



Ministry of Fisheries & Ocean Resources (MFOR)

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

"Actions speak louder than Words"

Republic of Kiribati





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Acronyms

Acronym	Abbreviation
AFR	Annual Fishing Revenue
BTC	Betio Town Council
CBFM	Community Based Fisheries Management
CFD	Coastal Fisheries Division
CSD	Corporate Services Division
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific Research and Industrial Organization
CPPL	Central Pacific Producers Limited
DB	Development Budget
DBK	Development Bank of Kiribati
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
ER	Established Register
ESDP	Economic and Social Development Programme
EU	European Union
FAD	Fish Aggregating Device
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FAPCOM	Fisheries Administrative Penalty Committee
FDAPIN	Fisheries Development Assistance For Pacific Island Nations
FFA	Forum Fisheries Agency
FPA	Fisheries Partnership Agreement
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoK	Government of Kiribati
GSD	Geo Science Division
HACCP	Hazard Analysis critical control point
HR	Human Resource
ICT	Information Communication and Technology

JCA	James Cubitt Architects
JV	Joint Ventures
KDP	Kiribati Development Plan
KFL	Kiribati Fish Limited
KIFL	Kiritimati Island Fish Limited
KMSPCC	Kiribati Marine Spatial Planning Coordinating Committee
KOFA	Korea Overseas Fisheries Association
KOIL	Kiribati Oil Company Limited
KSA	Key Strategic Action
KSCL	Kiribati Seafood Company Limited
KSVD	Kiribati Seafood Verification Division
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
KTFL	Kiribati Tuna Fish Limited
KV20	Kiribati Version for 20 Years
LLVDS	Long Line Vessel Day Scheme
MCS	Monitoring Control and Surveillance
MERL	Monitoring Evaluation Research and Learning
MEHR	Ministry of Employment and Human Resources
MFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade
MISE	Ministry of Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Marine Protected Areas
MPs	Members of parliament
MSP	Ministry Strategic Plan
MSP	Marine Spatial Planning
MSR	Marine Scientific Research
MTCIC	Ministry of Tourism, Commerce, Industry and Cooperatives
NCS	National Condition of Service
NEPO	National Economic Planning Office
NOCE	National Ocean Centre of Excellence
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OBM	Out Board Motor
OFCF	Overseas Fishery Cooperation Foundation
OFD	Oceanic Fisheries Division
PACER	Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations
PDD	Planning and Development Division
PICs	Pacific Islands Countries

PIPA	Phoenix Islands Protected Area
PNA	Parties to the Nauru Agreement
PNAO	Parties to the Nauru Agreement Office
PSM	Port State Measures
PROP	Pacific Regional Oceanscape Program
PSO	Public Service Office
SSOP	Standard Sanitation Operating Procedures
SOE	State Owned Enterprise
SPC	Pacific Community
TACL	Te Atinimarawa Company Limited
TOR	Terms of Reference
TTPSA	Taiwan Tuna Purse Seine Fishing Association
TUC	Teinainano Urban Council
TW-2	Tobwaan Waara 2
UN ISA	United Nations International Seabed Authority
USP	University of the South Pacific
VDS	Vessel Day Scheme
WB	World Bank
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission

1. Foreword

It is my great pleasure and privilege to present the Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resource (MFOR) Annual report for the year 2024.

This report provides a comprehensive account of the activities, achievements, challenges, as well as future priorities of my Ministry, executed and planned during the one-year journey of 2024.

This report should also be able to address the following:


- i. Provision of information on the roles and responsibilities of the MFOR,
- ii. Easy access of information on the various Ministry's projects and initiatives to the wider public,
- iii. Accomplishments of the Ministry completed during the year 2024,
- iv. The Ministry's future priorities, challenges, and capacity gaps,
- v. Provision of contents for academic researchers, journalists, development partners, investors on fisheries and ocean in Kiribati,
- vi. Act as the briefing medium on the work of the MFOR.

During the year 2024, we adopted the theme of "Actions speak louder than words" for our mode of working. This theme inspired us to get things started and drive actions to fruition rather than just planning and talking without results.

In 2023 and 2024, my Ministry managed to collect AU\$214 and AU\$210 million respectively in revenue collection consistently from the oceanic fisheries. This is the record of retaining above AUD\$200 million for 2 years in the history of oceanic fisheries work. It is also fair to note that from 2022, the Ministry, for the first time increases its revenue collection ceiling from AU\$140M to \$200M.

My Ministry also introduced the new performance monitoring scheme known as "Key Highlights". Key highlights are activities or projects (or components of larger projects) that can be delivered within one year timeframe. These key highlights should be something aligned to the MFOR Strategic Plan and Motinnano, creative steppingstones to future projects and unique to each





division. This scheme ensures that at the end of each year, some actions are delivered.

I am pleased to report that, out of the 28 Key Highlights we identified last year, 22 of them were successfully delivered and the rest require more further work but are progressing very well. Refer to each Division section and Annex 1 for more details.

To further reinvigorate the spirit of doing more actions to maximise benefits from our fisheries and ocean resources, we changed the name of our Ministry, from the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources Development (MFMRD) to the Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources (MFOR). This effort was coupled with the production of our new MFOR Strategic Plan for the next four year 2024-2028. These reforms reinforce our commitment to diversify economic benefits not only from fisheries, but the wider ocean resources while ensuring their long-term sustainability for our future generations.

The year 2024, was the year of actions for us. We share this theme together with our State-Owned and Joint-Venture Companies working under the auspices of the Ministry.

I often reminded my team about the significance of our responsibility. Our role is not just about fulfilling a task, but about contributing meaningfully to the collective good and producing results. Honoring our responsibility translates to re-affirming our commitment to our people and our country.

Lastly, let me take this opportunity to thank our development partners such as the Australia DFAT, China Aid, ESDP, the EU, FDSPIN, Japan Aid, JV China Shareholders (Golden Ocean, Shanghai Deep Sea, Ocean Family, Zhejiang Yinghai and Sea Wealth), Korean ODA, NZ MFAT, OFCF, USA, our regional organizations, multilateral partners and our fishing partners for your cooperation technical and financial assistance to our Ministry.

I invite you to navigate around this annual report and do not hesitate to get back to us, should you have more questions or interests to support us.

Te Mauri, Te raoi ao Te tabomoa.



Honourable Minister Ribanataake Tiwau

Minister of Fisheries and Ocean Resource



2. Introduction

The objective of this annual report is to provide information for the public uptake on how the Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources execute the Government's policies aimed at sustainably managing and developing the fisheries and ocean resources of Kiribati.

As outlined in the Minister's foreword, the information contained in this report should inform our I-Kiribati – resource owners, development partners and other interested stakeholder, on the overall landscape of the MFOR's policies, achievements, opportunities, and challenges faced during the year 2024.

This is also an effort for MFOR to be transparent to the public with its overall operations to deliver their expected responsibilities within a spectrum of their appropriated recurrent budget, development projects and human resource capacity within one fiscal year.


The Ministry has 6 main divisions namely, Corporate Services Division (CSD), Oceanic Fisheries Division (OFD), Coastal Fisheries Division (CFD) Geo-science Division (GSD), Kiribati Seafood Verification Division (KSVD) and the Planning and Development Division (PDD).

There are three State-Owned Enterprises which are under the carriage of the Ministry, and they include Central Pacific Producers Limited (CPPL), Marawa Enterprise and Te Atinimarawa Company Limited (TACL).

The Ministry also enjoyed working with 8 Joint Venture Companies with China (Kiribati Fish Limited, Kiritimati Island Fishing Limited, Kiribati Tuna Fish Limited, Kiribati Blue Pacific Limited), Kiribati Seafood Company Limited, Korea Joint Ventures such as Kirikore – Kiribati & Silla, Kiribati and KT Fishing Company, Kiribati and Sajo Fisheries Company.

In 2024, the Ministry was allocated a total of \$5,686,430.00 recurrent budget, development budget of \$7,684,659.00, staff capacity of 183 with varying qualifications and skillsets. This does not include the financial and human resources capacity of our existing State-Owned Enterprise Companies and Joint Venture Companies, who worked hand-in-hand with the overall operation of the Ministry. The Ministry promotes gender equality and is proud to report that the majority of Directors (six out of seven) for all Divisions of the Ministry are women. Two of the Divisions – the Kiribati Seafood Verification Division and the Seafood Toxicology Laboratory Division are all women staff. In addition, Kiribati is also the only country in the Pacific with the highest number of observers who are women.

The key responsibilities and expectations of the Ministry include, among others, revenue



generation from oceanic fisheries and coastal fisheries, raising national standards and capabilities for international export of our fisheries resources, aquaculture, deep-sea minerals prospecting and the management of the fisheries resource's aspects, research both in coastal, oceanic fisheries and deep ocean and community-based fisheries management.

During the year 2024, the Ministry prioritizes creating infrastructures needed to support the overall operations. These infrastructure projects include the new Ministry complex building in Ambo, Tarawa and Kiritimati Is; the Maneaba for the Ministry at Tanaea for meetings and planning sessions, the establishment of the fish cages and floating wharf structures in Tarawa lagoon, the design of the integrated marina infrastructure for the fishermen and the wider community, small-scale canning facilities in the outer-islands, fish market and many more.

The year 2024 was also focused on creating enabling environments, increasing more visibility of the Ministry's engagements through social media, and securing additional new projects to assist with other critical areas that have limited support such as the Geo-science Division, the Coastal Fisheries Division, and the Kiribati Seafood Verification Division.

The Ministry also encourages inter-division and inter-agency collaborations through new initiatives such as the Hackathon, Teriaki canoe paddling competition, Tanobakoa beach cleanup, Karaoke competition, among others.

In addition, the Ministry through her membership, gained substantial support from the regional and international inter-governmental organizations such as the PNA, FFA, WCPFC, INFOFISH, ISA and many more.

The new system of assessing performance was introduced through identification of few key annual highlights per division. These highlights were identified as flagship targets of each division which are expected to be delivered in one fiscal year. The progress of these key highlights was mentioned by Minister's foreword and can be found in Annex 1 of this report.

Lastly, the key milestone for the year 2024 was the change of Ministry name as well as the completion of the Ministry Strategic Plan 2024-2028 which was successfully endorsed by Cabinet.

The report will take you to achievements of each division, key projects and initiatives, linkages of our work with key national policies such as KV20, Motinnano and few other information.

This annual report is the beginning of the journey to consistently document key information annually, on the Ministry's policies, operations, key successes, lessons learned and opportunities for public consumption.



3. MFOR Divisional Achievements in 2024



3.1. Oceanic Fisheries Division (OFD)

3.1.1. Outline of Key Mission of the Division

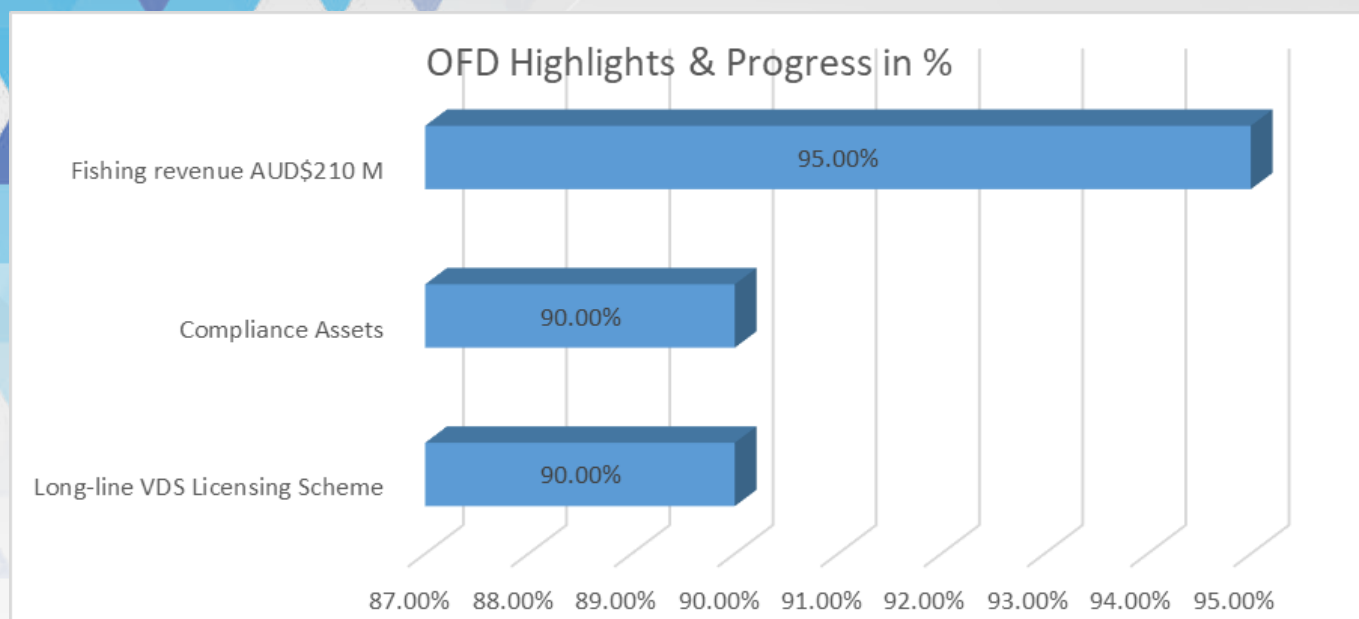
The Oceanic Fisheries Division is a division within MFOR, in collaboration with external fisheries partners, responsible for overseeing the management, development, and long-term sustainability of oceanic fisheries resources, particularly tuna species, for the Government's economic aspirations and food security of the nation.

Key roles of the division include:

- i. generating revenue through access fishing arrangements with distant water fishing nations,
- ii. monitoring the resource through license conditions and enforcement activities.

3.1.2. Key Highlight for 2024 and status

OFD highlights for 2024 comprised of 3 tasks which include the following: (i) the development of a Kiribati Longline Vessel Day Scheme Regulation, (ii) the purchasing of MCS tools and (iii) achieving A\$220 million fishing revenue in 2024. The status of these works is summarized below.



3.1.3. Additional information

(a) Fishing license

Annual fishing revenue from access fees represents the main driver of the economy accounting for 71% of Government revenue since 2018¹. These monies characterized the collection of license fees, registration, observer fees, fisheries sector support from fishing partners including shares from fisheries treaties, and dividends from joint venture arrangements.

The adoption of the purse seine vessel days scheme (PS VDS) by Kiribati marks the turning point in how the Government generates revenue from fisheries, particularly from tuna fisheries. Major enhancements were observed across the oceanic fisheries revenue from the scheme. Despite volatility, fishing revenue rose from an average of AUD30 million between 1993 to 2012 and fluctuated between AUD100 million and AUD200 million between 2013 and 2024.

Implementation of the PS VDS witnessed significant milestones in achieving more than AUD200 million in four years; 2015, 2019, 2023, and 2024. In 2024, fishing revenue hit more than AUD200 million for the second time in a row with AUD210 million achieved at the end of the year, however, it falls below the record of AUD219 million attained in 2019. Fishing revenue plummeted between 2020 and 2022 and this is due to several interconnecting factors, primarily the COVID outbreak, war conflicts in Europe (Ukraine/Russia), and unfavorable fishing conditions during those periods.

¹ Fishing License Revenues in Kiribati 2018-2022, Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources Development and Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.

Fishing Revenue (AUD m)



Fishing revenue from the purse seine fishery provides the bulk of fishing revenue contributing more than 90% compared to revenue generated by other gears such as longline fishery, pole and line, carrier vessels, and tankers. Equally, this is the same trend viewed in 2024 where the majority of fishing revenue derived from purse seine (AUD197 million, 94%) followed by reefer carrier (AUD7 million, 3.3%), longline (AUD3 million, 1.5%) and pole and line (AUD2.3 million, 1.1%).

Major fishing companies operating in Kiribati's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) represent either fishing associations or individual fishing entities mostly from countries like China, EU, Korea, Spain, and USA. These include fishing entities such as Korea Overseas Fisheries Association (KOFA) and Taiwan Tuna Purse Seine Fishing Association (TTPSA) as the main players not only in the purse seine fishery but as far as fishing revenue is concerned. KOFA paid AUD37.4 million to the Government in 2024 which is the highest compared to other fishing companies. Taiwan Tuna Purse Seine Fishing Association (TTPSA) came second with AUD33.5 million received last year.

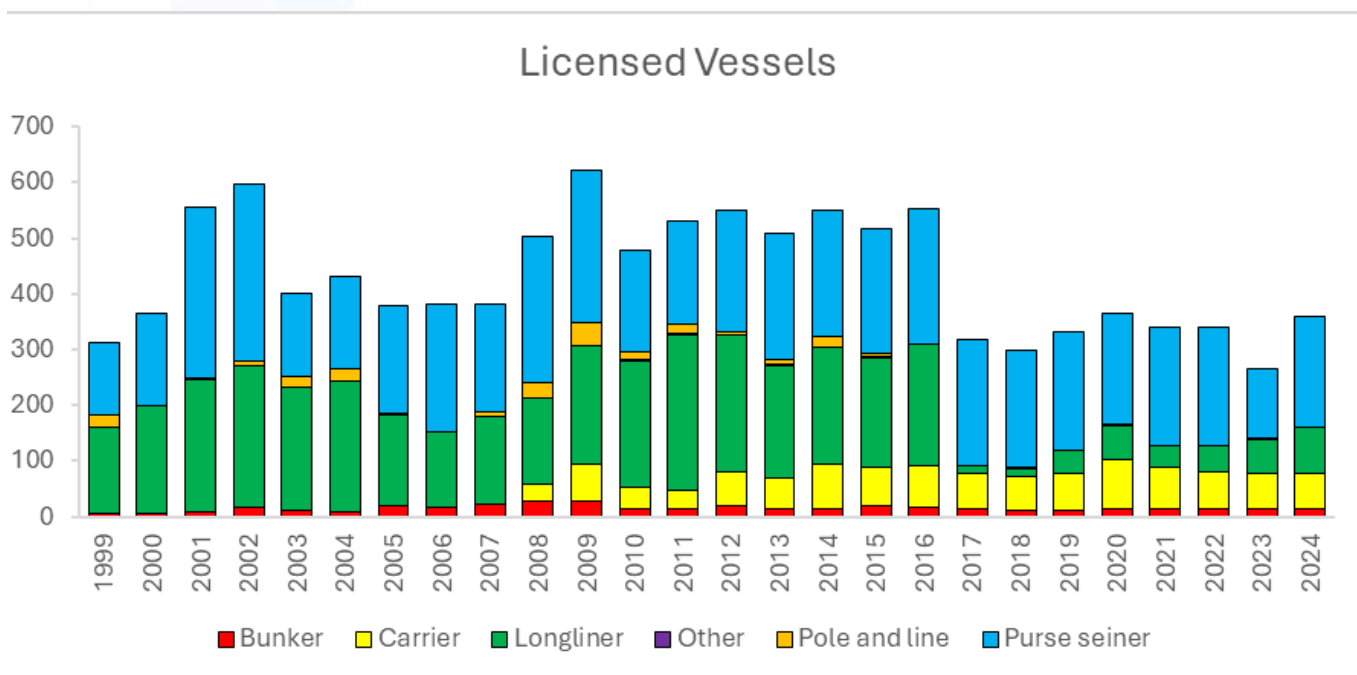
Share from the regional arrangement such as the FSMA came third with AUD22 million followed by Chinese joint ventures in Kiribati Fish Limited (AUD22 million), Kiritimati Island Fish Limited (AUD19 million) and Kiribati Tuna Fish Limited (AUD11 million). Share from the US Treaty amounted to AUD8.4 million) or 4%.

One initiative developed in 2022 purposely to boost economic generation from licensing is the "area-based scheme". Since implementation, the scheme has proved to be successful to add income on top of what is normally received from fishing companies annually. Over the years the scheme has generated AUD3.3 million in 2022, AUD4.7 million in 2023 and AUD2.2 million in 2024. The decline in 2024 demonstrates the adverse impact of extreme La Nina conditions on fisheries and Government revenue in any given year. Strong La Nina event was experienced during the second quarter of 2024 and persisted throughout the start of 2025. This condition has forced fishing to concentrate mainly in the western Pacific Ocean thus limiting companies from

purchasing fishing days in Kiribati. However, Kiribati still managed to yield revenue through trading mechanisms allowed under the VDS.

The total number of licensed vessels in 2024 was 358. This comprises 199 purse seiners, 83 long liners, 63 carrier vessels and 13 tankers. Japan is the sole operator

of the pole and line fishery in Kiribati's EEZ however, there is no record of pole and line vessels fishing in 2024. The average number of licensed vessels in 327 since 2017 and the decline in licensed vessels linked to the drop in longline fishing vessels when shifted to the PNA LL VDS to manage the longline fishery.



3.1.3 (b) MCS

Fisheries Observers

The division also oversees the national fisheries observers' program with the capacity of 123 active fisheries observers. They play a key role in the monitoring of fishing activities. The program comprised of 20 female fisheries observers, the highest in the region.

With the focus more on scientific aspects of the tuna fisheries, the job of fisheries observers gradually deviated to science-based monitoring. This is a key milestone in elevating our fisheries observers to be part of the international scientific community.

In terms of observers' engagement on foreign fishing vessels, there has been notable

increase post-COVID however a sharp decline was observed in 2020 due to the regional suspension of 100% observer coverage. Climatic conditions and seasonal aspects of the tuna fisheries are also factors that dictate foreign fishing vessels' preference to take Kiribati fisheries observers.

Placement by Year



Strengthening Fisheries Enforcement

The division is committed to protecting Kiribati's tuna fisheries and ensuring compliance with fisheries laws through enhanced enforcement measures. Real-time satellite tracking of fishing vessels, improvements in aerial and maritime patrols, and Electronic Monitoring are now a key focus shaping the division's work.





3.2 Coastal Fisheries Division (CFD)

3.2.1 Key mission of the Division

Coastal Fisheries Division under the Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources is the main government entity charged with the management, conservation, and development of coastal fisheries resources. The key mission, the division play is to maximize social and economic returns from coastal fisheries and to sustainably managed and conserved these vital resources for the current and future generation of I-Kiribati. Some of the important legal mandates, Coastal Fisheries Division align its roles with the following legal instruments; the Fisheries Act 2010 and its amendments, the Fisheries (Conservation and Management of Coastal Fisheries Resources) Regulation 2019, The Shark Sanctuary Regulation 2015, Aquaculture Regulation 2022 and Sea Cucumber Regulation 2024.

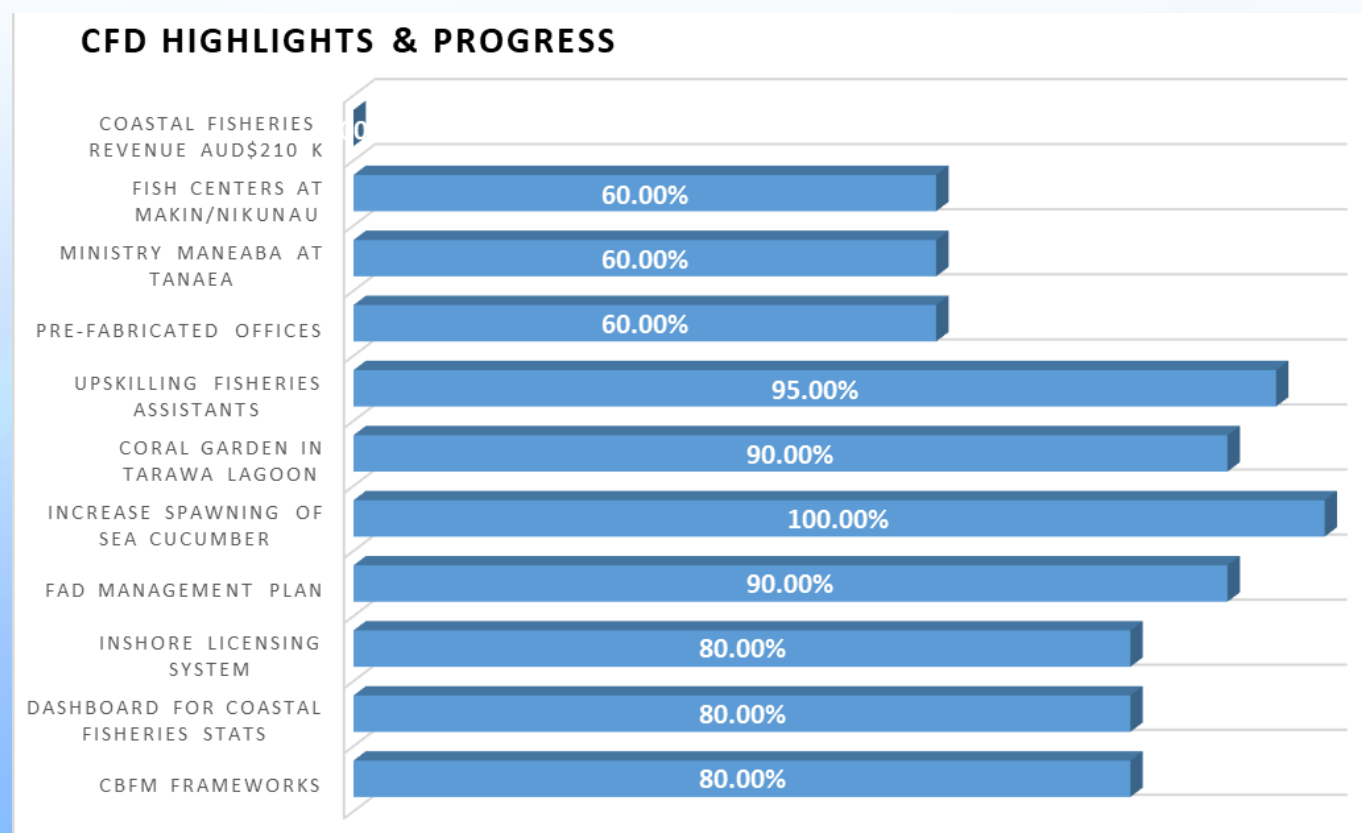
The division also plays a critical role in combating impacts of climate change and building resilience to climate change in coastal communities through adoption of best practices and approaches in sustaining

the health of marine ecosystem as well as improving well-being of I-Kiribati people through food security.



3.2.2 Key highlights for 2024 and their status.

The Divisional key highlights for 2024 comprises of 11 priority actions. The status of these priority actions is reflected in the diagram below:

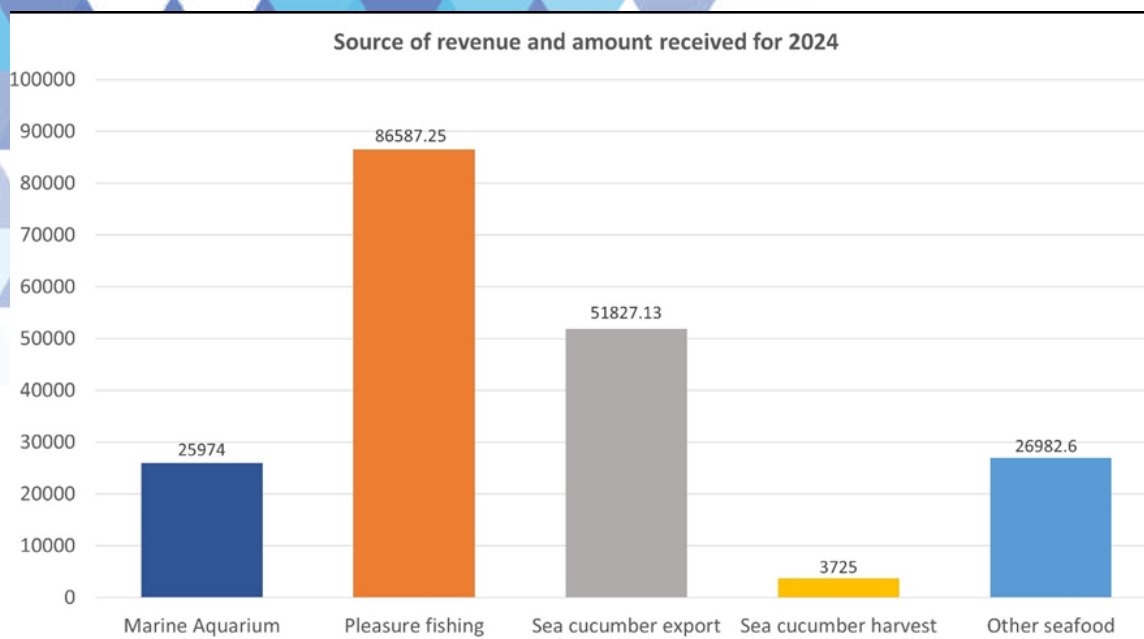


3.2.3. Additional information

Coastal Fisheries Revenue Sources

The Coastal Fisheries Division derives its revenue from access fees to harvest coastal fisheries resources. Coastal fisheries comprise of diversity of finfish and invertebrates that are yet to be exploited. To date only aquarium trade, sea cucumber export, recreational fishing and personal consignments that are still active which are considered major revenue sources for Coastal Fisheries Division.





In 2024, the estimated value of exporting coastal fisheries resources is approximately AU\$200,000. The following graph below reflect the amount of revenue obtained from harvesting and exporting these resources for 2024. Pleasure Fishing considered as the major contributor to the revenue from Coastal Fisheries Division compared to other fisheries.

Artisanal Boats Tracking System

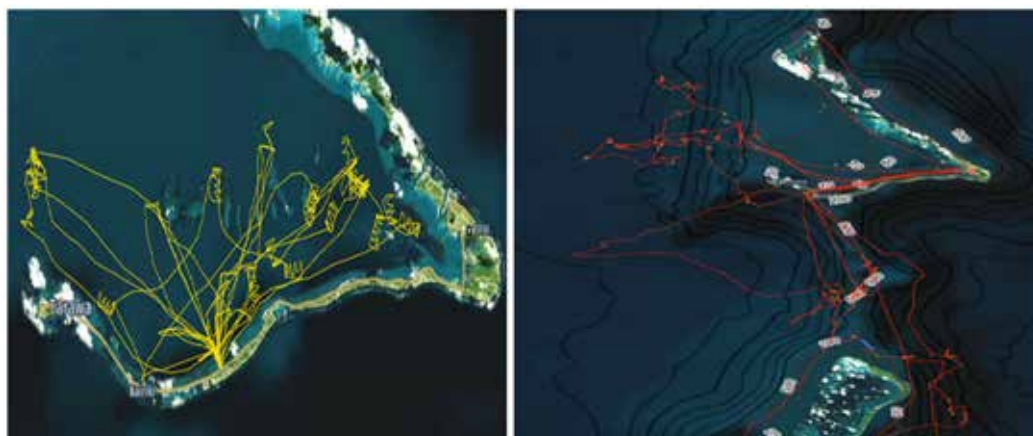
The MCS and Enforcement unit has just been established and institutionalized in 2020. Staff had shown competent in carrying out their roles through the support from Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the University of the South Pacific (USP) on capacity building and training on the job through a program namely, Certificate IV in Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture Compliance course.

Enforcement of coastal fisheries regulation has been on-going through land and sea inspection. To date, a new approach has been trialed to ease enforcement at sea using electronic boat monitoring system using a PELAGIC tracking device. The trial was conducted on two artisanal boats for South Tarawa and the outcome had been successful in visualizing the whereabouts of these boats including suspected illegal fishing within the lagoon. The initiatives will also contribute to



safety at sea and identifying fishing hotspots for future informed decision making. The diagram below reflects the output of this PELAGIC device installed on two of the boats:

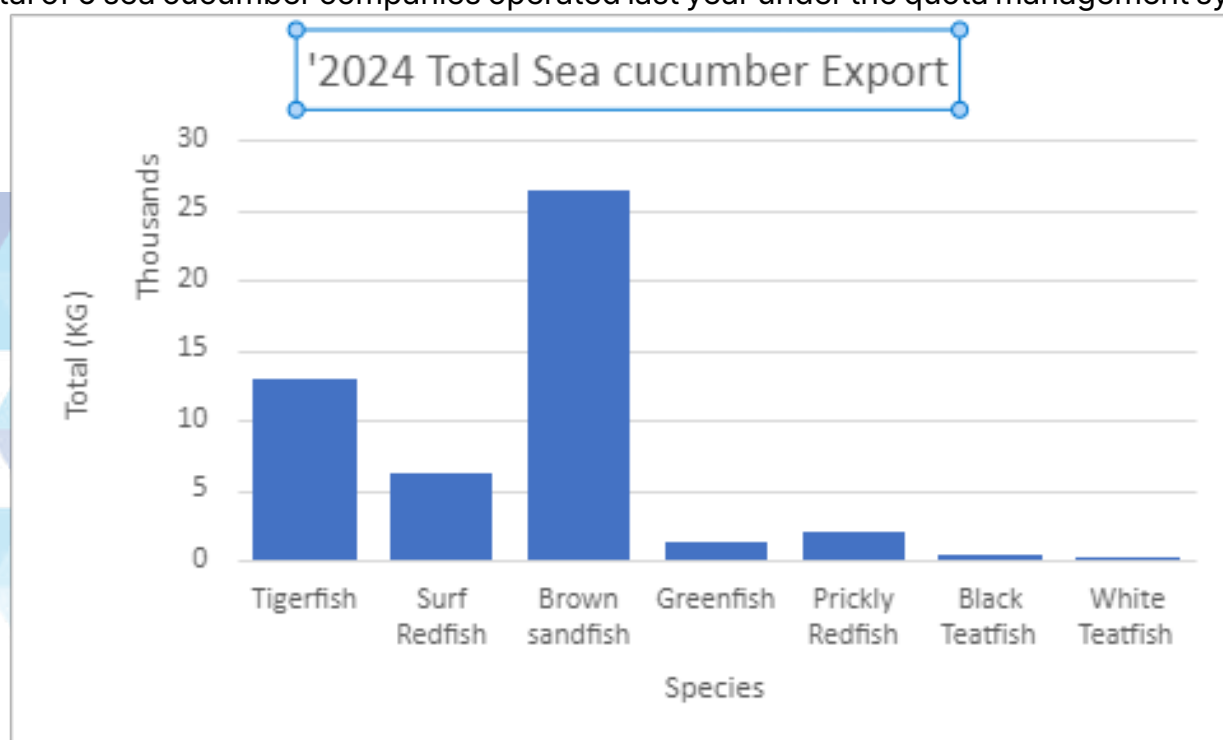
The plan of this initiative is to roll out this tracking system to all boats on South Tarawa and to expand to outer islands once funding is secured.



Quota Management System

The quota management system was first introduced last year targeting the sea cucumber fishery. The aim of this system is to manage, conserve and at the same time increase the revenue from this important fishery.

A total of 6 sea cucumber companies operated last year under the quota management system



with a total of 49.4 ton exported.

The quota management system is expected to be expanded to other fisheries in the future targeting export fisheries.

Fiberglass Boat Repair

Supporting fishing communities in the outer islands accessing fishing grounds through boat repair is one of the ongoing supports offered by the CFD.

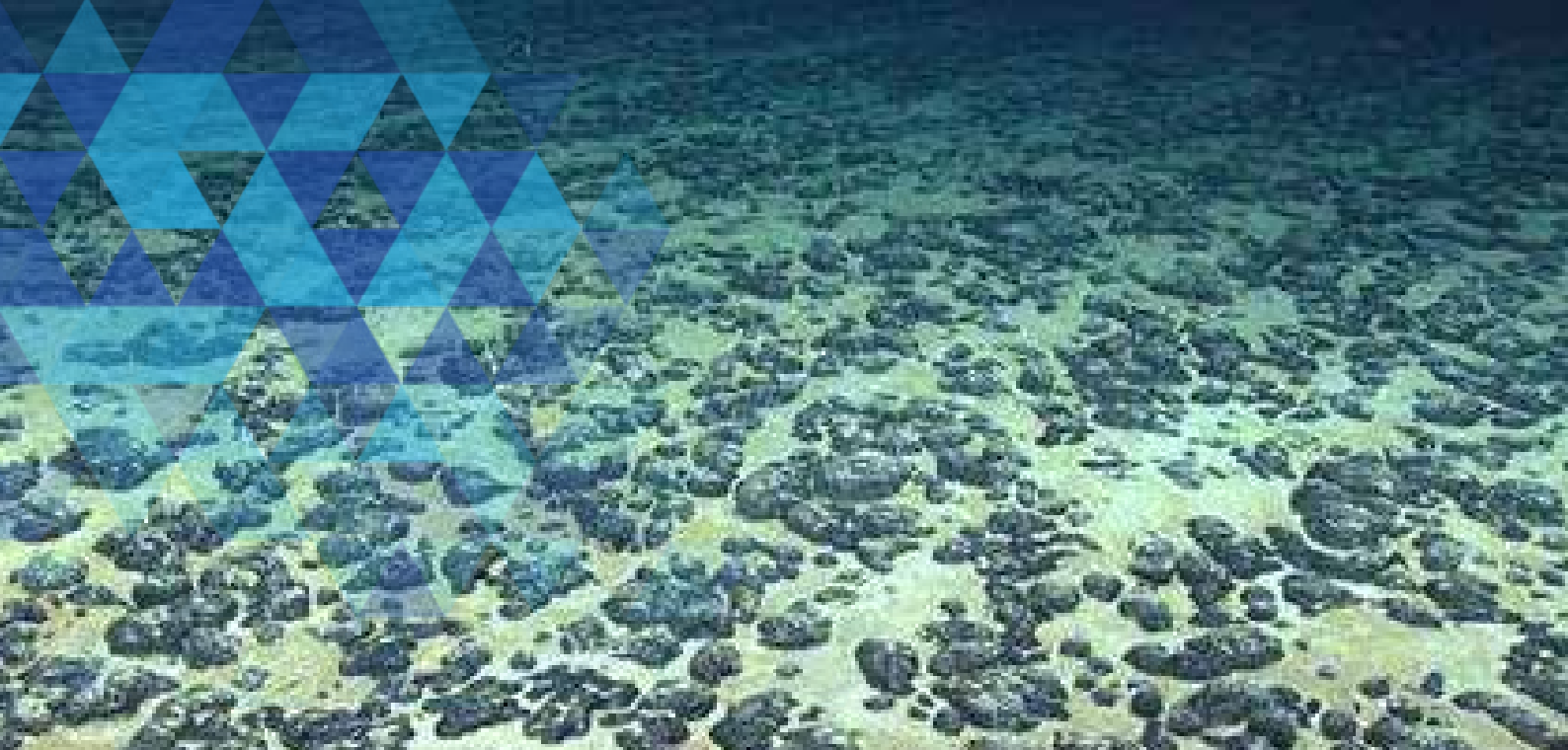
Last year, Nonouti Is was assisted by the Sustainable Fishing Development Unit in this area with 14 boats repaired.



Fish Aggregating Device

The rationale of the program is to support community in accessing fishing ground closer to the shores, improve cost-effective fishing operations by local fishermen and safety at sea. The program also plays a role in diversifying and sustaining livelihood and deviating fishing pressure from coastal areas to catching pelagic species aggregated in these floating devices. To date, only two islands have had their FAD deployed and these include Nonouti Island and Kiritimati Island.





3.3 Geo-science Division (GSD)

3.3.1 Key mission of the Division

The Geo-science Division is committed to advancing scientific understanding of Kiribati's marine and coastal resources and their ecosystems. We foster international collaboration for marine resource mapping, research, and oceanographic studies contributing to global marine science while enriching our national knowledge.

We actively participate in international initiatives to address the impacts of climate change on Kiribati coastlines, sharing data and expertise to enhance resilience.

Furthermore, we prioritize building national capacity in ocean resource management by providing training and sharing knowledge. We promote the application of geo-science tools to unlock new ocean-based opportunities and empower informed decision-making for a sustainable management of Kiribati's marine resources.

Geo-science Key Missions:

- i. Advance Ocean Innovation – harness the power of geo-science data and technology to identify and develop new opportunities for Kiribati,
- ii. Expand Ocean Knowledge – collaborate with international research institutions to enhance our knowledge of the ocean through resource mapping, research, and oceanographic studies, informing sustainable ocean decisions,
- iii. Lead Ocean Governance – Coordinate and facilitate the development and implementation of effective ocean policies and marine spatial plans that balance conservation, sustainable use, and social-economic development,
- iv. Enhance coastal resilience – Conduct coastal assessments and vulnerability analysis to understand and address the impact of climate change and other threats on Kiribati's coastlines,

- v. Build national capacity – Strengthen national capacity in ocean science and resource management through training, knowledge sharing, and technology use.

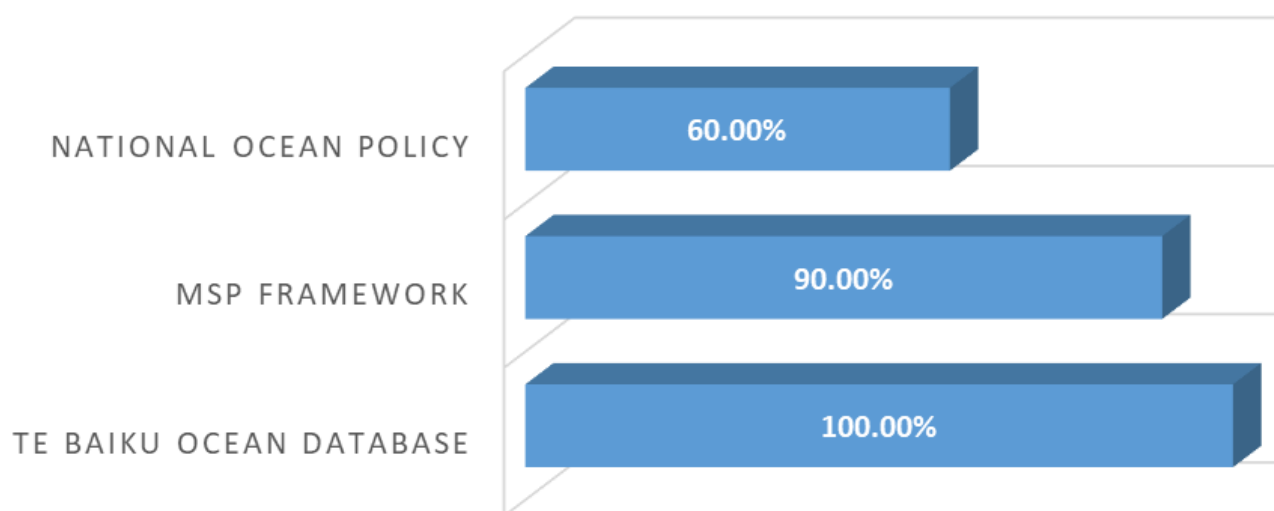
3.3.2 Key highlights for 2024 and their status.

The Geo-science Division executed 3 Key Highlights for 2024 along with a range of other significant activities. Progress on each of the 3 Key Highlights is outlined below:

A DOALAS – Kiribati study report on ocean governance which provide a high-level overview of the legal and institutional framework of Kiribati oceans was completed.

However, National Ocean Policy was not completed in 2024 due to procedural issues related

GSD HIGHLIGHTS & PROGRESS IN %



to the Ministry's name change and the election process for Members of Parliaments, Cabinet members, to endorse a mandate for MFOR to lead consultations to develop an Ocean Policy.

Consultations with stakeholders will commence in 2025 to discuss the institutional mapping, TOR of the committee and the workplan for the formulation of the Ocean Policy.

3.3.3 Additional information from the Geo-science Division.

Inshore initiatives

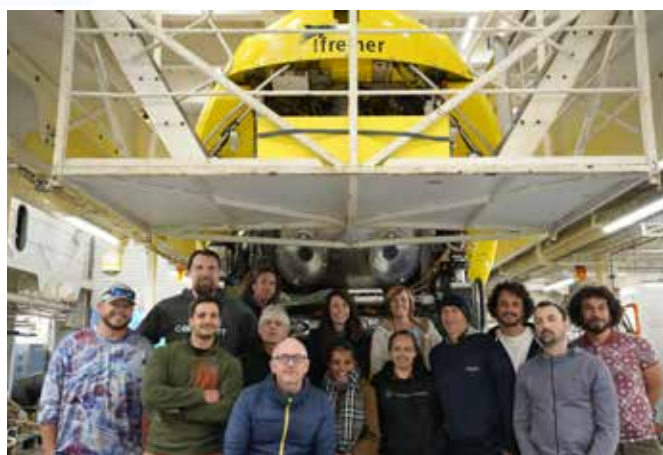
A pilot project for solar salt production in Beru Island showed promising results, although the rainy season impacted progress. 20 salt pans have been constructed and are awaiting installation at the salt ponds with a water pump.



Marine spatial planning activities commenced in mid-2024 in close collaboration with the MSP Coordinating Committee, comprising of key ocean stakeholders. The Committee has endorsed an MSP vision, objective, and costed work plan. 4 GIS technical in-country trainings were conducted to support the work of the MSPCC. One of their major milestones in 2024 is the establishment of a centralized spatial information system called Te Baiku Ocean Database.



The Geo-science Division, in collaboration with SPC, is proving placement opportunities for 4 interns and fellows. This program offers valuable on-the-job-experience while supporting the Division in achieving its priorities. This opportunity provides an opportunity for these interns to participate in Marine Scientific Research Activities and other ocean related activities.

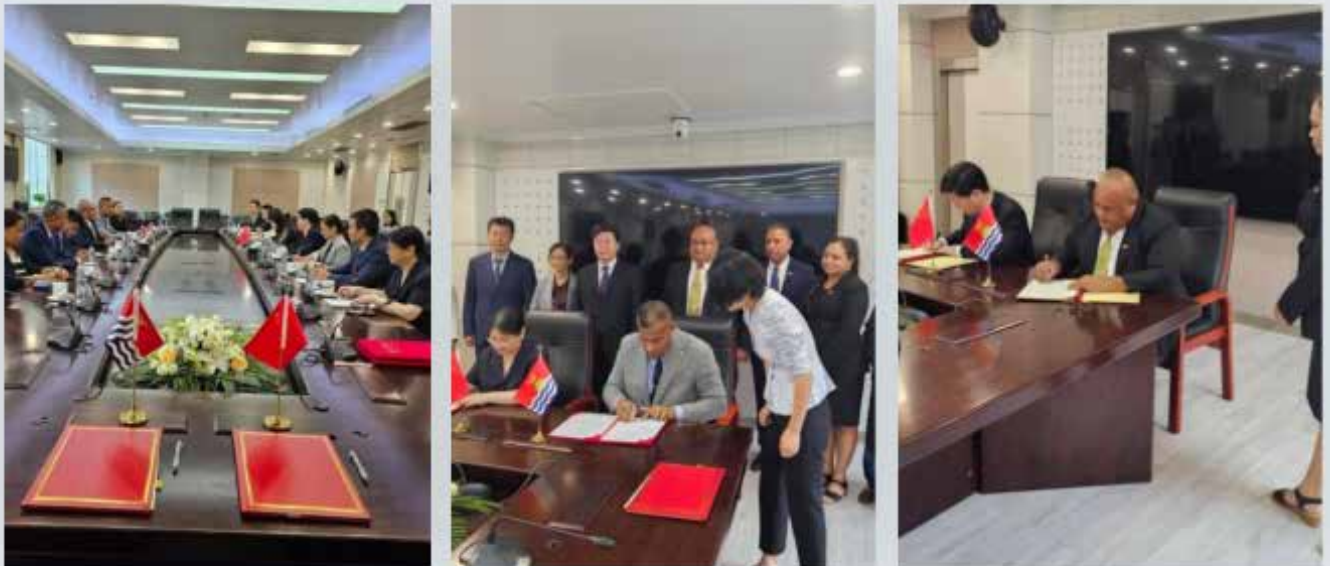


Offshore initiatives

The offshore section of the Geo-science Division focuses on Marine Genetic Resources, Deep Seabed Minerals, Marine Scientific Research and Ocean Policy.

In Mid-2024, the Division signed an MOU with China's Second Institute of Oceanography for joint research, data exchange, sharing of technology and expertise in oceanography and ocean mapping. A project proposal for a 3D Ocean Observation System is currently under review.

SIGNING OF THE MOU



The National Research Coordinating Committee approved 10 out of 13 MSR applications for Kiribati Waters while 3 applications were withdrawn² Prior Informed Consents were issued for samples collected within Kiribati waters, facilitating sample traceability. A sample database and traceability system are currently under development.

Cabinet has also endorsed Kiribati signature to the recently adopted legally binding instrument, the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction Agreement.



3.4 Kiribati Seafood Verification Division (KSVD)

3.4.1 Key mission of the Division

The Kiribati Seafood Verification Division is mandated to carry out official controls to guarantee the safety and suitability of fish and fishery products that are intended to be exported to the international markets.

These official controls include the following:

- i. Inspection and auditing of onshore and offshore establishments,
- ii. Sampling and analytical testing of water and fish products,
- iii. Organoleptic assessment,
- iv. Desktop review of HACCP plans and SSOPs,
- v. Traceability exercises,
- vi. Issuance of Health Certificate,
- vii. Annual review and external audits.

KSVD continuously carried out training to local fishermen and market vendors to promote compliance on food safety and hygiene for healthy seafood products that will be domestically sold for the public. Additionally, the training will provide opportunities with fishermen to supply any processing plants for better economic returns.



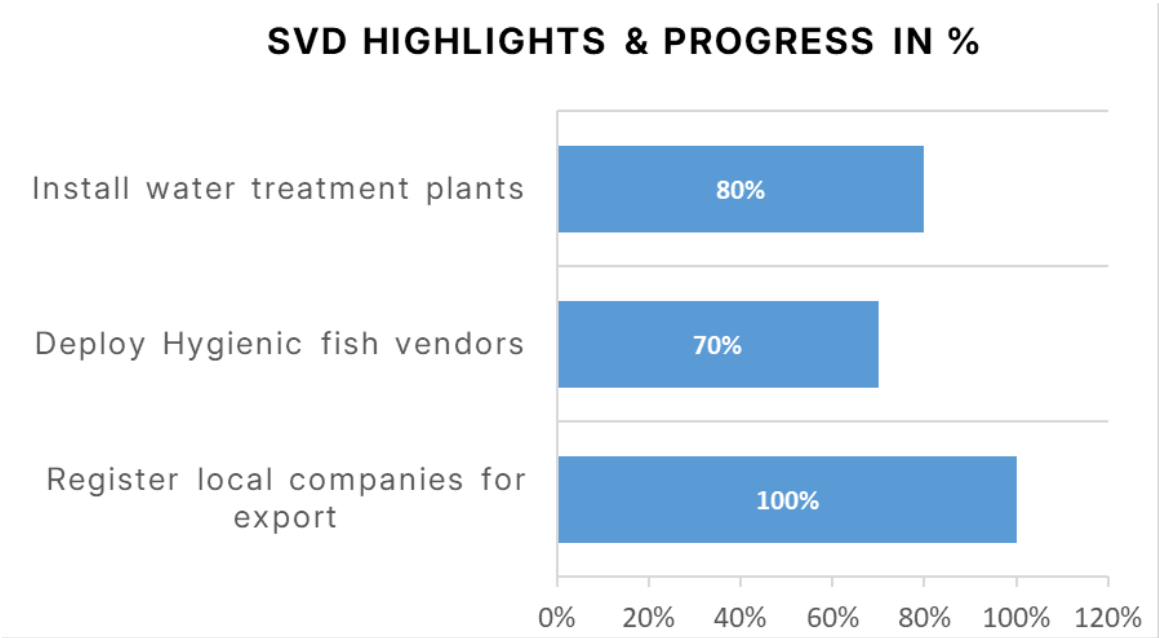
Figure 2: Sensory Evaluation



Figure 2: Sampling

3.4.2 Key highlight Activities for 2024

KSVD has 3 key highlight Activities for 2024 and the status progression for these highlights are stipulated on the pie charts below. The preparation work for exporting to China market has been completed while the other two activities are in progress (fish vending unit and water treatment installation).



3.4.3 Additional information & other key activities

Certification and Revenue pertaining to the number of establishments:

The total number of establishments that are currently listed with the KSVD are 16. 8 out of the 16 establishments are onshore processing plants while the remaining 8 are the freezer vessels.



Based on the graph above, there is an increased in the number of establishments listed since 2015, therefore, it is anticipated that more establishments will be listed in the near future especially in maximizing more economic benefits from our ocean resources.

The total amount of revenue that have been collected from these companies in 2024 on the export license fees is AUD \$59,585.00 and the health certification fees including the confirmation letter is AUD \$7,000.00, which provide the total revenue amount of **AUD \$66,585.00**.

2024 Total Revenue	
Certification	Total
Health Certificate (Export)	\$4,800
Sample Health Certificate	\$400
Confirmation Letter	\$1,800
Export License	\$59,585
Total	\$66,585

2024 Certification	
Certification	Issued No.
Health Certificate (Export)	17
Sample Health Certificate	2
Confirmation Letter	9
Export License	14
Total	42

Achievement for the KSVD in 2024:

One of the great milestones for KSVD in 2024 was the signing of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Government of Kiribati and Government of China, on the protocol of inspection, quarantine and sanitary for wild aquatic products. This MoU allows work to be done for marine seafood products from Kiribati to be exported to China markets. Under this MOU, Kiribati is obligated to comply with China requirements to ensure the safety of such seafood products. Recently, one of the establishments in particular the Kiribati Fish Limited (KFL) processing plant has been listed and approved to export fish products to China. More establishments are interested to pursue China markets therefore interested companies are encouraged to work collaboratively with the KSVD to ensure that listing procedures and processes are followed accordingly.

Seafood Toxicology Laboratory

The fisheries Seafood Toxicology lab is earmarked to be established soon. Currently there are 4 laboratory staff that have been recruited and will commence their task in performing analytical testing for seafood products, water and ice samples once their training is completed. The sole objective of the lab is to carry out basic testing such as microbiology, chemical and physical parameters that are significantly important for the assurance of seafood safety and to comply with market access requirements in providing timely analytical results. Additionally, the lab will enable to assist in providing timely result to support decision making when there are cases of foodborne outbreaks pertaining to seafood such as ciguatera fish poisoning.





3.5 Planning and Development Division (PDD)

3.5.1 Key mission of the Division

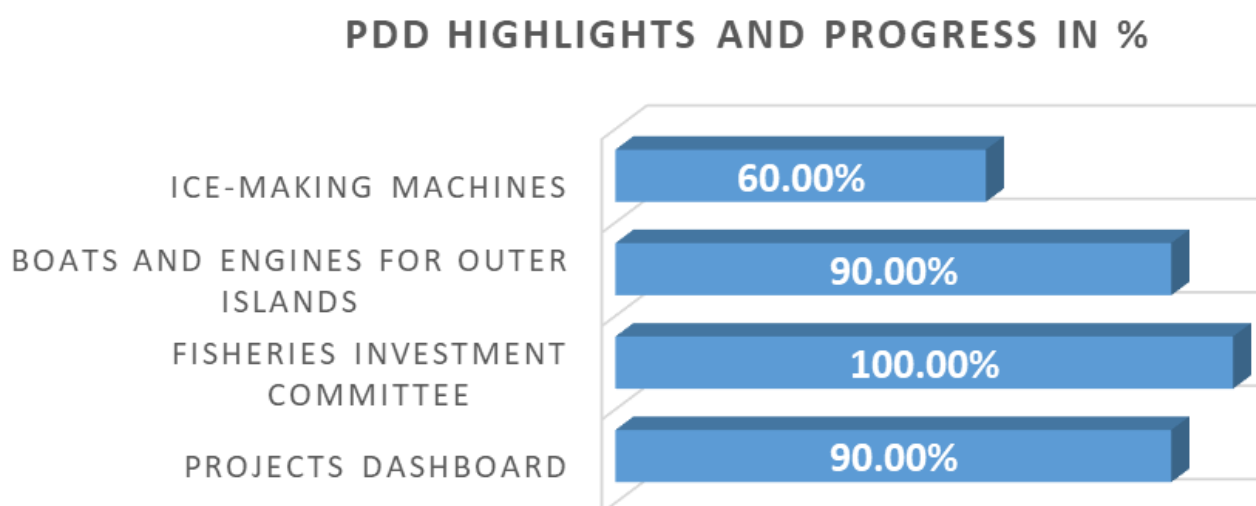
The Planning and Development Division is one of the key divisions under the Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources with roles and responsibilities that include the following:

- i. Support the formulation of policies, plans and strategies,
- ii. Coordinate and facilitate support for design of fisheries projects, briefs and prodocs to secure funding support,
- iii. Coordinate the support on project formulations working with Divisions and National Economic Planning Office (NEPO),
- iv. Facilitate the support with different Divisions for warrant of project funds,
- v. Monitor and evaluate the implementation of all development programs and projects,
- vi. Provide proactive and sound policy analysis, strategic planning, effective communication, sharing and dissemination of data & information,
- vii. Provide advice on economic and development issues for the Ministry,
- viii. Provide support for project coordinative and collaborative approach to key stakeholders,
- ix. Facilitate the coordination of the fisheries investment committee.

The Division is manned by only 8 permanent staffs with 3 on temporary appointments, managed by a Director, Principal Economist, Economists and Project officers. On an annual basis, PDD is one of the least divisions with budgetary allocations, account to only 4% of its operational budget from the total Ministry budget.

3.5.2 Key highlights for 2024

Reflecting on the important role of the Planning and Development division, this year there are 2 main highlights for PDD as outlined below:



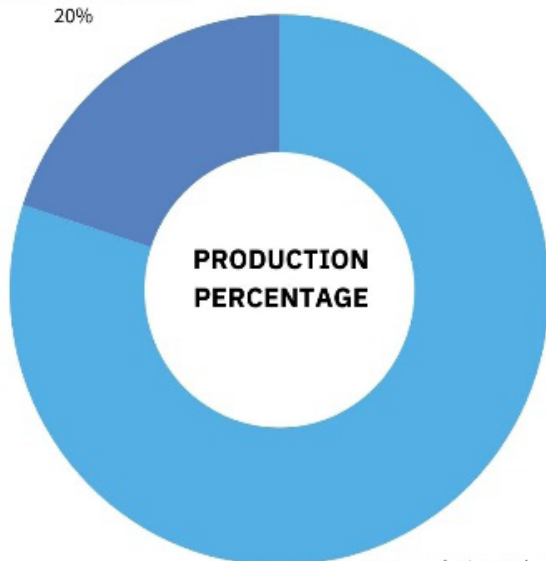
MFOR Project Dashboard

The platform provides an online public domain to visualize all projects at the Ministry level. It is a platform that centralizes information for all MFOR projects which not only limited to the projects background but provides real time progress and updates including, project site, donor, budget, linkages with Government policies, implementing division and so forth.

The work on the platform development was jointly coordinated by the PDD and ICT team, where the design phase was led by ICT team and data/content input coordinated from PDD team. For this highlight, PDD have conducted series of meetings to ensure that the work is progressing well in 2024. The PDD team conducted a 3-day retreat, 30th August – 1st September, 2024 in North Tarawa to allow the team to focus work on the data input to the system. It has been planned that the platform must be launched in November, 2024, however unforeseen technical issues hinder the completion of this work. The ICT team are in the final stages of configuring the system and final data inputs and validation, consequently the system earmarked to be launched in the Quarter 1, 2025. This highlight will be brought forward to the year 2025 to be completed and launched.

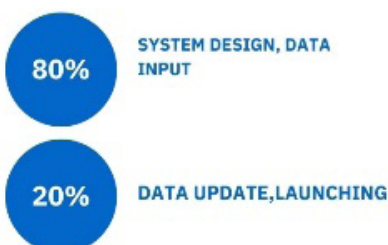


Data update & launching
20%



System design & data input
80%

PROGRESS ON PROJECT PLATFORM



Launching of the Fisheries and Ocean Investment Committee

The second highlight for PDD to implement in 2024 involved the establishment of the Fisheries and Ocean Investment Committee. The committee launched at the first dialogue

held in January with a second consultative meeting as a follow up in June 2024. The meeting brings together a multi stakeholder members from the Government agencies,

SOEs, JV companies and the wider stakeholder with roles and responsibilities related to fisheries investments.

At the dialogue, it provides a discussion platform to discuss on issues, challenges with discussions on ways forward on how investors and government agencies address issues that hinder any opportunities for investment in the fisheries sector. The dialogue forms a forum with important consideration for a collaborative effort for coordination between the Government agencies and authorities to support national investment opportunities in the fisheries sector. Noted the on-going challenges encountered to fast-track investment programs in country, the committee jointly provide advice and guide clear implementation role in supporting fisheries and ocean investment initiatives.

The inaugural dialogue initially provides a space to understand the importance of ocean investment with the follow up meeting held

in June, it invites 3 major companies, Kiribati Seafood Company Limited (KSCL), Kiribati Blue Pacific Limited (with the Otintai Hotel Project) and CPPL to share issues, challenges for support as details highlighted in the Table below.

The Corporate Division supported by the PDD team are spearheading this work, given the important mandate of the Ministry to promote fisheries investment opportunities, follow up on issues that requires Government commitment is essential. Given the mandate and blessings of the Cabinet for the work of the committee, planned quarterly meetings to be convened with further dialogue with the MTCIC on the existence of the Foreign Investment Auxiliary Committee with a TOR to avoid duplications and clear directions on how the committee perceive on issues that require higher level commitment.

Challenges/Issues	Government Intervention
1. Inadequate of established infrastructure and support facilities.	Investment to support infrastructures like port, holding facilities, net mending yards.
2. Limited Government facility to support micro-finance systems for private sectors	Budgetary allocations to finance institutions, DBK
3. Lapse of Government Land lease agreement	Commitment for extending Land lease on public assets, Otintai Hotel
4. Limited transportation to facilitate transport of fish and seafood from outer islands	Project in the pipeline on the Collection vessel
5. Lack of conducive system to streamline processes to attract investments	National coordination of a conducive approach to promote investment

Outer Island Fish centre

The Fish Centre project, currently operational in 20 islands across Kiribati, aims to sustain the supply of quality fish products. Fish centres in the outer islands had been established to purportedly contribute to the development to the wealth and health of the people of the respective islands. With the operation and implementation of the fish centres project in the outer islands, it gears to address and improve a sustainable supply of quality and fresh fish to meet the household need for fish supply and to promote trade and marketing of fisheries products from the outer islands to the main centres in Tarawa. This is to be achieved through the provision of ice, fishing equipment, the exploration of trade opportunities, and enhanced engagement with fisheries cooperatives and local communities.

The operation of the fish centres continued to be successful in the outer islands however there are continue challenges which hinder the operations, including but not limited to inadequate water supply, lack of sustainability plans on the business operations, lack of maintenance systems and limited capacity of the operators, facility non-compliance to market requirements, replacement of R22 ice makers, and others related to the operation of the centre.

However, Ministry of Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy (MISE) report has identified the existing facilities as deteriorated and unsafe (MISE,2024). Consequently, a rehabilitation project targeting two islands, Makin and Nikunau Island is underway. Co-financed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the NZMFAT Tobwaan Waara II project, this initiative commenced in 2024 and is projected for completion in 2025. The project played a significant role to the local communities; however, issues remain to arise with challenges impacting the long-term

operations. In addressing this issue, the Ministry is planning to design a project to carry out a feasibility study to roll out in 2025 to assess the current operations of the centres and provide recommendations for improvements. The Ministry of Fisheries is actively pursuing funding to renovate the remaining centres and equip them with the necessary facilities and amenities to meet market standards.





3.6 Corporate Services Division (CSD)

3.6.1 Key mission of the Division

The Corporate Services Division covers all administrative functions of the MFOR which include financial management, human resource management, asset and property management, records and file management, vehicle logistics and priority management. The CSD coordinates the Ministry's major activities and meetings that contribute to the efficient and effective delivery of the expected outputs in line with MSP.

There are four (5) units of the CSD that include the Administration & Registry, Legal Affairs, Account & Finance, ICTMedia & Communication Unit.

Key Mission

The key mission of the CSD is 'to provide a robust support to allow the Ministry to effectively and efficiently deliver on its broader strategic goals while responding and adapting to changing internal and external challenges'.

The objectives of the CSD includes but not limited to the following:

- i. Support the Minister and colleagues in promoting the work of the Ministry externally by ensuring strong and consistent internal communications,
- ii. Lead and manage HR function and deliver HR strategy, workforce planning and learning and development to ensure the teams capacity and capability is continuously upgraded,
- iii. Ensure that the Ministry has sufficient capacity to deliver on its overall vision and goals,

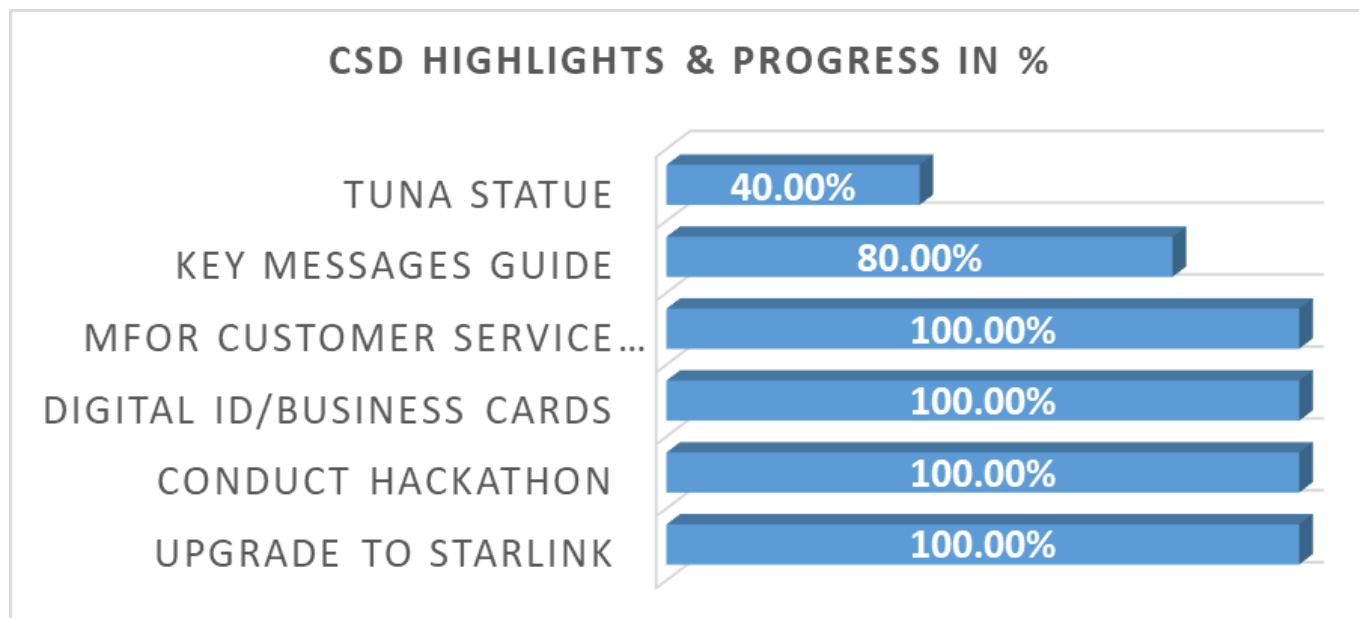
- iv. Support our staff through their grievances as to ensure high level of embrace and integrity,
- v. To support and inspire all our staff to keep the work morale and commitment robust for MFOR high quality service delivery,
- vi. Manage and deliver effective and efficient information, communication, and technological services and necessary to enable technical divisions deliver on their core objectives,
- vii. Continue to seek efficiencies and improved customer service including through continuous focus on digital opportunities,
- viii. Manage the Ministry's financial resources and oversee the financial system including estimates process, and capital and recurrent budget reviews,
- ix. Demonstrate excellence in corporate governance which will provide openness and transparency and ensure value for money,
- x. Coordinates the Ministry's position on relevant matters in alignment with recurrent budget, development budget, national government policies and cabinet directives, and ensure compliance with a range of statutory obligations such as the NCS, PSO memos, and Cabinet instruction devised from time to time, and
- xi. Direct and implement the Ministry's policies to ensure the overall team are aligned well with their roles and responsibilities that guided by good corporate governance principle.

The division seeks to achieve the following outcomes for the Ministry through:

- i. A responsible, professional, and flexible team,
- ii. Effective systems and strategically support the entire Ministry operations,
- iii. A sound corporate governance structure and culture,
- iv. Value for money in the management of the Ministry's financial resources,

3.6.2 Key highlights for 2024

There are six main highlights that the CSD needed to achieve in 2024. Of these, four have been fully completed, and two have been partially achieved by 80% and 40%, respectively. The enormous cost of erecting a tuna statue and the delay in receiving feedback from the Head of Divisions were the reasons for not completing these two key highlights. These two highlights will be brought forward to the year 2025 for successful completion.



3.6.3 Additional information & other key activities

CSD Operational Budget & Savings

The CSD managed the MFOR's approved recurrent budget of \$5,686,430.00 in 2024 plus the development budget (DB) of more approximately \$7 Million to ensure the Ministry can execute its primary functions with the aim of cost-cutting where necessary and appropriate to ensure there is 75% disbursement rate and end of year savings of 25%. The cost-cutting strategy used by the MFOR management team was to save cost as possible on the recurrent budget and to maximize the utilization of the available projects from development partners.

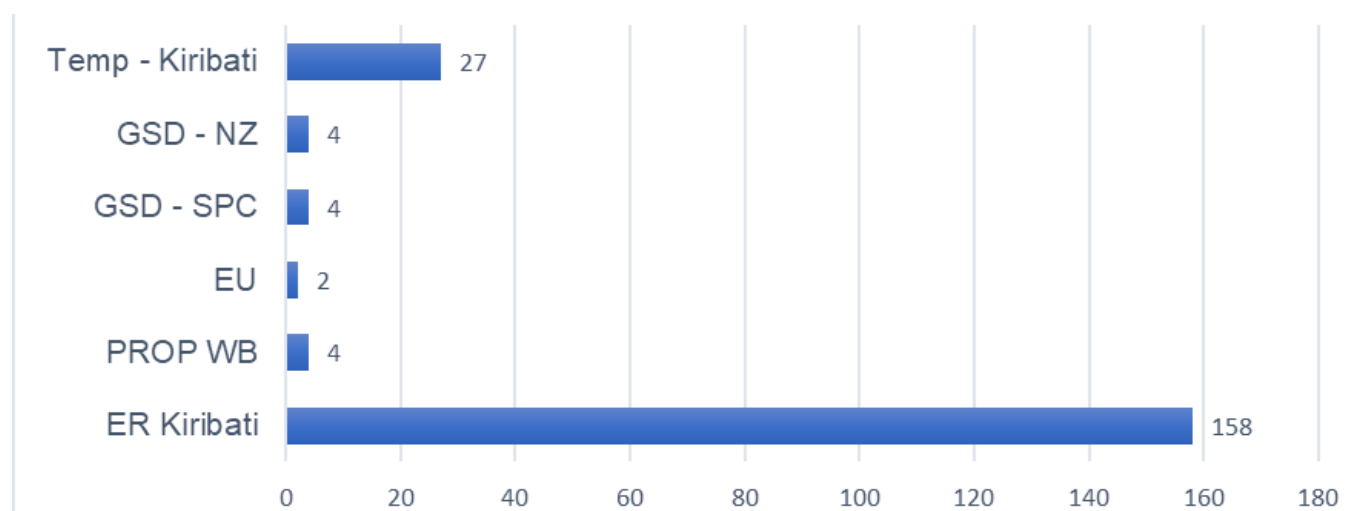
MFOR has developed and launched its new MSP 2024 – 2028 with an ultimate vision was ***"to create a dynamic and sustainable ocean development opportunities for current and future generations of I-Kiribati"***. This is an important policy strategic document that provides the Ministry's roadmap to achieve inclusive growth effectively and efficiently from fisheries and ocean resources in the next four years 2024 to 2028. However, to better understand the use of the state fund and donor projects,

Monitoring and Evaluation

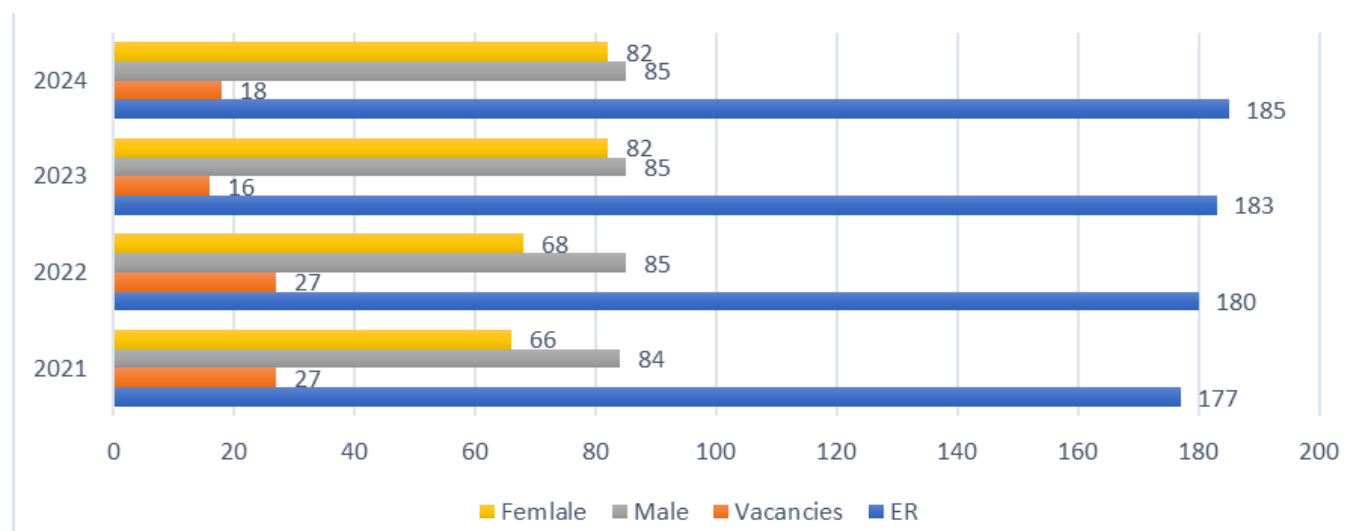
The MFOR has also developed its monitoring, evaluation, research and learning mechanism (MERL) framework with the technical and financial assistance funded by Tobwaan Waara 2 (TW2). This mechanism will work against the strategic actions and key performance indicators set out under the Ministry Strategic Plan 2024-2028. This framework will underpin the future reporting and evaluation of outputs of all divisions for the entire Ministry. The dedicated Monitoring and Evaluation Officer has also been created for the new year 2025 and will be working closely with the CSD team.

MFOR Human Resource

There are a total of 158 employees under the establishment register (Establishment Register for Permanent Staff) plus 27 temporary employees which filled the vacancies. Besides these numbers, additional 4 staff were employed by the World Bank PROP, 4 funded by SPC, 4 funded by NZ and 2 funded by EU.



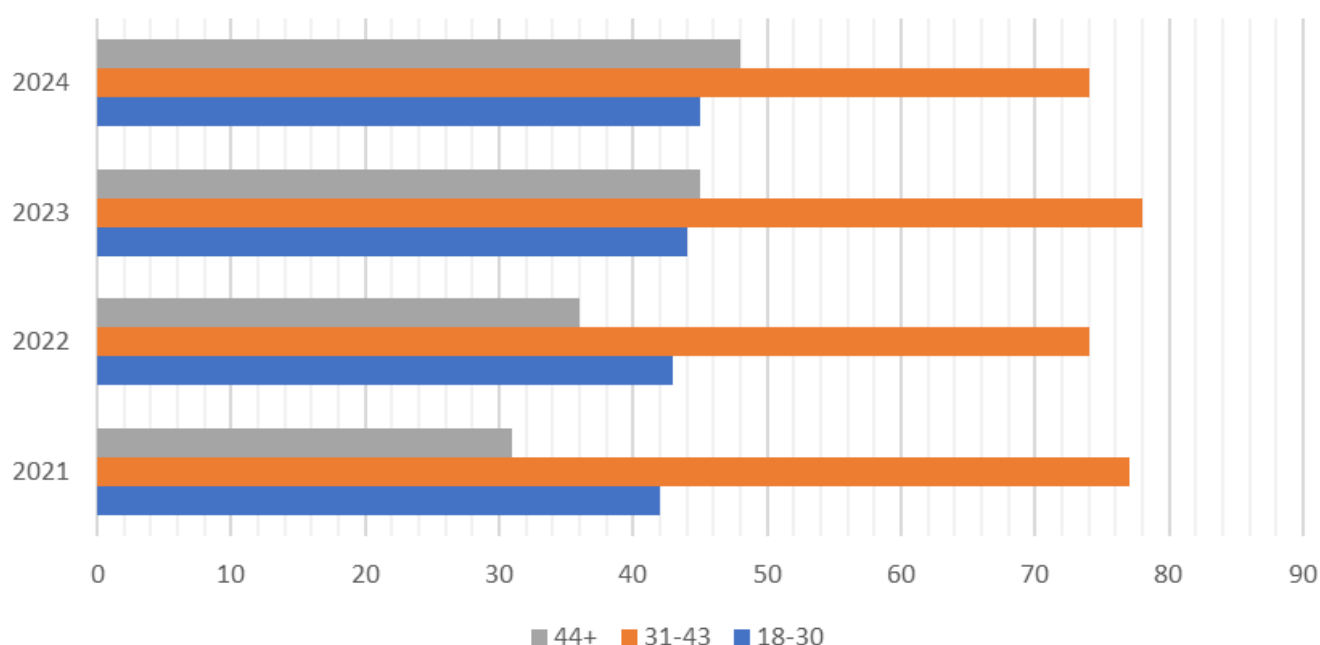
MFOR Employees by Gender illustrates the proportion of male and female employees, highlighting the Ministry's commitment to gender diversity and inclusion. This visual representation helps to



understand the balance of gender representation across various roles and departments within the organization.

MFOR Employees by Age Group categorizes employees into different age groups, such as Young Professionals (18-35 years), Mid-Career Employees (36-50 years), and Senior Employees (51+ years).

The graph highlights the proportion of employees in each age group, providing insights into the demographic composition of the Ministry's workforce. This age diversity helps to understand how the Ministry balances fresh perspectives from younger employees with the experience and expertise of mid-career and senior employees.



ICT Section

The MFOR Information Communication and Technology (ICT) section manages the Ministry's critical applications and communication systems, including email, instant messaging, and video conferencing. The ICT section ensures these systems are available, reliable, and secure against cyber threats, continuously monitoring and updating them for optimal performance and security. Recently, the ICT section transitioned to Starlink, significantly enhancing the Ministry's internet speed. This upgrade has been implemented across all MFOR offices, including the headquarters in Bairiki, the Coastal Fisheries Division in Ambo and Tanaea, and the Seafood Verification Agency in Betio and the Fisheries sub-division in Kiritimati Island, resulting in faster and more reliable internet connectivity.

In addition to managing communication systems and internet connectivity, the ICT section provides technical support and training to Ministry staff. This includes troubleshooting technical issues, assisting with software installations, and conducting workshops on cybersecurity best practices. The team is dedicated to ensuring all staff members are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively use ICT tools and resources.

MFOR Legal Affairs

The Legal Support Service, an integral part of MFOR, provides all internal legal services required to ensure MFOR executes and delivers its functions in line with the law. Since April 2024, the Legal Support Service has been manned by a local professional lawyer, operating under a one-year EU-funded contract. The duties of the consultant include providing legal advice, reviewing, and drafting legal documents, participating in meetings, and official travel. During the report period, the consultant offered 32 legal advisories on issues such as fishing agreements, procurement, compliance, and administrative matters, and reviewed 18 legal documents related to agreements and MOUs.

Throughout 2024, the Legal Support Service produced 10 key documents, including the Sea Cucumber Regulation 2024, FAPCom Guidelines, Fisheries (Penalty Notice) Regulations, and amendment bills. The consultant also assisted in drafting ministry-related proposals and agreements. Additionally, MFOR Legal Services provided support in fisheries-related meetings locally and internationally, playing a pivotal role in ensuring the Ministry's functions complied with legal standards and anticipating future challenges with additional resources and qualified staff.



4.0 MFOR Projects and Initiatives in 2024

4.1 Projects

The MFOR development budget for 2024 accounted to a total of \$15.6 million, with a provision of \$7.9 million accounted from the estimated balance in 2023 and additional 2024 budget of \$7.6 million.

In summary the Ministry has a total number of 45 projects at the beginning of 2024, 39 with funds using the Government system and the remaining are under the donor system. The figures, increased with additional 5 projects bring the total number of projects at end of 2024 to 50 projects.

From the total number of projects, approximately 84% of most projects falls under Wealth pillar under the KV20, 14% under the infrastructure pillar and the least governance pillar. The Ministry this year have warranted around 70%

of the development budget for execution of the projects, such provides a great indication of funds utilized for project implementation, however there is need to ensure monitoring of project performance in meeting key objectives of the project.

The graph shows the MFOR Project status for the period of 2024- 2025, which shows that 60% of the projects remains to be active, around 30% is inactive, with 5 projects have completed with process of acquittal to officially close the project in 2025. From the MFOR Project, PDD also have process to officially acquitted 8 projects with remaining funds utilized for a repurpose to secure a project to purchase the Ministry 4 transports (1 big bus, mini-bus and 2 double cab truck).



At the Ministry level project implementation rests with the respective divisions, with PDD role to facilitate the warranting process and support project monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the projects performed as expected. At the end of 2024, we have 5 completed projects with official closing to be carried out in 2025. There are also ongoing projects where funding may not be reflected in 2024 but are likely to continue with carried forward balances from previous years, which are usually reported as inactive projects.

According to the development budget, most of the Ministry projects are funded by the GoK, MFAT, WB, DFAT, Korea, EU, FFA and regional agencies with contributions from other development partners and fisheries associations including through bilateral arrangements with fishing partners.

The Ministry also have secured funding support through the fisheries bilateral arrangements, such includes the new protocol under the signed European Partnership Agreement with annual sector support of 400k Euro starting from 2024. Other arrangements also benefitted the Fisheries sector, the Ministry has secured 1.2 million for the implementation of the blue lagoon marina project through the arrangement with Korea fisheries partners. Other technical support provided through the OFCF Japan, with provisions of technical support and equipment through the FDAPIN program in PICs.

Donor supported projects

Under the bilateral arrangements, the Government of Kiribati through the Ministry have received support under the Japan Grant Aid for the Economic and Social Development Programme on major development projects plus provisions of equipment that might be huge in terms of funding support and through this arrangement the Government able to secure such projects.

Collection vessel project

Under the ESDP support YR2021 a funding of 650,000,000 million yen is secured for this project (equivalent US\$5.7million). The project is in the manufacturing stage, with the vessel planned to be delivered to Kiribati in June 2026.

Work already completed on the design and confirmation of the required technical information.

Dredger project

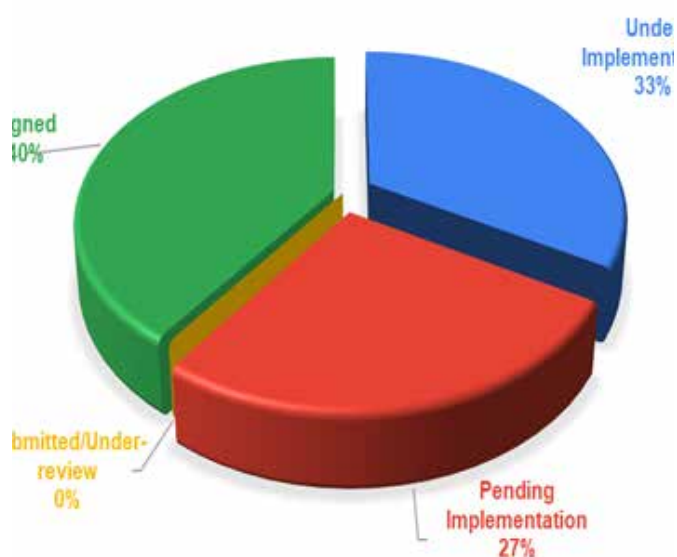
The dredger project forms part of the Japan's Grant Aid for the Economic and Social Development (ESDP) program for that fiscal year 2018. Through this grant aid the fund of JPY600 million of equivalent to 6.3 million AUD provided to Kiribati to support the 2 projects; the dredger and medical equipment. For the dredger, it is allocated around 500,000,000 JPY (5.2 million AUD)

The project has completed the design phase supported through the work of the consultant to complete the work on the design, working with TACL, the Ministry and relevant bodies to finalize the design for the dredger. The tender process to be completed in March, 2025 for a contractor to carry out the construction of the dredger. The project planned to be delivered by mid-2026.

PROP Project

The Pacific Regional Oceanscape Program (PROP) Kiribati Project is a 6-year fisheries program funded by the World Bank (WB). US\$19.5 million was approved in April 2020 to support the PROP Project. At end of 2024, AUD5.16M (18%) of total grant funds was expensed. At the end of 2024, out of the 30 activities, 12 contracts (40%) have been signed; 33% are under implementation (procurement); and 27% are yet to be implemented.

PROCUREMENT PROGRESS UPDATE 2024



At the end of 2024, the following activities were completed:

Component 1- i) *Legal and policy review of the Fisheries legislation;* ii) *Port State Measures (PSM) processes and procedures (including transshipment monitoring);* iii) *Support for transshipment monitoring through the development of procedures/systems/operational & safety equipment;* & iv) *Review of the Kiribati National Plan of Action to prevent deter and eliminate IUU Fishing* v) *Kiritimati Master Plan and Concept Design for the MCS office.*

Component 2 – i) *Kiritimati Island Ocean Resources & Fisheries Management Planning* ii) *CPPL Needs Assessment & Study of Economic Viability of Supply Chain for the Line Islands;* iii) *Marine Spatial Plan for Tarawa;* iv) *Training re to change from a paper-based reporting system to e- reporting.*

Component 3–i) *Policy Work & Conceptualising Fisheries Laboratories (INFOPESCA)* – work includes review of seafood safety regulations, developing design concept for the 2 labs (coastal & offshore), developing capacity building/training plan for lab staff, and the development of a seafood quality management system manual.

Activities still in progress include the following:

Component 1. i) *Procurement of 2 observer boats for Kiritimati and Betio* ii) *Final Design of the Ambo office complex.*

Component 2. i) *Legalising of CBFM Management Plans* ii) *Solar salt production (trials) in Beru;* iii) *Preparation & implementation of a sustainable supply chain development plans for 4 islands the Gilbert Group procurement.*

Component 3. i) *Recruitment of new Lab staff.*



Projects launched in 2024

EU Fisheries Sector support 2024-2028

In 2024, the Government of Kiribati through the MFOR have secured a funding support from the EU for the implementation of a sector support project. This project secured through the new [Fisheries Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement](#) (FPA) signed between the EU and Kiribati and entered into provisional application on 2nd October 2023.

Significantly this project, is not new to Kiribati with previous arrangement with the EU since 2011 under the expired protocol of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement. The new protocol stipulated how this EU fisheries sector support should be implemented for the next 5 years – life span of the protocol.

Phoenix Islands Marine Spatial Planning project

The project signed by Kiribati MFOR and the MFAT in September 2024, with funds channelled to the Ministry in support of the implementation of the Phoenix MSP project. This project aligns and compliment the current work of the GSD with a broader support for the national coordination work to establish a national Marine Spatial Plan and process, beginning with the Phoenix Island Ocean space, in Kiribati.

The project subsequently provides and implementation work as a role with the mandate to establish an MSP Coordinating Committee which includes a wider sector work with other Ministries with interests in management of the marine space. The project complements the work of the assigned role of GSD to restructure the former Phoenix Islands Protected Area to a multi-use with developing zones to balance the commercial operations and management.

The core objective of this MSP project is to reform and recalibrate the former Phoenix Islands Protected Area (PIPA) from an entirely closed area to one that encouraged multi-use

zoning through a Marine Spatial Planning and Blue Economy approach. This was following Government directive to re-open PIPA closed area to fishing in March 2023.

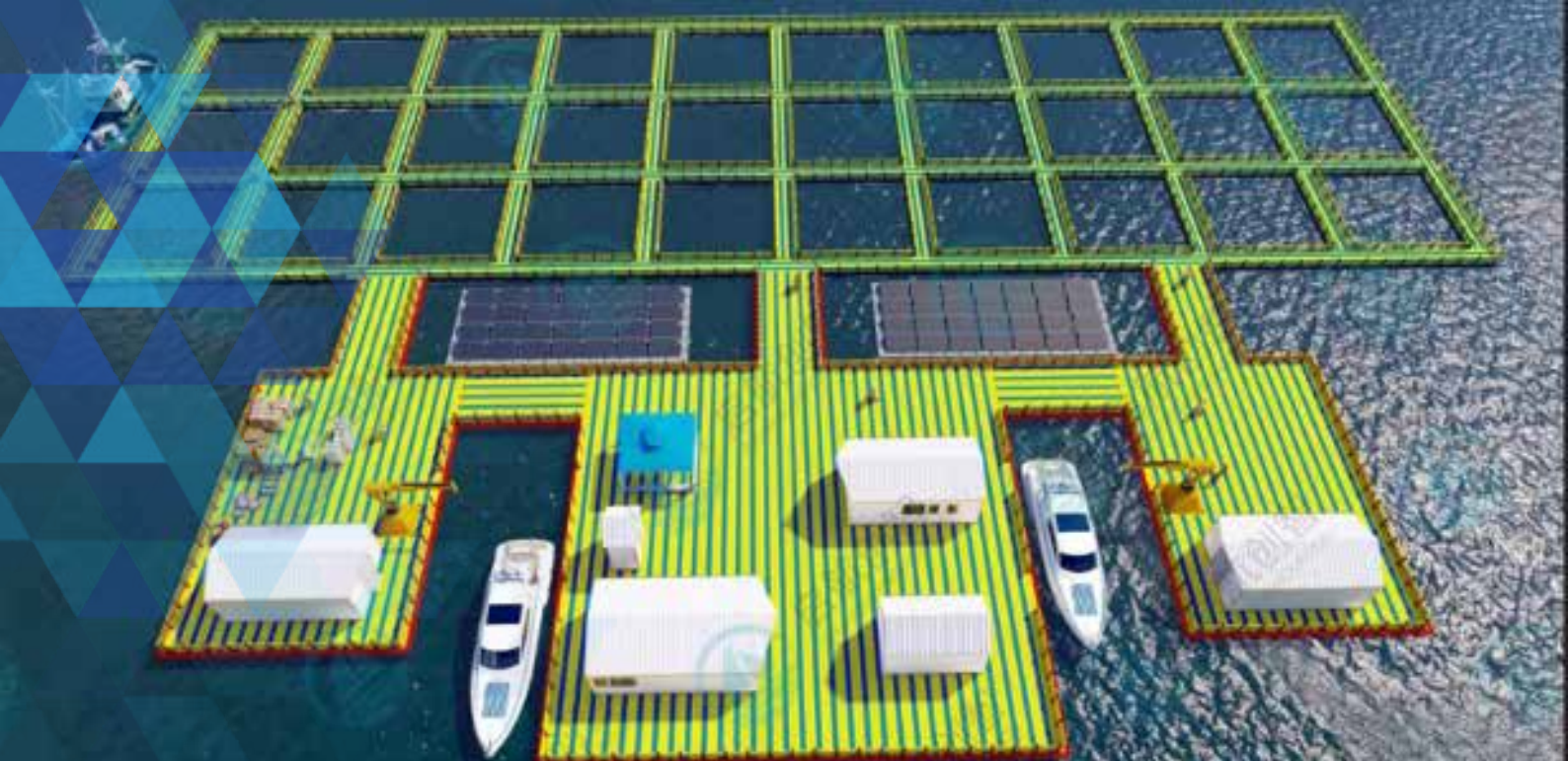
Tobwan Waara Phase III

In November, 2024 MFAT provided funding for the extension of Tobwan Waara Programme under its Phase 3 (2024-2027) to the Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources. As reflected in the GFA signed a grant of a maximum amount of AUD\$3.2 million to cover the period 2024-2027.

This programme represents the 3rd phase of the TWP which seeks to operationalize the high-level Kiribati-New Zealand Ten Year Strategy for Sustainable Fisheries Development and Management (Joint Strategy) signed between the Government of Kiribati and the Government of New Zealand in November, 2016.

Under this third phase, the approved results-based performance and payments matrix sets out a summary of the Results based payment targets to be achieved within the funding period selected based on the MFOR strategic plan KSAs and indicator targets in line with TWP goals and support pillars. This project is a sector budget support project from MFAT to the fisheries sector in Kiribati.





4.2 New Initiatives

4.2.1. KIFL marina and floating fish farm project

The main objective of the marina project is to improve quality of landed catch by fishermen through access to all fisheries related services available in the marina amenities. It will also provide for a one stop shops for other services needed such as ice cubes for fishing, safe berthing sites for small boats and access to major domestic market such as KIFL. To date, 90% of the floating dock has been assembled and it is anticipated to be completed in March 2025. Sand deposit in the proposed site has been removed to allow space for the floating dock to accommodate bigger boats and artisanal boats to berth alongside the floating marina

In addition, a floating fish farm project main purpose is to diversify mariculture programs by investing in culturing other valuable reef fish in the lagoon. The project will also offer amenities for conference and other recreational activities such as sight-seeing, seaweed, and coral farming within the Tarawa Lagoon as per in the concept design below. The floating fish farm project is divided into three phases. Phase 1 consist of 30 square floating cages. Installation and deployment of phase 1 was completed in October 2024. Phase 2 consist of 42 round floating cages. Materials has arrived and assembling of these round cages is still in progress. Phase 3 of the project consist of 63 floating cages. Some of the materials has arrived, assemblage and installation is anticipated to be completed in June 2025



4.2.2. Ananau causeway marina infrastructure project

With a projected cost of millions, the Kiribati Marina Infrastructure project is the largest infrastructure development project currently undertaken by MFOR. The objective of infrastructure is to provide a one-stop shop for small-scale fisheries in terms of fishing gear, cold storage facilities, fuel outlets, outboard motor repairs, and replacement parts. The initiative aims to transform the scenery of Tarawa, the capital island, and to support local artisanal fisheries. Additionally, it will seek to offer recreational space, such as berthing for small yachts, fishing boats, and stores and restaurants, allowing both locals and visitors to enjoy their free time. The money received from the facility's rental is anticipated to be added to MFOR's revenue contribution to the government's overall recurrent budget.



In the meantime, a budgetary agreement has been reached with China Ocean, a globally recognized consulting firm, to conduct the preliminary feasibility study that would inform the infrastructure's full plan. The Ananau Causeway, which is closed to the present MFOR Eco-farm, is where the infrastructure will be located.



4.2.3. Floating Ecosystem islands infrastructure project

The floating offshore ecosystem infrastructure project is a floating town that is self-sustained itself through resources from the ocean. This project is at its infant stage of development between the Government of Kiribati and the Indigo Civilization company (French-based firm) which is a consortium of engineers, philanthropists, developers and many more. The objective of this project is to demonstrate that through innovation of constructing this floating self-sufficient ecosystem town, ocean through a blue economy can address all global problems such as scarcity of land and resources, drinking water, energy challenge, pollution, loss of biodiversity and sustainable living.

This project will be implemented in Kiritimati Is and Tarawa and will make Kiribati the laboratory for the future, learning to live, work in symbiosis with the ocean world. This would edge Kiribati as the global leader in sustainable marine development by investing in Smart Offshore Ecosystems that harness renewable energy, promote aquaculture and eco-tourism, and support research and monitoring, creating new economic opportunities while preserving our ocean environment.



4.2.4. MFOR New Building Complex at Ambo

The construction of the new MFOR Building Complex is one of the urgent and priority projects to accommodate staff in a conducive working environment. The current buildings occupied by staff of MFOR are either very old, congested and posing occupational health risks as they are no longer safe.

The new MFOR complex as allocated by cabinet, will be built in Ambo at the existing fisheries compound near the KIFL building. Through World Bank PROP project, a professional designer based out of Australia, James Cubitt Architects was hired to undertake the detail design of this MFOR building complex. This detail design work is expected to be completed in March 2025 with documentations that will be ready for bidding process for the construction contractor.

After thorough consultations between JCA and MFOR on the expectations, features and systems required for this MFOR Complex; a four-story design was agreed with small footprint leaving more space in the allocated site for car parking space and other services.

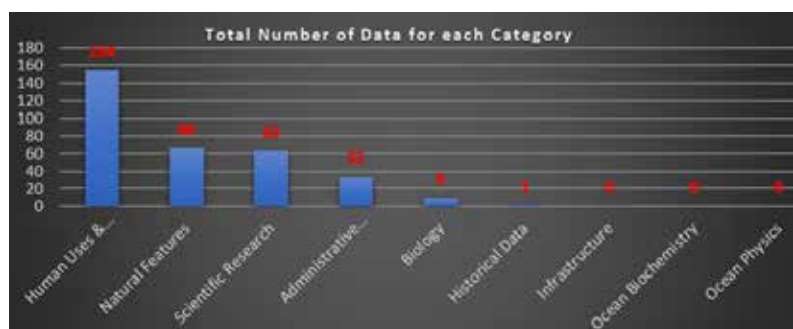


4.2.5. MFOR Te Baiku Ocean Database

Inspired by the high-level intelligence of Manta Rays - renowned for their long-term memory, sophisticated navigation, and exceptional learning and problem-solving abilities - “Te Baiku,” the Kiribati Ocean Database, is a Web-based interactive mapping platform that centralizes Kiribati fisheries data and ocean information.

Te Baiku Ocean Database will serve as a critical knowledge base for the Marine Spatial Planning Coordinating Committee, a national body dedicated to fostering collaborative efforts, integrating data, and engaging in participatory mapping to address crucial ocean challenges.

The database was successfully completed and launched in November 2024. This achievement was made possible through the technical expertise of Seasketch, generous funding support from the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) via the Phoenix MSP Project, and close collaboration with members of the Marine Spatial Planning Coordinating Committee.

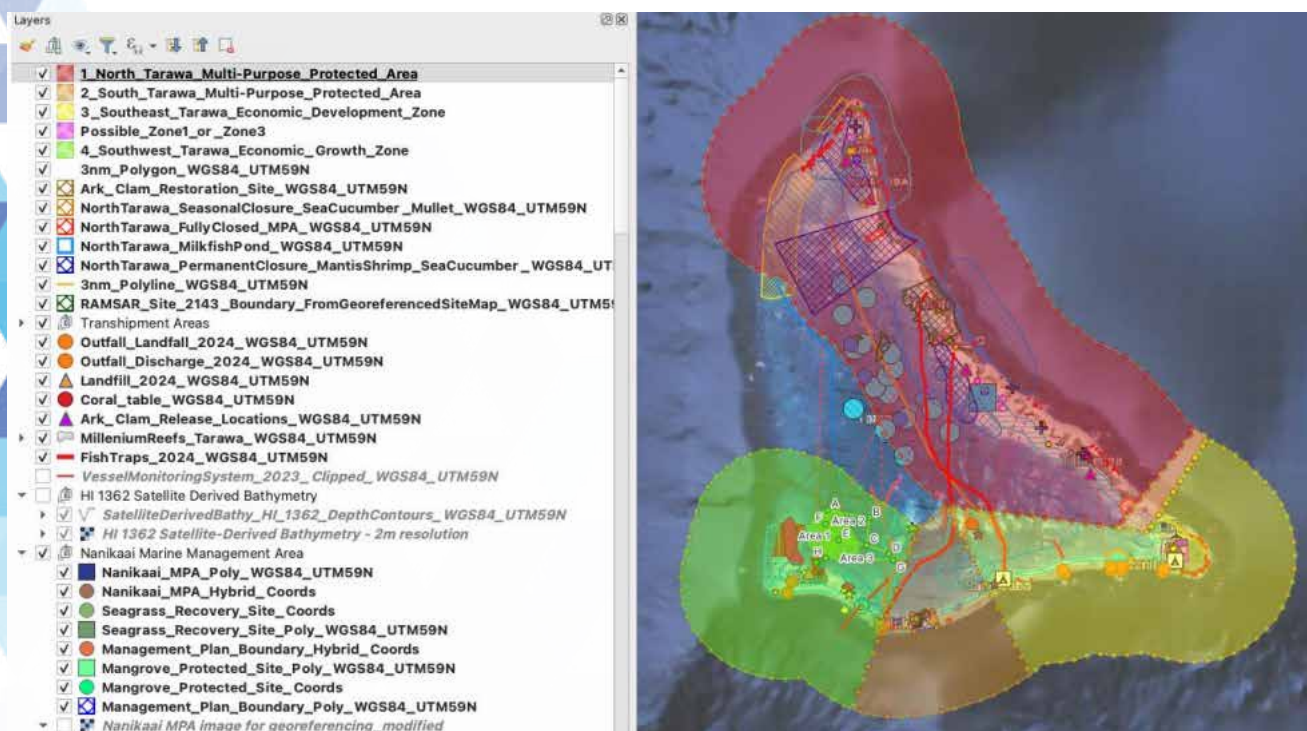




To enhance the comprehensiveness of Te Baiku Ocean Database, the Geo-science Division invites Members of the Marine Spatial Planning Coordinating Committee, CROP agencies and International Research Institutions to contribute their valuable Fisheries and Ocean Data. This collaborative effort will significantly enrich the database and support informed decision making for sustainable ocean management.

4.2.6. Tarawa Marine Spatial Planning Tool

The increasing pace of urban development in Tarawa is resulting in a significant rise in diverse marine activities and competing uses of the Tarawa lagoon, which poses threat to the health of its critical marine resources and increases the likelihood of conflicts over the ocean space. To address these challenges, the Marine Spatial Planning Coordinating Committee, with financial support from the World Bank's Pacific Regional Oceanscape Programme (PROP), engaged a Consultancy Firm, Macalister Elliot, and Partners LTD early 2024 to create a comprehensive Marine Spatial Plan for Tarawa. This plan encompasses Tarawa's coastal and marine environment extending 3 nautical miles offshore. This MSP at the island urban level is yet to be incorporated into a wider national MSP framework for proper ocean planning. The vision of this plan is to cultivate a healthy and productive marine ecosystem, underpinned by a well-structured and comprehensive spatial planning system that encourages sustainable resource management and guarantees an equitable, resilient, and prosperous future for Tarawa's residents.



4.2.7. Tanobakoa Beach Clean-up

Te Tanobakoa meaning the sand from the shark (referring to white, flaky sand used in traditional dances), is one of the Ministry's initiatives promoting beach beautification and landscaping at Te Ananau Causeway near Bonriki Airport. This was successfully delivered with funding support from the EU.



4.2.8. Te Kuia – National Ocean Centre of Excellence (NOCE)

Te Kuia-NOCE, a National Centre of Excellence concept, proposing for a multi-purpose floating vessel for research expeditions, tourism and maritime patrols, was drafted and completed mid of 2024.

Kiribati faces several challenges in fully maximizing benefits from its ocean resources due to the lack of necessary scientific infrastructure, including a dedicated research institution, data center and laboratory to effectively promote innovative research and product developments.

To address these challenges, Te Kuia – NOCE concept is proposed to strengthen Kiribati's scientific capabilities and to promote sustainable economic developments. The concept envisions a National Centre of Excellence based on Kiritimati Island, serving as logistical hub for the vessel and housing a laboratory and Ocean Data Centre for archiving research samples and expedition data. Further development of this concept is currently underway.



4.2.9. MFOR Teriaki Canoe Paddling Competition

Promoting the value of our culture, our traditional knowledge through canoe racing and the abundance of resources from the sea is paramount as it has a strong connection to our economic growth. This is the goal of the MFOR Teriaki Canoe Paddling Competition, popularly known as Teriaki. In his introductory remarks during Teriaki Tournament 2024, HMFOR Ribanataake Tiwau reaffirmed that the event “emphasized the value of teamwork and paddling together in a well-coordinated manner at the sea facing numerous challenges for a common purpose to get to a desired destination.”

The Australian High Commission, the New Zealand High Commission, Te Atinimarawa Co., Ltd., Central Pacific Producers Ltd., and the Kiribati Police Service all engaged in Teriaki, which began on the 11th November 2023.

On 23rd November 2024, Teriaki was held once more with the participation of the Kiribati Police Service, Te Atinimarawa Co., Ltd., Central Pacific Producers Ltd., ANZ Bank, several line Ministries of the Government and Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources. The event was made possible through generous funding support by MFOR, EU Project, PROP project, DFAT, MFAT, Capital Restaurant, Peter & Sons, Mary’s Beach Café, Seven Seas Kava bar and Big-eye Kava bar.



4.2.10. KOFA projects on Fisherman Training Institute and Bairiki Wharf Upgrading

The Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources through the Planning and Development Division have sought to secure a project under the Korea ODA 2025-2028 working in collaboration with the Korean counterpart (KOFA, KOFC and KRC) beginning of 2024. The project called Kiribati Fishing Community Development Project with Green New Deal Initiative of USD\$11.4 million.

The project rationale is to support the management and sustainable development in Kiribati by providing essential infrastructure, including the building of the Fisheries Training Complex in Tanaea, upgrading work of the small-scale fisheries wharf with necessary capacity building training programs. In securing this proposal, the project concept paper has submitted to the Korean Government in February, 2024 through the Embassy in Fiji, with follow up awaiting the official notification if project is successful.

Limited infrastructure to support fisheries development in Kiribati continues to be lacking, with the successful of this project proposal, could earmarked another infrastructure development project to be implemented in 2025. The design of this project aligns with priorities under the KNIP, where it provides the Ministry with lessons to align to donor specific criteria beside identified priorities at the Ministry level.

Furthermore, the project includes the wharf upgrading at Bairiki, where consultation is required once the project is approved under the Korea ODA, the Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources has to go through the Cabinet submission to seek blessings for the implementation of the project and continue to work with relevant Government agencies.



[그림 1-10] 어업훈련센터 사업계획도

4.2.11. Kiribati Long Line VDS Scheme



The development and enactment of a Kiribati LL VDS is a new initiative that began in 2024 for two main reasons. First, is to comply with PNAO requirements for licensing longlines in PNA waters in accordance with the Ministers' directive to standardize the longline fishery across the PNA region. The second reason is to revive the longline fishery to interested distant water fishing nations after its closure in 2017 and to expand Government revenue streams from fisheries besides revenue derived from the Purse Seine VDS.

The new regulation is ready with small amendments to be added before it is submitted to Cabinet's final approval. Words of thanks to the PNAO Legal Consultant and our own Legal Advisor for their great assistance, staff of the OFD, the Ministry, and our industry who have also contributed and participated in this work.

The expectation is that after Cabinet's approval, we will initiate the socialization process with fishing partners particularly those who have been requesting to operate longline in our waters. Rolling out the Longline VDS next year is envisaged to add more to fishing revenue and in line with the Government's objective related to economic growth.



4.2.12. Blue Carbon Initiative

Blue carbon refers to the carbon stored in coastal and marine ecosystems like mangroves, salt marshes, and seagrass beds, which play a crucial role in mitigating climate change and supporting biodiversity. Of these, seaweed and seagrasses are the two currently calculable as blue carbon resources. The nature of the program includes research study on determining carbon sink from seagrass beds and kappaphycus seaweed farming and introducing floating farming methods of seaweed on Abaiang. Abaiang and Tarawa are the two islands piloted for this initiative and the funding support from OFCF Japan. The first phase of the project is to conduct a survey on seaweed and seagrass bed coverage on both islands, introduce new farming methods and the second phase was to determine carbon sink. The team had successfully carried out consultation on Abaiang in September. The next visit was planned in 2025 to continue with the survey and to carry out farming activities. More work is required on this area, and several interests have been expressed by donors and partners (CSIRO Australia and Waka Pacific New Zealand) to support this project in the future.





5.0 MFOR Contribution to Government Development Strategies

5.1 MFOR inputs to Moti n Nano

The Ministry aspires to achieve and fulfil its commitments to bring a prosper and wealthy nation through a number of ventures in developments and arrangements. The Fisheries sector is continued to be categorized as the core blueprint for long term development aspirations of the Government of Kiribati under the KV20 and the Government Manifesto, however challenges and constraints always fall back on the Government commitment to address larger investments projects such including infrastructure.

In achieving these aspirations, the Ministry have embarked on a number of programs and key activities to attain and maximize returns from the fisheries sector.

Overall, the Ministry have implemented a number of Motinano commitments as outlined in the table below:

Motinnano	Updates	Details
4. Maximize revenues from fisheries through investment in value-added activities and fostering greater local ownership in fisheries harvesting and exporting.	In-Progress	<p>100% tariff free to China, Nearshore Local licensing - designated fisheries open for licensing.</p> <p>Increased number of establishments that have been approved to export to the international markets.</p> <p>Diversification of seafood products to be exported the markets including, reef fish species, sea cucumber and others.</p>
16. Make Kiribati a major transshipment hub in the region and internationally	In-Progress	The development of the national port master plan details a plan on the segregation of the port area and the uses. Integration of the fisheries port incorporated in the plan, with awaiting Cabinet approval on this plan.
17. Expedite establishment of additional fish processing centers on Kiribati	In-Progress	<p>CPPL processing plant in Bikenibeu earmarked in 2025. The reclaimed land has completed with follow up construction work in 2025. 2 Target islands to pilot the Tuna canning processing, Makin and Nikunau. Centers construction in progress.</p> <p>Few sea cucumber facilities have been established and listed.</p>
18. Strengthen coastal and artisanal fisheries through appropriate incentive schemes	Completed	100% operational of the fisheries loan scheme under DBK. Injection of 500k to DBK for small-medium size fishing boats. Other incentives, including the revival of the seaweed farming and fishing gear revolving project.

24. Establish ice-plants on islets and larger islands	In-Progress	2 Satellite centres - Tabuarorae and Tebunginako still awaits land acquisition. Environment screening of site to be completed in Qrt1,2025. Expansion of CPPL, to include Takaeang, Abatiku and Tab North to establish new centers. Water treatment system is earmarked to be installed in Tamana fish centre to provide potable water during fish processing and this is funded by PACER plus.
25. Boat for communities or wards yet to receive a share	In-Progress	70% complete, Distribution of chattels still in progress, Islands completed - 15/23, remaining islands - Marakei, Banaba, Teraina, Kiritimati, Tabuaeran, BTC, TUC, Tab North. The project includes, purchase of 249 chattels (221 fibreglass boats, 28 aluminum boats with 249 30hp OBM) with budget of \$3.8million.
148. The purchase and operation of Bunkering vessel	In-Progress	Consultation with KOIL still in progress with joint paper to explore viable options for the bunkering operation in Kiribati.

5.2 MFOR inputs to Kiribati Development Plan

The Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources (MFOR) is tasked by the government to look after the national ocean resources (living and non-living aquatic resources) for national food security and sustainable economic growth. As such, MFOR plays a vital role in ensuring that Kiribati Development Plan 2020–2023 Key Priority Area 2 (Economic Wealth) is accomplished by generating a set of revenue benchmark to fund 70% of the national budget.

In so doing, MFOR has undertaken strategic measures in collaboration with regional development partners, such as PNA, FFA and SPC, to safeguarding Kiribati's ocean resources to guarantee a steady income to finance.

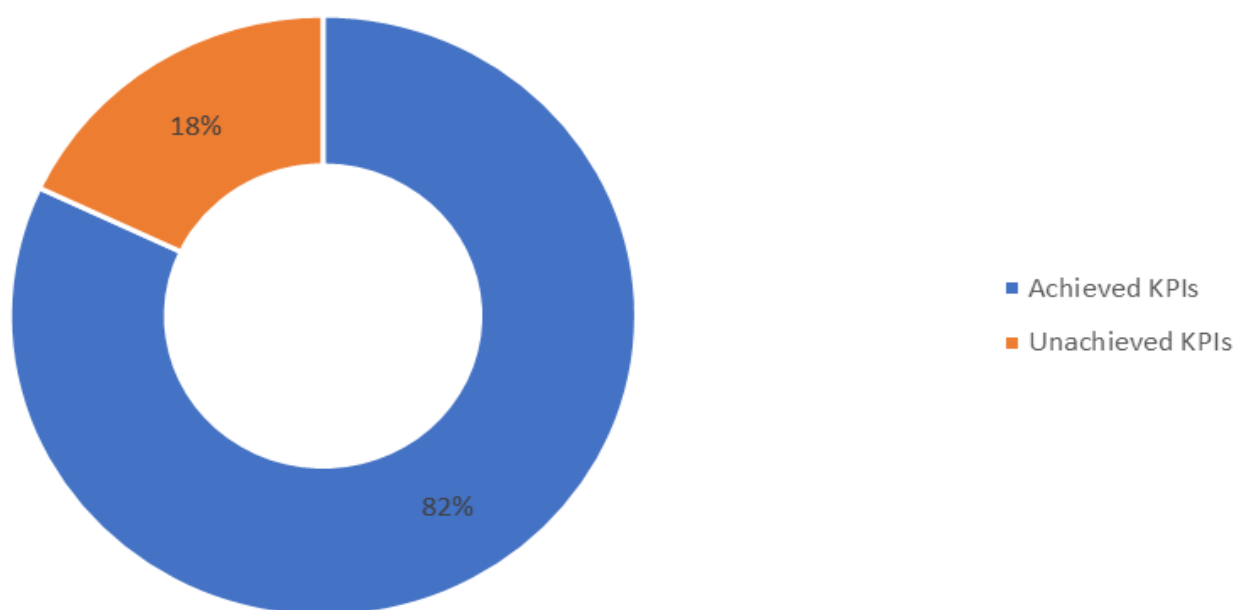
Albeit the strong fish resource management system put in place, the fishing revenue was notably declined from 2019 to 2022 and this was due to the global pandemic that further led to the closure of 80% of global fishing industry and the hike in fuel costs aggravated by Ukraine – Russia war. However, this trend has changed in 2023 and 2024, as you would note that MFOR has generated more than \$200 million in 2023 and 2024. This is a record for MFOR that was achieve beyond its \$200 million target in 2 consecutive years.

While revenue derived substantially from access fees from the oceanic fisheries, the coastal fisheries contributed a minimal amount. However, this coastal fishery plays a critical part in sustaining national food security.

MFOR in collaboration with development partners has invested significantly in the coastal fisheries domain to support food and economic security for the communities through the maintenance of island fish centres and the Community-based Fisheries Management framework to establish small scale community-based Marine Protected Area (MPAs).

In line with the KDP 2019 – 2023 (Key Priority Area 2: Economic Wealth), MFOR has performed satisfactorily well in achieving more than 82% of the indicators. However less than 18% was not achieved due to the issues associated with high start-up capital requirements and the lack of knowledge and skills, particularly in value-addition seafood process.

Status of MFOR KPIs under the KDP2019 -2023





KPIs achieved (2019 - 2023)	KPIs not achieved (2019 - 2023)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Percentage increased in value of export goods (2.1d) 2. Increase total government revenue as proportion of GDP (2.2a) – 3. Percentage increase in number of people engaged in labour mobility schemes (now falls under MEHR mandate?) (4.2a) 4. Percentage of strengthened, improved and priority for biodiversity conservation (4.2b) 5. Percentage of strengthened, improved and priority for climate change (4.2e) 6. Percentage of strengthened, improved and priority for environment spatial planning, data and information management system (4.2f) 7. Percentage of aquaculture farming implemented (4.3) 8. Number of ocean resource related policies, legislations, regulations developed/ reviewed (5.3) 9. Number of public awareness (5.4) 	<p>Contribution of Sustainable fisheries and other marine (Living and non-living resources) to GDP</p> <p>Number of transshipment hubs</p>



6.0 Parliament issues concerning MFOR

Responding to, and actioning on Parliament's oral questions from Honourable Member of Parliaments is one of the important responsibilities of the Ministry. The legislative branch of government, Parliament usually meets every quarter to make new laws, amend existing laws, review existing policies of the executive branch of government, including approving the budget.

There are varying issues raising to the Ministry by MPs, but generally they are categorized into 4 main groups. The issues revolve around the following.

- i. Issues around the existing fish center and the ice-machines with those centers
- ii. Issues around the boats and engine project
- iii. Issues around support services and training to artisanal fishermen such as boats repair, fishing gears, fish cages, fishermen training and lastly
- iv. Issues around revenues including sea cucumber fees, fishing revenues, etc.

The Ministry usually makes a priority to address those issues raised from Parliament immediately after every session. Due to the nature of each issue, some of them may not be fully addressed but require a longer-term timeframe, whilst the small ones can be fully executed in a short timeframe.

In 2024, the Ministry proposed to put forward amendments to the existing fisheries act to incorporate elements of UNCLOS on fishing. A comprehensive review of the Fisheries Act will be tabled in the new year 2025 to reflect some of the emerging issues.



7.0 Challenges

While MFOR was entrusted with the economic development of Kiribati from our vast ocean resources, there are numerous challenges facing the Ministry faced during the implementation, which calls for continuous improvement and addressing. The challenges are contained in the table below.

Challenges	Solutions and Opportunities
i. Poor coordination between Government institutions often led to substantial delays in our implementation.	Promote coordination through bilateral meeting and MOU to ensure all line Ministries provide mutual support to each other.
ii. Limited staff capacity – poor skills and knowledge on new and emerging work areas such as marina infrastructure, blue carbon, etc.	Develop human resource planning to address the gap. Explore training opportunities for staff capacity development
iii. Lack of transport – there's a constant need for more vehicles and boats for our teams to execute their functions effectively.	More proper and efficient coordination of transportation. Proper maintenance of existing vehicles Utilize the existing workshop to look after the maintenance of all vehicles
iv. Small working space and poor office conditions. All office spaces are either congested and in very poor conditions.	Awaiting completion of new complex To optimize the utilization of the available resources
v. Limited Funding in some areas	Concerned directors must plan, seek and tap available sources
vi. Lengthy financial process of payment	Translate the process to MFOR process standard under Secretary



8.0 Strategic next steps

Despite the successes and achievements that the Ministry have collectively achieved in 2024, it was also acknowledged that there remains pending initiatives and policy targets that have not been delivered yet and require further support.

The lack of smooth progress and delivery of other key policy targets was attributed to the existing challenges and constraints identified in section 7 of this report on challenges. There are also several sporadic and ad hoc priorities that weren't necessarily link to key policy targets. These short-term tasks with urgent nature often overshadowed efforts on the implementation of key policy targets. A clear plan of action must be set in motion in the subsequent year to address the challenges and constraints to improve the conditions of working and service delivery by the Ministry.

The Ministry must also begin to transition the absorption of critical areas and regularization of important roles into Government budgetary provisions and plans that are currently handled by projects (CBFM, PROP, EU, and MFAT Sector Support, Japan/OFCF support, etc) funded externally by our development partners. This is to ensure the Government is fully autonomous and independent from aids and associated influences.

The current modus operandi of the Ministry, executed by the different divisions must be overhauled to one that is very efficient, game changing and working towards harnessing and maximizing more benefits from our ocean resource.

The current game plan of the Ministry includes the following:

generating revenue from fishing license fees, marine export, consignments and recreational fishing fees,

- facilitating marine scientific research, coastal assessments and deep-sea exploration,
- research and development of aquaculture and mariculture,
- equipping outer islands with boats, engines, fish centers and mini hatcheries,
- accrediting export companies to standards,
- monitoring, surveillance, control, management of fishery resources

There is a need to move beyond the modus operandi and up the ante moving ahead in the year 2025 and beyond.

Of highest interest and expectation is the need to move the Ministry's work to fishing our own

tuna resources, in addition to distant fishing water nations, and generate additional revenue from this tuna domestication venture. There is also a need to expand work in Kiribati to harness more benefits, from exporting of our coastal fisheries resources through sustainable aquaculture to the growing global seafood demand. This implies national capabilities on seafood standards, export requirements, seafood laboratory, scaling aquaculture and fish farm facilities, improve the supply chain, moving towards converting all processes to digital systems, relevant permitting processes must be all in place and efficient.

In addition to expanding on exporting raw fisheries resources to major markets, the Ministry must also now move towards more work on creating small-scale production infrastructures or industries to process and export our abundant fisheries and ocean resources into value added products targeting high-end and niche markets.

Economies of scale must be gradually established for these game changing initiatives.

The Ministry must also move towards exploring other revenues and benefits from non-fishery resources such as research, deep-sea mining, ocean-related infrastructures such as marina, specialized fisheries port, tuna transshipment hubs, innovative means to generate revenues from blue carbon, ocean estate concepts and many more. Work must begin now to gradually establish these new investments and opportunities.

One of the Government priorities is to create more opportunities and investments on the fisheries-tourism nexus. These may include creating more floating infrastructures over our lagoon to house hotels, restaurants, underwater aquarium, and more services.

Overall, Kiribati should continue to increase our revenue and accelerate the creation of more investments and opportunities from our ocean resources, optimizing our huge EEZ and strategic location as our leverage and bargaining power to re-assert Kiribati global leadership in these ventures.



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Annex 1. Matrix of Key Highlights for 2024

Team	Key Highlight	Progress percentage scores (status comments) as at 31 Dec 2024
ICT – Corporate Services Division (CSD)	Upgrade All Ministry Organs to Star-link Speed	100%
	Kiba n Raku Hackathon Competition on Ocean ICT Solutions	100%
Registry - CSD	Digital ID Business Cards for improved attendance	100%
	Improve Customer Service at the MFMRD HQ	100%
Geo-science Division (GSD)	Develop & Launch the National Ocean Database	100%
	Develop a Marine Spatial Planning Framework	90%
	Develop a National Ocean Policy	60%
Project Development Division (PDD)	Develop & Launch the PDD Projects Dashboard Application	90%
	Launch the Fisheries/ Ocean Investment Committee	100%
Oceanic Fisheries Division (OFD)	Develop & Launch Long Line VDS	90%
	Complete purchase of Compliance Assets ²	90%
	Achieve \$220 Million revenue	95% Target AUD\$210 Mil, Achieved AUD\$210.2 Mil)

Media - CSD	Ministry Key Messages Guide for Advocacy	90%
	Ministry Tuna Statue	40% Issue with funding, design and contractor
Seafood Verification Division (SVD)	Complete preps for local companies to begin export to China	100% complete as KFL has been listed and ready to export to China
	Deployment of Cart/Sheds to Fishing Vendors	60% It is anticipated that the fish vending units will be arrived in January depending on the availability of the carrier from China.
	Water treatment for fishing markets in outer islands ³	90% all equipment that are needed for the water treatment in Tamana have been shipped and the installation will be done once the flight to Tamana is resumed.

2 Patrol boat, Double cap vehicle, Satellite phone, Uniforms.

3 Outer islands Nonouti and Tabiteuea North.

Coastal Fisheries Division (CFD)	1. Launch CBFM Frameworks for Islands	90% Draft completed for 8 villages
	2. Develop & Launch Dashboard for Coastal Fisheries Statistics	90% Database already completed. Further follow up on data from SPC
	3. Complete the Inshore Licensing system	90% Database already completed. More work on tweaking the format and inputting more data
	4. Complete the FAD Management Plan	90% Draft Plan already completed awaiting final legal review
	5. Increase production of sandfish 3000 per spawning run	100%
	6. Develop Coral Garden spot in Tarawa lagoon (patch reef)	90% Coral garden with Frigate frame underwater completed. Planting is needed
	7. Complete FA upskilling training	95% Training on-going
	8. Complete Prefab Building at Ambo	60% Ground-breaking completed and construction is underway now
	9. Secure funding and complete MFMRD Maneaba at Tanaea	60% Construction has commenced
	10. Develop new Fish Centers at Makin and Nikunau	90% Ground-breaking for 2 centers (in Makin Is and Nikunau Is) already completed
	11. Achieve \$10 million revenue from Coastal Fisheries – Report on how much is received	\$227,000.00



**Ministry of Fisheries
& Ocean Resources**