 221 000	379 740 268	–	488 000 (partnerships) 800 000 (other means)
Miscellaneous	159 116 000	–	1 423 501 620	–
Total	3 511 598 000	902 340 504	2 136 393 590	22 441 000

^a Amounts may be tagged to more than one priority area and overall total may not tally.

73. Japan reported that, while not exclusively directed towards small island developing States, the total amount of its bilateral ODA for the period 2015–2017 was \$60.7 billion. In relation to the priorities of the Samoa Pathway, support provided by Japan was allocated as follows: sustainable energy (3.00 per cent), disaster risk reduction (1.44 per cent), food security and nutrition (1.05 per cent), health and non-communicable diseases (3.02 per cent), gender equality (0.15 per cent), social development (1.47 per cent) and biodiversity (0.76 per cent). Japan did not present specific figures for sustained and sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth, climate change, ocean and seas, sustainable transportation, sustainable consumption and production, chemical and waste management or means of implementation, but indicated that support to those areas were included in the remaining 81.61 per cent of its total bilateral ODA.

74. Additional support reported by Member States was as follows:

(a) Qatar provided \$400,000 to the Alliance of Small Island States and \$285,000 to Pacific small island developing States in the period 2015–2017, \$30,000 to the trust fund of the high-level political forum on sustainable development and \$200,000 to Kiribati in 2017 and \$100,000 to Vanuatu in 2018;

(b) Ireland provided €200,000 for the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and €100,000 to the trust fund of the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2018 and is providing €1 million to the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility in 2018/19;

(c) The Russian Federation made a financial contribution to Cuba, through the World Food Programme, of \$1 million in 2018/19;

(d) The Republic of Korea expended approximately \$87 million on small island developing States during the period 2014–2017, as follows: \$32.26 million to States in the Pacific region, \$53.99 million to States in the Caribbean region and

\$780,000 to States in the Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region;⁵⁶

(e) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Austria contributed \$339,000 for sustainable energy in 2016.

Expenditure by small island developing States on the Samoa Pathway

75. Four small island developing States (Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu) responded to the Secretariat's questionnaire, submitting, inter alia, their Samoa Pathway expenditure data. Investment in sustainable transportation was observed to have taken a consistent portion of their budget allocations. Expenditures by both Fiji and Samoa were focused on social development, such as health and education. The level of resource allocation for the SAMOA Pathway priorities differs across countries, ranging from as high as 73.3 per cent of the total national budget of Fiji for 2018/19 to as low as 9.0 per cent of the annual development budget of Solomon Islands.

Table 10

Financial contributions by small island developing States

(United States dollars)

Priority areas identified in the Samoa Pathway	Budget allocation			Investments
	Fiji ^a (2016–2019)	Samoa (2017–2019)	Solomon Islands (2015–2018)	Tuvalu (2015–2018)
Sustained and sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth	56 311 776	94 318 540	10 130 000	36 258 750.25
Climate change	427 768 109	20 904 004	550 000	586 553.05
Disaster risk reduction			870 000	
Sustainable energy	60 653 501	2 721 600	6 700 000	385 965
Oceans and seas	7 533 290	15 105 138	1 500 000	
Food security and nutrition	137 736 283		3 700 000	2 011 567
Water and sanitation	279 547 169	9 724 749	1 500 000	
Sustainable transportation	703 083 318	40 531 952	68 400 000	12 546 183
Sustainable consumption and production			3 900 000	
Management of chemicals and waste, including hazardous waste	5 951 765		680 000	2 638 038
Health and non-communicable diseases	402 922 968	84 214 900	4 400 000	24 834 711
Gender equality and women's empowerment	8 383 907		900 000	378 457
Social development	68 596 500	96 857 099	900 000	1 343 566
Culture and sport	108 561 201			
Promoting peaceful societies and safe communities	430 898 491			
Social security	178 821 934			
Education	1 079 296 992			
Biodiversity			700 000	434 433
Desertification, land degradation and drought	24 591 420			
Forests	5 062 174			
Invasive alien species	11 771 971			

⁵⁶ See www.odakorea.go.kr/ez.main.ODAEngMain.do. Includes a total of \$360,000 for Cook Islands and Niue during the period 2014–2017.

Priority areas identified in the Samoa Pathway	Budget allocation			Investments
	Fiji ^a (2016–2019)	Samoa (2017–2019)	Solomon Islands (2015–2018)	Tuvalu (2015–2018)
Means of implementation, including partnerships		465 594 584		
Partnerships	131 678 990			
Financing	61 191 839			
Capacity-building	7 896 836			
Technology	46 222 222			
Data and statistics	11 797 185			
Total	4 256 279 839	423 004 304	104 800 000	81 418 224

^a Using an exchange rate of US\$0.47 per F\$1.

Support from United Nations system organizations and regional and subregional organizations

76. Table 11 shows the contributions made by United Nations system entities and other regional and subregional organizations to small Island developing States for the period 2014–2018.

Table 11
Financial contributions by United Nations system organizations and other regional and subregional organizations

(United States dollars)

Priorities identified in the Samoa Pathway	Budget allocation				Investments			
	UNDP (2017/18)	UNESCO (2014–2019)	UNICEF (2014–2018)	UNIDO (2016–2018)	ESCAP (2018)	IAEA ^a (2015–2018)	PIDF (2016–2018)	UNOSSC (2017–2019)
Sustained and sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth	59 460 638			9 902 389	219 207		98 146	
Climate change	14 033 573			4 563 967	92 096		431 842	1 000 000
Sustainable energy	9 459 263			12 581 282	12 500	34 937	353 325	1 000 000
Disaster risk reduction	70 558 929	115 000	20 246 179 (including climate change)		120 977		39 258	2 500 000
Oceans and seas	11 843 830	6 950 000			46 116		294 438	
Food security and nutrition			16 415 801			3 397 345	98 146	
Water and sanitation		200 800	17 732 939		5 000	1 225 612	39 258	
Sustainable transportation					5 753		333 696	
Sustainable consumption and production							196 292	
Chemical and waste management	16 268 152			45 000			39 258	
Health and non-communicable diseases	3 127 136		15 966 490			3 650 399	19 629	1 140 000
Gender equality	2 205 429				86 665			
Social development	31 498 013	11 026 696	11 104 075		93 603			556 000
Biodiversity		945 600					19 629	

Priorities identified in the Samoa Pathway	Budget allocation				Investments			
	UNDP (2017/18)	UNESCO (2014–2019)	UNICEF (2014–2018)	UNIDO (2016–2018)	ESCAP (2018)	IAEA ^a (2015–2018)	PIDF (2016–2018)	UNOSSC (2017–2019)
Means of implementation	52 354 888	940 825	739 214		1 054 547	1 133 078		
Miscellaneous			9 471 577			6 705 495		
Total	270 809 851	13 228 921	71 430 096	27 092 638	1 736 463	9 442 315	1 962 919	6 190 000

Abbreviations: ESCAP, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; IAEA, International Atomic Energy Agency; PIDF, Pacific Islands Development Forum; UNDP, United Nations Development Programme; UNESCO, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; UNICEF, United Nations Children’s Fund; UNIDO, United Nations Industrial Development Organization; UNOSSC, United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation.

^a Using an exchange rate of \$1.14 per €1.

77. Other reported investments included \$1,117,549 mobilized by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, Port of Spain) from its regular programme budget and \$1,321,707 from its extrabudgetary and development account funds for the period 2015–2018. The International Renewable Energy Agency mobilized \$500 million. The Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States spent \$1,975,794 on means of implementation in 2018 and 2019. UNODC spent \$2.3 million on Pacific small island developing States for the United Nations Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption Project and \$900,000 on Caribbean small island developing States. The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea reported supporting 155 staff members in and from small island developing States through its fellowship trust fund (amount not specified). The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction reported that its regional offices and headquarters supported the implementation of the Sendai Framework in small island developing States (amount not specified).

VIII. Monitoring and follow-up

78. The General Assembly, pursuant to paragraph 124 (a) of the outcome document entitled “SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action SAMOA Pathway” (Assembly resolution 69/15, annex), annually requests the Secretary-General to report on the progress achieved in implementing the priorities, commitments, partnerships and other activities of small island developing States. While attempts have been made to move away from a descriptive approach to reporting to a more strategic and analytical approach,⁵⁷ the challenge continues to be the availability of appropriate data to support assessment and analysis. In addition, the response rate from Member States, in particular small island developing States, remains low. The continued absence of an appropriate and consistent means of monitoring and measuring progress could be a factor in that low rate of response, as the absence of an appropriate monitoring framework inhibits meaningful, strategic analysis. Strategic analysis of trends in the implementation of the Samoa Pathway could be improved through an agreed monitoring and evaluation framework.

⁵⁷ See [JIU/REP/2016/3](#), para. 176.

IX. Observations

79. Observable trends emerging from the information gathered during the preparatory process for the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway⁵⁸ include augmented recognition by small island developing States of the advantages and importance of regional approaches to its implementation and the absence of such a mechanism for States in the Atlantic, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region. Climate change and resilience-building remain the top priorities of the environmental pillar. Social inclusion, poverty eradication and addressing the non-communicable disease epidemic emerged high on the social pillar, while debt alleviation, access to concessional financing and challenges relating to connectivity featured prominently on the economic pillar.

80. The Samoa Pathway remains the blueprint for sustainable development in small island developing States. Effective monitoring of its progress, however, remains hindered by the lack of an appropriate monitoring and accountability framework, in particular for priorities that fall outside the Sustainable Development Goal targets. Such a framework will ensure that the specific priorities and interests of small island developing States are not left behind.

X. Secretariat coordination

81. The Small Island Developing States Unit within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and within the Office of the High Representative, respectively, continued to collaborate to strengthen the coordination and complementarity of their work in support of these States. Joint activities included the planning and organization of an ambassadorial retreat in March 2018; the alternating chairmanship of the Inter-agency Consultative Group on Small Island Developing States; continued support for the Steering Committee on Partnerships for Small Island Developing States, including the holding of the regional partnership dialogue in 2018 and the annual global multi-stakeholder small island developing States partnership dialogue; and joint efforts in resource mobilization for the holding of the regional and interregional preparatory meetings mandated as a part of the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway. The two units also collaborated on the conduct of the assessment to determine their resource needs in the light of their increased mandates.

82. The role of the Inter-agency Consultative Group as a coordination mechanism on issues pertaining to small island developing States among United Nations system entities has been further strengthened since the adoption of the Samoa Pathway. Concrete steps taken include the adoption of its terms of reference, the establishment of its programme of work and the convening of quarterly meetings, co-chaired by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Office of the High Representative. The establishment by the latter of national focal points for small island developing States in 2018 will play a critical role in ensuring coherent delivery, in particular in relation to the localization of the Samoa Pathway and the 2030 Agenda. The national focal points and the Small Island Developing States Global Business Network offer unique opportunities for further collaboration between the two units within the Secretariat.

⁵⁸ Including from sources referred to in paragraph 2 of the present report.