

**Report on the National Assessment  
for the World Summit on  
Sustainable Development to the  
Tokelau Islands  
December 10, 2001 – February 15,  
2002**

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## **PREFACE**

A significant turning point in development thinking occurred at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) also known as the “Earth Summit”. Held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992, the conference resulted in a global plan of action known as Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. Agenda 21 placed human beings as being central to the concerns of sustainable human development and recognized that all countries (including small island developing states) have the potential to use their valuable resources, including ocean, coastal environments, bio-diversity and, especially its human resources in a sustainable way for the well-being of present and future generations.

The first gathering held to implement Agenda 21 was known as the Global Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. It was held in Bridgetown, Barbados, from 25 April to 6 May 1994 and delegations from throughout the Pacific region were well represented at it. Through New Zealand, Tokelau is a signatory of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development as well as a signatory of other closely related conventions (e.g. Biodiversity Convention, Climate Convention). From both conferences flowed numerous programs and initiatives in the Pacific. These efforts are coordinated by regional entities like the South Pacific Regional Environmental Program (SPREP) based in Apia, Samoa whose main purpose is putting into action a range of sustainable development strategies.

In response to the UN request the Government of Tokelau prepared a report, which was presented at the UNCED meeting, which was held in Brazil 1992. Tokelau unfortunately, had no official representation at the 1994 Barbados meeting where the critical issues of the Agenda 21 were first established. (they did however send a video) More recently, the Government of Tokelau signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU see attached dated December 7, 2001) with the United Nations Development Programme [UNDP] Resident Representative of the Apia office, which provided financial support for the development of the National Assessment and Reporting for the WSSD. This financial support comes from UNDP’s Capacity 21 Programme and AusAID and is channeled through the UNDP office Apia. Under this same MOU Tokelau agrees to establish National Council for Sustainable Development to facilitate for the WSSD National Assessment and Reporting process.

The purpose of this “3<sup>rd</sup> draft” WSSD National Assessment Report is simply to review, compile and collate the existing information concerning the status of sustainable development activities in Tokelau and detail those that are particularly relevant to the Barbados Programme of Action [BPOA].

Therefore, the structure of this National Assessment document complies with the Chapter Framework as described in the Annex 3 provided for in the BPOA and which was recommended to Pacific Island Countries at the recent 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development *Pacific Region Multi-stakeholder Consultation* 5-7 September, 2001 Apia, Samoa.

While Tokelau has made significant progress toward its own sustainable development since 1992 there still remains the hard road ahead, particularly in the country’s self-determination and complete establishment of the “Modern House of Tokelau” [MHT].

Regarding Tokelau’s targeted programmes on sustainable development, efforts have largely been supported by New Zealand Aid (NZODA 16.71 million NZD since 1996); UNDP’s office in Apia (0.98 million USD since 1995).

The basis of this report is to facilitate as a template for future UN reporting activities in which Tokelau may simply incorporate the more current information as required. In this respect, it should be acknowledged here that while newer information has been added, much of the detailed information provided in this report has been obtained directly from the on-going work of the UNDP programme on “Sustainable Human Development Situation Analysis” and the various consultants whom have contributed over the last 5 years (Toloa, Alailima, Hooper).

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**GENERAL THEMATIC OVERVIEW:** Tokelau is a non self-governing territory of New Zealand. Tokelau wishes to move toward greater self-governance and is supported in this by the Government of New Zealand and the UN Special Committee on Decolonisation. The Modern House of Tokelau (MHT) is a major Tokelau initiative that aims to provide a governance structure that better fits Tokelau's cultural context and increases Tokelau's capacity to manage its own affairs in a sustainable fashion.

Tokelau's national development problems remain common to those of many other Pacific Island Countries (PIC's); these being, a meager and fragile natural resource base; relative geographic isolation; heavy emigration; limited human resources; restricted human development capacity, and dependency on foreign aid and remittances. All these limitations are acute in Tokelau's context and are, in some cases, even exasperated since the country has taken steps toward self-government.

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**CHAPTER 1: SOCIO-ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS & FRAMEWORK for  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

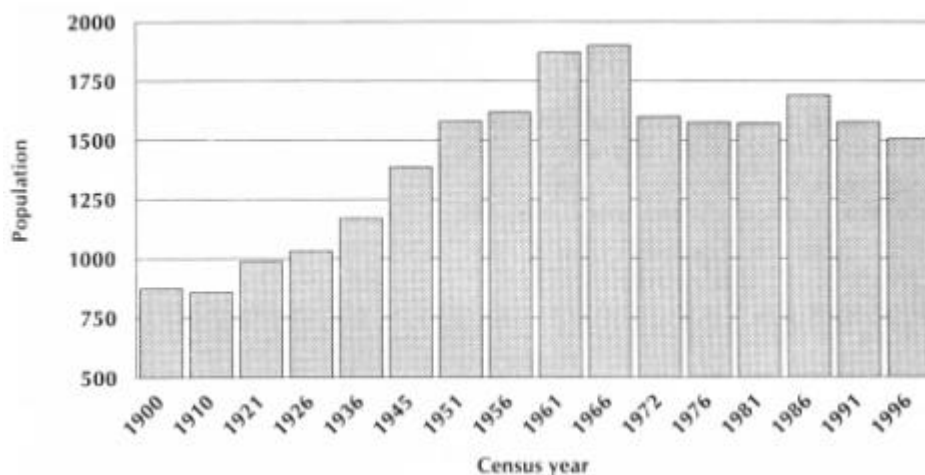
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**REVIEW COMPONENT:** Tokelau is small in both size (approx. 12 sq km) and population (1507 *De facto* in 1996). It is a remote and isolated community. Its coral atolls provide a sustainable subsistence lifestyle but a within a fragile environment. It maintains strong social cohesion, active traditions and a strong communal culture, which places considerable emphasis on collective effort and reward. All Tokelauans have New Zealand citizenship and approximately 5000 live in New Zealand at present.

*Demographics:* In the comprehensive population census taken in 1996 [Fig. 1] it was estimated that Tokelau has a total population of 1,507 people (Atafu= 499; Fakaofu= 578; Nukunonu= 430 respectfully) with an annual growth rate [due primarily to outward migration] of only -0.9% overall (for years 1991-1996). Therefore, Tokelau's population density in 1996 was 123.5 people per km<sup>2</sup> overall [Atafu= 142.6; Fakaofu= 144.5; Nukunonu= 91.5 respectfully]. In the more recent census taken in October 2001 figures showed a slight increase in population to 1,518 (Atafu= 608; Fakaofu= 501; Nukunonu= 409) respectfully [*pers. comm.*].

The population living in Tokelau is weighted to dependent groups – older and younger people due to the tendency for younger people and those with young children to emigrate to pursue better employment and education opportunities [Table 1 & Figure 2]. Hence there is a significant gap in the 20-60 age group, which would normally provide a major part of the workforce and skills of a community.

**Figure 1: Tokelau population from 1900 to 1996**

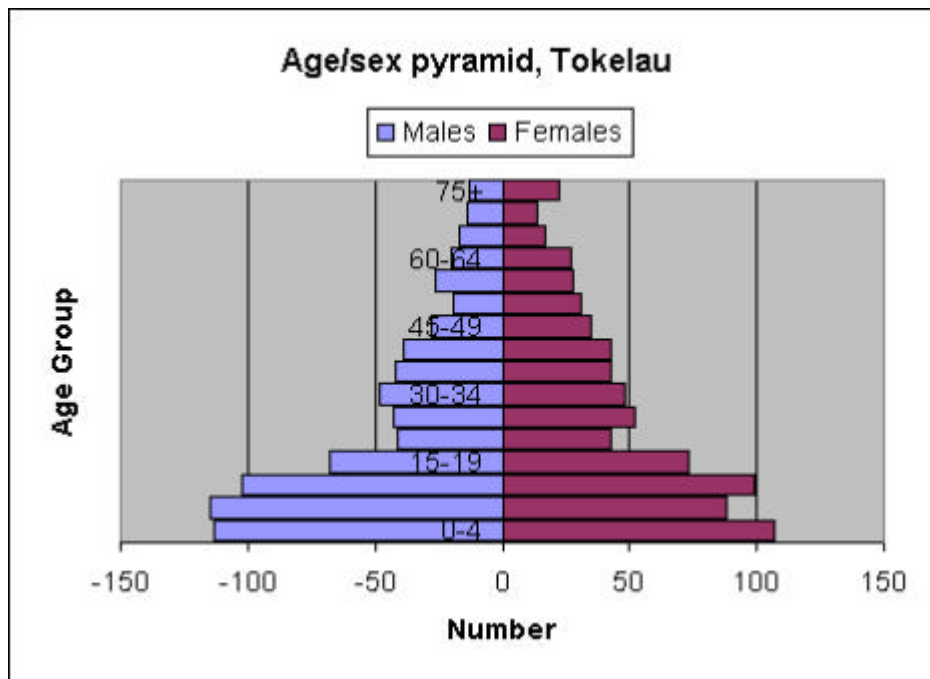


**Table 1:** Distribution of people by age, median age and dependency ratio, Tokelau: 1991, 1996 and 2001.

Age Group	Atafu			Fakaofu			Nukunonu			Tokelau		
	1991	1996	2001	1991	1996	2001	1991	1996	2001	1991	1996	2001
0-14	44%	44%	42%	45%	42%	45%	38%	38%	36%	43%	42%	41%
15-60	47%	48%	49%	44%	49%	44%	51%	52%	56%	47%	49%	49%
60 +	9%	8%	10%	11%	9%	11%	11%	10%	8%	10%	9%	10%
Median age	19.8	20.1	na	20.1	18.4	na	19.6	23.8	na	19.8	20.3	na
Dependency Ratio	112	109	na	127	104	na	97	94	na	113	103	na

**Source:** Andreas Demmke et.al. *Tokelau Population profile Based on 1996 Census: a Guide for Planners and Policy Makers*, Noumea, SPC, 1998, p.10. **Source 2001 data:** Chris McMurray Noumea, SPC, February 2002.

While Tokelau is a small country it still must carry many of the functions of larger nations. Furthermore, it must do so with very limited resources and without the benefit of the economies of scale. As a nation it must plan, prioritize, and organize itself in a very deliberate manner. In addition, it must articulate well its needs and concerns to external powers whose support is essential to its survival well into the future. In that respect, Tokelau has done well particularly in recent years and, despite the frustrations of dealing with large bureaucracies, the Tokelau voice is being heard in many quarters. Changes leading towards greater self-sufficiency and self-determination are taking place both internally and externally.



**Figure 2. Population Pyramid Tokelau, 2002** *Source:* Chris McMurray Noumea, SPC, 2002.

*General Comments:* Tokelau is a non self-governing territory of New Zealand. Tokelau wishes to move toward greater self-governance and is supported in this by the Government of New Zealand and the UN Special Committee on Decolonisation. The Modern House of Tokelau is a major Tokelau initiative that aims to provide a governance structure that better fits Tokelau's cultural context and increases Tokelau's capacity to manage its own affairs. As part of the MHT initiative, the Government of Tokelau is in the process of developing a strategic plan for Tokelau and fostering progress towards greater economic, social and political self-sufficiency.

Tokelau is not alone in facing the challenges of developing in a more sustainable and equitable manner. Many of the concerns identified by Small Island Developing States in their Program of Action are quite applicable to Tokelau, and most are covered in this report. They include climate change, sea level rise, national and environmental disasters, management of wastes, coastal and marine resources, energy,

tourism, bio-diversity, national institutions and administrative capacity, regional institutions and technical cooperation, transport and communication, and human resources development. Tokelau need not reinvent the wheel in trying to address many of its concerns. There is an enormous amount of information available to it along with support resources, which cover the experiences, successes and failures of other communities.

The budget for Tokelau 2000/01 was NZD \$8.5 million which was 4-5 times bigger than the GDP due primarily to the high levels of donor support and overseas remittances. The budget for the 2001/2002 fiscal cycle is 7.5 million 60% of which is allocated for fiscal budget support and the remainder designated for specific development project support.

**1A. Progress and Achievements:** If we only look at what the quality of life indicators tell us then it would appear that Tokelau is relatively better off than some of its regional neighbors. Of the 15 Pacific Island countries surveyed, it ranked third after Cook Islands and Tonga in a UNDP compilation of the Human Development Index (HDI) for the Pacific. The index measures life expectancy at birth, adult literacy rates, mean years of schooling, educational attainment and Gross Domestic Product per Capita. These indicators, however, give only one side of the picture and can easily overlook some of the more serious shortcomings in a country's human development situation. A step towards building SHD into national action strategies was taken recently when both the government and UNDP agreed to a Country Cooperation Framework (CCF) for the years 1998 to 2000. For Tokelau, the building capacity of the government has been identified as a necessary pre-condition for SHD pursuits. The CCF was based upon consultations with the government, the Village Council of Elders in the three atolls and Tokelau's bilateral development partners (e.g. New Zealand). Consensus was reached that UNDP will support SHD through (1) the promotion of good governance and capacity building, and (2) the promotion of job creation and sustainable livelihoods through village-based entrepreneurial development. Furthermore, Tokelau has made the following recommendation:

That the Joint Committee: Note that the Sustainable Development contract has not been let; Agree to delay until the first General Fono meeting in 2002, consideration of a revamped Sustainable Development process that would provide training opportunities for local Tokelauans, allow the process to be managed and delivered by locals and at the same time building towards true community ownership of the process and outcome.

- **Programmes & Projects in Tokelau [Multilateral, Regional and Bilateral]**  
Tokelau is heavily dependent on donor assistance, especially from New Zealand, which makes up approximately 80% of its annual budget. Tokelau seeks more self-reliance, especially through pelagic fisheries development.
  - ❑ **UNDP Programmes of Assistance**
    - TOK/98/001: Job Creation and Sustainable Livelihoods Programme  
*Project Duration: 1999-2002; Total UNDP Funding US \$ 148,000*
    - TOK/98/002: Governance Programme  
*Project Duration: 1997-2001; Total UNDP Funding US \$214,000*
    - TOK/94/001: Tokelau Telecommunications Network  
*Project Duration: 1995-2000; Total UNDP Funding US \$ 438,000*
    - TOK/00/001: Project Monitoring and Oversight  
*Project Duration: 2000; Total UNDP Funding US \$ 33,204*
    - Poverty Strategies Initiative: Household Income and Expenditure Survey [HIES]  
*Project Duration: 2000-2001; Total UNDP Funding US \$ 150,000*
  - **Regional Environment Programme [SPREP]**
    - RAS/91/G31: South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme [SPBCP]  
*Project Duration: 1993-2001; Total Regional Funding US \$ 10.07 million*  
*GEF/UNDP= \$6,272,217; AusAID= \$3,794,897*
  - **Other UN System Assistance:** Other organizations in the UN system, which have supported Tokelau in various ways, include: the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Health Organization (WHO), and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Sometimes with financial support from donors. Organizations like the Food and Agricultural organization (FAO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) will include Tokelau in some of its programming, even though it is not a member country of either of these organizations.

□ **NZODA Programmes of Assistance [Total 2001/02 Tokelau Assistance NZD \$ 7.5 million]**

- Ongoing Support for Self-Government  
*Project Duration: annual levels subject to ministerial approval*  
*Forecast Funding 2001/02: NZD \$ 4,500,000*
- Education and Training Study Awards  
*Project Duration: approved annually*  
*Forecast Funding 2001/02: NZD \$ 208,000*
- New Education Initiatives  
*Project Duration: approved annually*  
*Forecast Funding 2001/02: NZD \$ 200,000*
- VSA Teachers Allowances  
*Project Duration: approved annually*  
*Forecast Funding 2001/02: NZD \$ 30,000*
- Health Sector Support  
*Project Duration: approved annually*  
*Forecast Funding 2001/02: NZD \$ 300,000*
- Health Sector Support Mid Term Review  
*Project Duration: consultancy opportunity*  
*Forecast Funding 2001/02: NZD \$ 20,000*
- Infrastructure –Tokelau Power Supply  
*Project Duration: approved annually*  
*Forecast Funding 2001/02: NZD \$ 400,000*
- Meteorological Services Department  
*Project Duration: Funding approved*  
*Forecast Funding 2001/02: NZD \$ 30,000*
- Maintenance for Schools, Hospitals and Government Buildings  
*Project Duration: Funding approved*  
*Forecast Funding 2001/02: NZD \$ 567,000*
- Infrastructure Support  
*Project Duration: approved annually*  
*Forecast Funding 2001/02: NZD \$ 130,000*
- Good Governance-Modern House of Tokelau Project  
*Project Duration: approved annually*  
*Forecast Funding 2001/02: NZD \$ 900,000*
- Financial Management and Technical Advice  
*Project Duration: approved annually*  
*Forecast Funding 2001/02: NZD \$ 50,000*
- Trust Fund  
*Project Duration: consultancy opportunity*  
*Forecast Funding 2001/02: NZD \$ 55,000*
- Economic Development-Enterprise Development  
*Project Duration: consultancy opportunity*  
*Forecast Funding 2001/02: NZD \$ 50,000*
- Gender and Development  
*Project Duration: approved annually*  
*Forecast Funding 2001/02: NZD \$ 30,000*

□ **Other Multilateral Donors and Regional Assistance:** Additional assistance to Tokelau is also provided by the following agencies on occasion:

- Australian Aid (AusAid);
- South Pacific Environment Programme (SPREP);
  - Composition Toilets
  - Environment Education
  - Nukunonu Pigsty Project
  - Environmental Health
  - Personnel Training
  - Waste Management
  - SPBCP: Tokelau Conservation Area
- Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC);
  - Screen Printing Project
  - Pest Management Programme
- Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA);
  - Boat Building

- Fish Aggregating Devices [FADS]
- Statistical Data Collection
- University of the South Pacific (USP);
- South Pacific Cultures Fund, primarily in the area of humanitarian aid and relief, human resource development, and health.

## **1B. Institutional Framework:**

### **Government: Legal and Institutional Framework**

**New Zealand relationship with Tokelau:** The law-making power for Tokelau ultimately rests with the New Zealand Parliament. It is delegated to the Governor-General and to each of the Village Councils. The administrative authority is also with the Governor General and exercised through the Minister of Foreign Relations and Trade of New Zealand who sets policy at the political level for Tokelau. The Administrator of Tokelau is in turn responsible to the Minister of External Relations and Trade.

International treaties applicable to Tokelau are all post-1948 and signed by New Zealand, which holds the treaty-making power. Those that relate to sea boundaries and sea resources of states as well as to marine pollution control help to provide some control on foreign fishing activities and on marine pollution beyond Tokelau's shores.

**The General Fono and the Council of Faipule:** As the supreme national body of Tokelau, the General Fono, now some 30 years old, consists of nine representatives from each of the atolls elected by members of the three Council of Elders (also known as *Taupulega* or Village Councils). It meets twice a year to decide matters that affect the respective communities, including those related to budget and finance. It also decides on policy matters with respect to Tokelau's relationship with New Zealand. The Faipule of each Village Council sits as village representative on the Council of Faipule. In 1994 changes were made to establish the Council of Faipule as the on-going executive body when the General Fono is not in session. The Council of Faipule equates with Cabinet and on a rotating basis one of the three Faipule serves as Ulu or Head of the Council.

The Office of the Council of Faipule serves government by developing drafts of the Constitution and laws, archiving legislation, overseeing programs including budget planning, foreign relations, and servicing the General Fono sub-committees, the *nuku*, the *taupulega*, and the government departments including the liaison office (TALO) in Apia. Integrating of Traditional Village Structures and Organizations into a National Framework.

**Implementation & Decision Making:** Tokelau's position on self-determination has followed a number of key changes. In April 1994 the Tokelau Public Service (TPS), previously based in Apia, Western Samoa, was relocated to Tokelau, leaving behind only a small Liaison Office. A year earlier, 1993, it had assumed the administrative powers of the New Zealand State Service Commissioner with respect to Tokelau. Another major step was taken in August 1996, when the Tokelau Amendment Act came into force. The act conferred on the General Fono the power to make rules for Tokelau, including the power to impose taxes and to declare public holidays. The endorsement of the Administrator of Tokelau, however, would still be required. The development of the constitution is continuing. Since 1994, there has been a shift in decision-making powers from New Zealand to Tokelau, a relocation of Tokelau's administrative offices from Apia to Tokelau, the completion of a satellite-based telecommunications system, and a nearly completed draft constitution. All of these changes have taken place within the span of the last 5 years. These efforts are aimed at improving living standards, education and health, instituting principles and practices of good governance, development of the economy and structuring broad-based participation into local and national decision-making processes [see Fig. 2]. The framework for the Tokelau Government and its electoral process as of January 2002 stands as follows:

**The Modern House of Tokelau Transition Team:** The General Fono, at its meeting of 29 June 2000, approved the Modern House Project and the establishment of a Transition Team. To oversee the work of the Transition Team a Joint Committee, to comprise of the Council of Faipule, the TPS Commissioner, and the Administrator was agreed in principle. Subsequently it was considered important to include the Pulenuku's in the Committee.

The Modern House of Tokelau, in summary, is to provide Tokelau with a governance structure for the future that is based on Tokelau's cultural context. The work is proceeding on the basis that improvements in service and benefits will come from the Modern House Project. The modern house idea involves:

- Building and developing the future governance structure around the village founded on the traditional authority of the Village Council (Taupulega);
- Integrating traditional decision making processes with modern advice and support, thereby allowing quality decisions to meet the modern needs of Tokelau;
- Re-establishing the village as the focus of social and economic activities;
- Transferring appropriate functions from national level management to village level management; and
- Consolidating functions that can be more effectively carried out at the national level.

The Modern House of Tokelau Transition Team is comprised of thirteen key members from various government departments from all three atolls. The transition membership is as follows:

Aleki Silao: Acting Manager, Modern House of Tokelau.

Koli Kalolo: Team Leader, Atafu Modern House Project.

Casimilo Perez: Director of Health, Nukunonu/Acting Village General Manager.

Loimata Iupati: Director of Education, Atafu.

Ake Puka: Director of Finance, Talo, Apia.

Zak Patelesio: Director of Support Services and Transport Talo, Apia.

Beulah Wong Kee: Finance Advisor and Trainer, Talo, Apia.

Hina Puka: Policy and External Relations Specialist, Nukunonu.

Falani Aukuso: Director, Office of the Council of Faipule [OCOF], Atafu.

Mose Pelasio: OCOF Policy Advisory, Fakaofu.

Makalio Ioane: Support Services and Transport, Talo, Apia.

Afega Galualofa: OCOF Policy Advisory, Fakaofu.

Orita Nu Haki: Atafu.

**Administrator:** Is a New Zealand representative whom sits in on the General Fono for the purpose of receiving the national budgetary requirements for Tokelau and the acceptance of new proposal requests to the New Zealand Government. At present the Administrator is an appointee of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade in New Zealand.

"The formal responsibility is "administration of the executive government of Tokelau" (see Tokelau Administration Regulations 1993). The practical responsibility takes account of reality that government in Tokelau, culturally/historically, is village centered, that anything beyond that (i.e. the area of NZ's responsibility) has not impinged on everyday life in Tokelau, that accordingly NZ's administration has never been managed on a resident basis, that in contemporary times (i.e. last decade) Tokelau has seen need for its own sake to come together as one in order to manage more effectively interests that are common to the three atolls, that this has required Tokelau to establish its own national governing arrangements, that in turn this has created the opportunity to resolve issues of village governance and administration that are a consequence of policies pursued re public services over some three decades, and that thanks to all of these things, it has become practicable to address issues surrounding Tokelau's status as a non-self-governing territory in terms of Article 73 of the United Nations Charter.

The role of the Administrator has evolved considerably over this decade, in a way that has enabled the Administrator to operate in the Tokelau system as well as the New Zealand one. This reflects, further, the closeness of the association that Tokelau has forged with New Zealand, including common citizenship, and the clear wish of Tokelauans to ensure that this closeness is reflected in whatever arrangements are agreed between the two governments to formalize the relationship, taking account of Tokelau's on-going constitutional evolution. Those arrangements and that evolution stand to bring to an end the office of Administrator (at a date which presently cannot be determined). At the same time, just



as an atypical decolonisation context has shaped the Administrator's role to date in a "one-off" way, so too can the experience of the office help in establishing the basis upon which Tokelau and New Zealand will manage their relationship into the longer-term."

Mr. Lindsay Watt  
The Administrator for Tokelau  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand  
January 28, 2002

**General Fono:** Overall decision making body (Tokelau Parliament) for all of Tokelau. As of January 2002 the Group is comprised of a set number of representatives from each atoll as follows: Atafu=8 members; Nukunonu=6; and Fakaofu=7. The number of representatives is based on the total village population (e.g. Atafu= 595; Nukunonu= 365; Fakaofu=464 *De facto* as of Oct. 2001). Each village group's representation will have at least two *Toeaina* (village elders); one *Fatupaepae* (women's group); and the remaining members decided by each village's *Taupulega* (Council of Elders).

**COF:** Council of Faipule made up of the three elected representatives (i.e. member of parliament) from each village, which is designated as the decision makers in between the general fono. In essence the Tokelau Government of the day.

**ULU:** The titular head of the COF whom is expected to represent the Government of Tokelau in matters arising overseas, particularly those which are non-specific to Ministerial matters. The Ulu title alternates amongst the three duly elected *Faipule* on an annual basis.

**Taupulega (Village Council)**

The core of the community on each atoll is the Council of Elders also known as the *Taupulega* or Village Council. This body is generally comprised of the representatives of extended families and is primarily concerned with village matters. The Council is responsible for decisions on village developments and promulgating rules for the welfare and peace of the community. Every three years a council selects from it members a *Faipule* to sit on the Council of Faipule.

The Tokelau Village Incorporation Regulations came into force in 1986 giving official legal recognition to the villages and their three customary officials: the *Faipule* (Atoll Representative), the *Pulenuku* (Mayor), and the *Failautuhi* (Clerk). With this legal identity, Village Councils have comprehensive legislative power to make and enforce rules in their communities. They can impose charges and taxes of various kinds and prescribe penalties for non-compliance.

This rulemaking power at the village level is limited by rules that would not be contrary to a treaty obligation of Tokelau, an Act of Parliament or any regulation already in force in Tokelau. The Tokelau Emergency Regulations, approved by the Councils of Elders in 1986, is such an example. It provides a clear legal basis for intervening in the lives of individuals or matters affecting the property of individuals where there is a serious threat to the environment of Tokelau or where an emergency or sudden disaster endangers life or property on an island of Tokelau.

Village rules vary with the community. Some have developed rules that are more aligned with customary practices while others have made rules of a more contemporary nature. In general the penalties set are relatively light, with the maximum limit set at \$150. Village rules cover a broad range of issues ranging from resource use and management to health and safety. Nukunonu's Rule 5 limits the export of clams to 15 pounds per family per trip and applies a levy of \$1 per pound of clams exported. Non-compliance makes the offender liable to forfeiting the clams and a fine not exceeding \$100.

The integration of the *Taupulega* and other village bodies into national development planning and service delivery is the centerpiece of the new reforms taking place. This approach requires that the Council of Faipule take a leading role in the processes of government while Village Councils, in particular, are given the latitude to provide for their communities. The move has significant ramifications on institutions like the Tokelau Public Service (TPS), the major employer for the country.

Villages are assuming more responsibilities for service provision and, for the first time, are being required to produce plans to justify resource allocation with an emphasis on monitoring achievements against planned targets. Financial cutbacks to keep the country within budget are a new experience for many. Further emphasis is being placed on generating self-help activities at the village level with the

objective of raising living standards. For example, people in Nukunonu are able to work a normal four-day week and utilize their Fridays to plant coconuts for copra production as well as to engage in other individual productive endeavors.

**Taupulega:** [Council of Elders]=the overall decision-making body for each individual village. Each village has its own unique criteria for membership in the council. Fakaofu=any male over the age of 60 years with no limit in numbers; Nukunonu=limited to a single representative from each of the 34 main families (but can be more or less) in the village and can be male or female of at least 18 years of age or older; Atafu= limited to a single representative from each of the 27 main families (but can be more) in the village and can be male or female of at least 18 years of age or older.

**Law Commissioner:** An individual appointed by and responsible to each village *Taupulega*. Responsible for keeping the civil law and administer fines other than that imposed by the village *Taupulega*.

**Politics:** Not surprisingly, electoral practices vary from atoll to atoll, reflecting historical preferences and patterns. In Fakaofu and Nukunonu, the *Taupulega* approves the slate of candidates while in Atafu anyone can run. The Fakaofu *Taupulega* is comprised of the male elders while the Atafu and Nukunonu *Taupulega* are comprised of the elders and family heads.

Along with the transition process towards self-government, there is a trend towards electing younger *Faipule* with overseas education and experience. For the first time in Tokelau, all the *Faipule* are under 55 years of age. An example is Kuresa Nasau, the current Ulu of Tokelau. Kuresa was born on Swains Island, educated in American Samoa and worked in Hawaii before returning with his family to his home island of Atafu.

**Matai:** An elected member of a land holding family who has been chosen to represent the extended family in all cultural and village matters.

**Faipule:** Elected representative (i.e. member of parliament) for each village to serve in the *Council of Faipule* and answer to the General Fono for a three-year term. Various criteria apply between each village as to who can run for and become a *Faipule*. For example, in Atafu any man or women over the age of 18 can run as a candidate. In Nukunonu candidates can be of any sex or age above 18 but must be a member of the *Taupulega*. In Fakaofu a candidate must be a member of the *Taupulega* or a *Matai* and nominated by the *Taupulega* and/or a *Matai* of the village. The three *Faipule* also hold a pre-established ministerial duty and responsibility for the national government as follows:

**Atafu=** Agriculture/Fisheries, Natural Resources, Environment, Meteorology, Education

**Nukunonu=** Finance, Health

**Fakaofu=** Telecommunications, Transportation

**Pulenuku:** The village mayor responsible for the implementation of the village work programme designated by the village *Taupulega*.

The Election Process: *to be filled in*

### **The Tokelau Public Service (TPS)**

The Tokelau Public Service was established in the 1970s under New Zealand's State Service Commission and based in Apia, Western Samoa. In 1993, the Commissioner's decision-making powers were transferred to the TPS. The following year, the TPS office was moved from Apia to Tokelau to allow greater flexibility to institute reforms in accordance with Tokelau's changing needs and circumstances. The TPS departments are now distributed over the three atolls and include the following: Education; Support Services and Finance; Public Works; Transport; Communication, Youth & Sport; Natural Resources & Environment; Office of the Council of *Faipule*; and Health.

In 1996, the paid labour force numbered 486 people (330 men and 156 women). Of that number, 178 (36%) were paid salaried employees of the TPS (105 men and 73 women) mostly in the area of professional and technical people (37%) and trades-persons (17%). Concern for its size, given budgetary constraints, has resulted in efforts to streamline the workforce and increase accountability. In 1996, a review was done of the organization for the purpose of identifying areas currently undertaken

by the TPS that could better be performed by Village Councils (Feleti Lopa and Casimilo Perez, "Review of the Tokelau Public Service," May-June, 1996). The review also looked at the appropriateness of the TPS structure, staff organization and the effectiveness of the support role provided to the General Fono and the Council of Faipule.

Among the recommendations of the review were moving certain functions out of the service to the Village Councils (e.g. maintenance, garbage collection, coconut replanting, youth and sports). Other areas were to remain as a national projects such as communications (Teletok), Shipping (Vakatok), and electrical power generation (Powertok) or as joint national and local cooperative effort (rat control, home gardening and fisheries). Treasury, the national hospital, registration, external relations, and police services were also to remain with the TPS. Departments would then exist to maintain formal co-ordination linkages between the villages and relevant external entities as well as to monitor the work standards in all three atolls. They would also serve in an advisory capacity to the General Fono and the Council of Faipule.

More recently a document known as the "Review of the Framework for NZODA to Tokelau" (April 1998) was prepared by C. J. Vandersyp, Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop and Tioni Vulu, which outlines how the reforms to the TPS would take place. In June 1998, the Tokelau Council of Faipule presented the plan through a process of consultation with the island councils, traditional village bodies and the NGO's. Community-wide support was expressed for the principles outlined in the NZODA document, with the understanding that many of the details of implementation needed to be worked out later.

**TEC:** Tokelau Employment Commissioners: An appointed official from each village selected by the respective *Taupulega* (Council of Elders). The appointee is for a three-year term as in the case of the other elected officials yet the appointment is meant to be staggered apart a year or more from the normal elections as to avoid any direct clashes. Each Commissioner is responsible to the General Fono and/or COF for the implementation of programmes involving the Tokelau Public Service (TPS). The commissioners are normally for a three-year period but are reviewed annually by each *Taupulega*.

**Public Safety:** The Police force was established to service village officials and the Village Councils, and to maintain order. Due to the changes taking place in Tokelau, the enforcement of new and existing laws at the national level is of high priority. Recommendations have been made to government to establish a national law enforcement group to enforce and monitor these laws. Such a group should be kept to a minimum and remain within the TPS. However, they should be seen as an integral part of the village system incorporating into their job description village requirements and responsibilities. Further training of the police force is needed to upgrade their skills and their understanding of the laws they will need to enforce.

Fortunately for Tokelau, the traditional forms of keeping order and discipline are still in place. The head of each family is responsible for seeing that family members obey village rules. Disciplinary action is taken by the *Taupulega*, with some community members still being called to the disciplinary mat, the *takapau*.

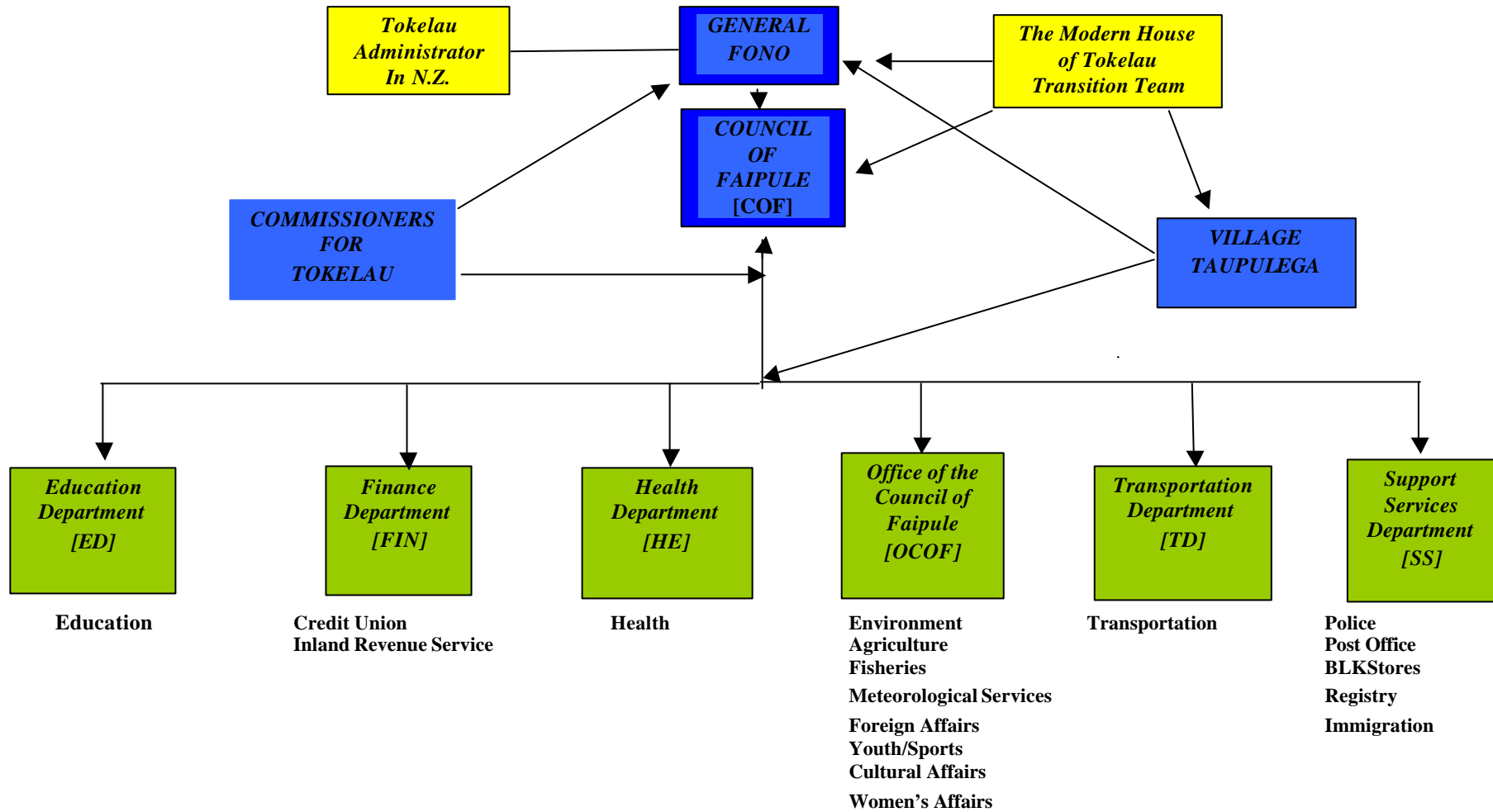
**Judiciary:** Lay judicial officers (also known as commissioners) have been established in each community and have jurisdiction in any offence where the maximum penalty does not exceed a fine of \$1,000 or imprisonment for one year. Commissioners can impose a maximum penalty for offences of up to \$150 or a term of imprisonment not greater than three months. However, as there are no prisons in Tokelau and no system of incarceration, penalties are primarily in terms of fines, which are typically very small. Traditional penalties such as reprimands and community service are also employed. There have not been any cases of disputes being tried before the High Court of New Zealand acting as a High Court for Tokelau as there is strong community desire for Tokelau to handle its own affairs.

**Infrastructure:** Since 1990, there have been some major capital investments to upgrade infrastructure particularly with respect to shipping and communications, which were placed under the Department of Communications and Transport. These developments, although very necessary, have been costly and may actually result in an increase rather than a decrease in Tokelau's reliance on external assistance for maintenance, replacement and expansion.

New Zealand has primarily focused its efforts on the development of the Tokelau administration and infrastructure projects. In 1994/95 it provided budgetary support for the relocation of the Tokelau administration from Apia to Tokelau, as well as for shipping and water tanks. In the same year, New Zealand, UNDP, the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and the Tokelau government collaborated to establish a modern satellite-based telecommunication service.



**FIG. 2: DECISION MAKING/IMPLEMENTATION *ORGANOGRAM* TOKELAU 2002**



**Legislative and Policy Platforms:** The Village Council of each atoll retains the power to regulate the use of the land, including private land, for ‘gathering’ through an allocation system, which covers all lands in the atolls. This system sometimes extends to sections of the atoll reefs for fishing. There is not yet, however, a general policy covering sustainable human development concerns such as gender equity, youth empowerment, and productivity to support and complement other related initiatives.

The “Draft” of the *Equitable and Sustainable Human Development Situation Analysis for TOKELAU* has documented the many ways in which Tokelau has expressed its commitment to sustainable human development issues and is in many ways the basis of this report. Similarly, with respect to the environment, there is no general legislation with a primarily environmental purpose. There are, however, a number of official documents, which articulate a range of strategies to enhance the quality of life and the environment. Two of the key documents include the Tokelau Country Report for UNCED of August 1991 and the Tokelau Environmental Management Strategy (TEMS) of January 1992. Both are reviewed and discussed in this report.

- **Cooperation & Participation:** The Earth Summit gave the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) the leading role for capacity building within the UN development system. UNDP responded with Capacity 21, a broad plan of action to help developing countries formulate economic, social and environmental goals, plans, programmes and policies that lead to sustainable development. It is focusing its resources to meet the objectives of poverty elimination, creation of jobs and sustainable livelihoods, the advancement of women, the protection and regeneration of the environment and good governance. The last objective, good governance, is considered the necessary underpinning for the other objectives.

Other organizations in the UN system, which support Tokelau in various ways, include the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Health Organization (WHO), and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNCF), sometimes with financial support from donors. Organizations like the Food and Agricultural organization (FAO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) will include Tokelau in some of its programming, even though it is not a member country of either of these organizations.

New Zealand Official Development Assistance (NZODA): A key focus for New Zealand assistance since the UNCED conference in 1992 has been to support a number of environmental and sustainable development initiatives in response to specific bilateral and regional requests. One of the main themes emerging for NZODA in its analysis of a response to global environmental issues in the South Pacific is the need for capacity building. This theme is central in its strategy to focus on five main sectors: environmental management, biodiversity and resource management, climate change, waste management, and the phase-out of ozone depleting substances.

The guiding principles in NZODA’s Policy Framework are on capacity building, sustainability, reducing poverty, participation, and partner responsibility. It’s Policy Statement on Development and the Environment issued in 1990 specifically addresses environmentally sustainable development and the need to “cooperate with developing countries to strengthen their capacity to anticipate, identify, assess and resolve issues of environmental protection, natural resource management, and conservation”. NZODA supports the work of the South Pacific Regional Development Program (SPREP) and complements the activities of other donors, sharing resources as appropriate, to support sustainable human development initiatives. In addition, it is the entity, which provides most of Tokelau’s budgetary assistance through Tokelau’s relationship with New Zealand as a Non-Self-Governing Territory

**1C. Capacity Building:** Skills gaps are predominately in areas where modern methods or skills are required particularly in the following critical areas:

- Governance skills;
- Policy analysis and advice;
- Management – especially planning, project management and financial management;
- Enterprise development;
- Communications, especially writing skills for policy, planning and management.

In addition, villages have identified the need for training in some traditional and technical areas, and in relation to community and family development skills.

*Key areas for capacity building*

The capacity building programme outlined below aims to equip Tokelau to continue its development and to meet the challenges it has committed itself to in improving decision-making and the quality of services.

Education and Training: *Providing good governance*

- Support for decision-makers
- Training for policy advisers
- Support services/processes for good governance

*Improving quality of services*

- General Management
- Project Management
- Planning
- People management
- Customer focused services
- Financial management

*Creating new enterprises*

- Developing traditional skills – fishing
- Developing traditional skills – handicrafts

Most of the proposals in this area will be developed from the report being prepared by Leota Sio the Director of the Samoa Small Business Centre.

*Improving communications skills*

*Developing stronger communities*

- NGO development
- Traditions, language and culture of Tokelau
- Living skills programmes

*Improving other support services*

- Information Technology
- Transport
- Telecommunications

*Individual needs of Tokelau Public Service staff*

Needs identified from the questionnaires will followed up through the above programmes and Tokelau Public Service (TPS) managers.

*Village needs*

The specific needs of each village will be followed up through village training programmes using financial support, where necessary, from the fund established by the Joint Committee.

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## CHAPTER 2: CLIMATE CHANGE

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**REVIEW COMPONENT:** *Climate and Weather:* The country's climate is tropical and marine being located in the easterly trade wind zone. Tokelau has a mean annual temperature of 28<sup>0</sup> C and a mean annual rainfall of 280 cm. There is a marked seasonality in rainfall incidence, with the 6 months between October and March accounting for approximately 60% of the total annual rainfall with December and January accounting for 25% of the annual total.

Tokelauans have been concerned about the impacts of climate change. The elders have observed that tides are becoming more extreme and air temperatures hotter. The extensive exposure of reefs is a new phenomenon, and storms are more frequent and severe. If the worst-case greenhouse scenarios apply, there is concern that rising sea levels resulting from climate change may force resettlement. Such a drastic upheaval may result in a loss of Tokelauan identity and cultural heritage. Some contingency planning is needed in this regard, with on-going assistance from the international community in providing relevant and er an30 -12 TD 5 TD 0.1636 Tc -0.3511 T33275 TD(t have 8n co) Tj 1 -12 TD 5 T7 Tc 0 Tw (-) Tj



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### CHAPTER 3: NATURAL and ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTERS

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**REVIEW COMPONENT:** A small country like Tokelau will suffer proportionately more damage from a single natural disaster than a larger country, which can absorb more due to the economies of scale. Tropical storms and cyclones with accompanying storm waves are a continuing concern for Tokelau, especially during the hurricane season. Droughts are also a problem. While estimates of sea-level rises are disputed among climatologists and have been revised downward in the past few decades, it appears that the frequency of storms (cyclones) and the rises in air and sea temperatures are more of a direct result of the effects of global warming. Of the three major cyclones that have hit Tokelau in the past ten years, Tusi (1987), Ofa (1990) and Val (1991), Ofa was the worst in living memory.

Storms and cyclones, depending upon their severity, can cause severe coastal erosion, damage fresh water lenses, increase soil salinity, destroy a significant proportion of agricultural and forest resources in the short term and decrease productivity of crops like coconuts, breadfruits and pandanus in the long term. Furthermore, disruptions to fresh water lenses can further adversely modify the marine ecology, biodiversity, and the fishing potential of adjacent lagoons and reefs.

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## CHAPTER 4: MANAGEMENT OF WASTES

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**REVIEW COMPONENT:** A little more than half of Tokelau households build ‘sea latrines’ over the lagoon behind their houses (51%); others have flush toilets (40%) or pour-flush toilets (9%). By atoll, most ‘sea latrines’ are found on Atafu and Nukunonu. Fakaofu households use mostly flush or pour-flush toilets installed inside their dwellings. Disposal of sewage from households with pour or flush toilets is generally by septic tanks. There is currently no adequate drainage system in place, so that disinfectants, solvents, bleaches and detergents are discharged into the ground.

A recent development initiative involves the introducing of composting toilets, which help to reduce pollution, eliminate the human waste problem, and create a resource. The project is being trialed by Eco-Tour Samoa with funding from SPREP. It is being implemented through the local Village Council. The first four toilets were installed in April 1998 on Nukunonu at the Women’s Committee house, public school and two other private residences.

Other composting toilets will soon be installed on the other two atolls on a trial basis for a year. The benefits of composting toilets include the conservation of precious rainwater, the production of much-needed fertilizer, and prevention of further seepage of sewage into the lagoons, which has contributed to the problems of nitrification. These toilets are still quite expensive. The model currently being tried costs NZ\$2,500. However, a less expensive model is currently being considered that costs around NZ\$1,400 with a three year warranty on defective parts.

**Waste Disposal:** With limited land area and increases in the quantity of both recyclable and non-recyclable garbage, Tokelau is faced with a problem of how to best manage it. Currently, there is an attempt to bury garbage or dump it in secluded areas on selected islets. Some material is being composted, used for animal feed or burned. Other wastes are dumped into the receding tide only to end up back on shore. Empty beer bottles are usually returned to Apia; however, one type, which is not accepted for recycling, is often dumped into the ocean.

There are no adequate facilities for the disposal of toxic wastes, batteries, hospital and other chemical wastes. These are usually buried, with the risk of their eventual leakage into the lagoon. Of all the atolls, Nukunonu has the best-organized garbage collection system in which the majority of the households participate (98.6%). For Nukunonu, it has served to keep the living environment free of garbage and minimized that which is thrown into the ocean.

**Table 17: Means of waste disposal as percentage of all households**

	Atafu	Fakaofu	Nukunonu	Tokelau
Burning	35.9	47.1	16.4	34.1
Burying	45.7	0.0	20.5	22.6
Lagoon/ocean	6.5	19.5	0.0	9.1
Public collection	44.6	0.0	98.6	45.2
Animal food	17.4	80.5	90.4	60.3
Compost	58.7	63.2	72.6	64.3

Source: Andreas Demmke et.al. *Tokelau Population profile Based on 1996 Census: a Guide for Planners and policy Makers*. Noumea, SPC, 1998, p.46.

### 4A. Progress and Achievements

- **Programmes & Projects in Tokelau:** On Fakaofu a NGO named *Afeke* has taken responsibility for the collection and appropriate disposal of rubbish.

### 4B. Institutional Framework

- **Implementation & Decision Making** [Please refer to Section 1B]
- **Legislative and Policy Platforms:** Important legislation known as the Tokelau Health Regulations was introduced in 1987. This covered issues ranging from the practice of medicine to the approval processes for the building of sewage and waste disposal facilities. The Village Health Committee on every atoll consists of the *Pulenuku* (mayor), the medical officer, the executive officer, the village foreman and two members of the *Taupulega*. They

provide oversight of the siting, construction and alteration of any building. They also have a say over the types of construction materials used, water supply, sanitation facilities and any other building matters which may impact on health. The Committee has the mandate to disallow further construction work or have the building demolished if it does not meet the proper specifications. The Tokelau Health Regulations also places matters related to waste disposal with the *Pulenuku* and requires that a village work in consultation with the Director of Health to determine the appropriate types of sewage facilities and method for their construction.

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## CHAPTER 5: COASTAL and MARINE RESOURCES

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**REVIEW COMPONENT: Marine Resources:** It is generally recognized that Tokelau's greatest asset is in its natural marine resources. Tokelau's fisheries are made up of an inshore lagoon fishery, reef fishery and an abundant offshore pelagic fish and deep-ocean fishery. It has been reported that up to 55% of all animal protein consumed in the atolls is from reef, migratory, and shellfish (*UNDP unpublished report*).

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## CHAPTER 6: FRESHWATER RESOURCES

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**REVIEW COMPONENT:** Fresh water is very limited on all the atolls, although some is retained in lenses underlying a number of the larger islets. As there is no surface water, Tokelauans have been dependent on rainwater storage and wells tapping these 'freshwater' lenses. However, the lenses are thin and are affected by the rate of extraction. They are also vulnerable to natural influences of rainfall, tides, seepage and evapotranspiration. The intermixing of seawater with the freshwater lenses most recently caused by Cyclone Ofa has resulted in brackish ground water that is unfit for consumption. The continuing salination of the soil and groundwater with the storm over-wash could increase to the point where the atolls would no longer be able to support food production.

In addition to subsidizing housing, the Tokelau government also supports a program to increase the water catchment's capacity in all three communities. There are no large communal backup reservoirs, which can pose a problem in prolonged droughts. Due to the limited village land areas, more families have been constructing reservoirs into the foundations of their houses. In a 1991 survey, it was determined that only 25% of the water caught from roofs was actually being stored in existing reservoirs. Given average monthly rainfall, the existing roof catchment could provide an estimated 100 liters per person per day. However, the existing water tank capacity was only holding an average of 30 liters per person per day. More can be done to increase the overall supply of water by increasing the storage capacity. The quality of catchment water, however, is high, with 99% of the water recording bacterial counts well below the acceptable level

*Institutional Framework [Please refer to Section 1B]*

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## CHAPTER 7: LAND RESOURCES

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**REVIEW COMPONENT: Geography:** Tokelau is a small tropical country located in the central Pacific region between 8° and 10° latitudes and 171° and 173° west longitudes and just outside the South Pacific equatorial dry zone. The country consists of three small atolls aligned from the northwest to the southeast (Atafu, Nukunonu, and Fakaofu). The three atolls are comprised of a total of 127 islets (*motu*), which cover a total land area of only 12.7 sq. km. (arable land equaling approximately Atafu=223 ha; Nukunonu=546 ha; Fakaofu=290 ha. respectively). The islets range in size and number between each atoll (Atafu=42; Nukunonu=24; Fakaofu=61). The *motus* vary in length from 90m to 6km and in width from only a few metres to 200m. No point anywhere on any of the atolls reaches higher than 5m above sea level. The atolls are approximately 480 km. north of Samoa (the country's main shipping connection and port of usage) with each atoll being separated by an expanse of ocean [Fakaofu-Nukunonu = 38 nm/70.4 km; Nukunonu-Atafu = 59 nm/109.3 km.] The total area of the inner lagoons for the three atolls is estimated at 187 sq. km.

**Geology and Soils:** The atolls are composed of calcium carbonate reef, sands, and rock. The soils are generally characterized as being highly alkaline, highly porous, nutrient poor and as having low humus content with a high surface salinity. Soils within Tokelau are considered as one of the country's major restricting factors especially in relation to land-based agricultural development. Because of the nature of Tokelau's soils the country's current agricultural economy is limited to a subsistence level.

**Land Based and Agricultural Resources:** Cultivated food crops are generally limited to breadfruit (*Artocarpus altilis*), giant swamp taro 'pulaka' (*Cyrtosperma chamissonis*); taro palagi (*Xanthosoma*

*sagittifolium*); giant taro (*Alocasia macrorrhizos*); bananas (*Mus sp.* [2 varieties]); papaya (*Carica papaya*); pandanus ‘fala’ (*Pandanus ordoratissimus*); pumpkin; and coconut (*Cocos nucifera*).

***Institutional Framework [Please refer to Section 1B]***

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## **CHAPTER 8: ENERGY RESOURCES**

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**REVIEW COMPONENT:** The majority of Tokelauan households (86%) uses kerosene stoves for cooking and are connected to community generators (97%) for their main source of lighting. The increase in the numbers of dwellings over the years has a consequence with respect to space.

***Institutional Framework [Please refer to Section 1B]***

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## **CHAPTER 9: TOURISM RESOURCES**

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**REVIEW COMPONENT:** Few tourists visit Tokelau, perhaps only a handful in any given year, due mainly to the lack of convenient transport. However, ecotourism probably has some potential, due to the group’s remote location, its relatively undisturbed environment, particularly the marine environment, and its adherence to traditional values. More and more visitors are opting for a low-impact form of tourism, which involves learning about the culture and environment, and participating in programs and research that could enhance an eco-site destination. Some of the popular eco-tours internationally include the Elderhostel tour for the elderly and the Elderhostel Service Program for retirees who would pay to do a short-term service and learn about a culture or preserving the environment.

Geoff Hyde, then Tourism Development Advisor for Western Samoa, did an eco-tourism study for the Tokelau government. It stated that an eco-tourism package within the regular monthly boat schedules was a feasible option for Tokelau. One of study’s strong recommendations was to build a program that would especially appeal to tourists and tour operators due to its small scale, low impact on the environment and culture, and support for conservation principles and programs. It further recommended that education and interpretation is an integral part of it. Such a program needs a strong commitment by landowners, tour operators, and developers to manage sites for conservation purposes. As an initial target, Tokelau could start with 10 tourists per atoll per fortnight or 750 tourists per year. Small owner-operated hotels on each atoll could easily handle these tours.

**9A. Progress and Achievements:** Prior to European contact, Tokelauans traveled by canoe to and from quite distant neighboring islands. Canoe travel other than for fishing purposes is no longer practiced due to the convenience of modern shipping services. Tokelau lies about 480 km north of Apia, Samoa. It currently takes 30 to 36 hours for a vessel to travel from Apia to the first atoll of Fakaofu, and a round trip from Apia to the atolls takes about seven days if one day is spent at each of the islands. On the average, ships leave Apia for Tokelau once or twice a month. The high cost of travel and schedule delays, however, have put severe constraints on inter-island travel. Transportation is the largest line item in the government budget and the situation remains unsatisfactory.

Convenient, cost effective and regular inter-island ocean transport will continue to be a key priority for government. It is a very necessary component of developing the local economy and in reducing Tokelau’s remoteness relative to other countries. To help offset the costs of this heavily subsidized service, Tokelau is moving towards a ‘user pays’ approach managed through a corporate entity known as ‘VakaTok’.

Air travel has also been proposed for the country but for a number of reasons, these plans have been shelved. The reasons include: the limited land area, the adverse impact of construction on the surrounding environment and the high cost of building and maintaining the service.

There are, however, positive aspects to the country’s remote location that might even be viewed as an advantage rather than a disadvantage. These include the fact that the Tokelauan community will have to continue placing importance on sustainable utilization of its natural resources even while living a more westernized life-style. In that regard, distance and remoteness can serve as an impetus to put into place

additional conservation measures to protect and enhance these resources well into the future. Less frequent contact with the outside world also has an advantage when viewed from the perspective of maintaining cultural values, traditions and practices, pest management control and maintaining the atolls as a singularly special travel destination for ecotourists.

*Institutional Framework [Please refer to Section 1B]*

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## CHAPTER 10: BIODIVERSITY RESOURCES

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**REVIEW COMPONENT:** *Environmental Ecology and Biota:* The atolls themselves have a relatively species-poor ecosystem. The atolls have been described (by others) as being, generally low in both plant and animal diversity. Although this may be expected on such a remote and insular atoll environment, the further degradation and/or loss of the limited biodiversity is highly cautioned. Throughout the atolls biodiversity is highly valued by the Tokelauans and is currently a matter of concern to each atoll's village community. In Tokelau it is reported that there are only 67 species of vascular plants (including 16 "naturalized" weed and 13 introduced species). None of the islands (islets or motu) remain today with totally undisturbed vegetation. This is mainly the result of the country's limited land resources for agriculture activities. Coconut is now the predominant tree species on most of the islands with the under-story of the upper palm canopy comprising of native trees, shrubs, and fern species.

Perhaps the most significant ecological work ever carried out in Tokelau was that of Kazimierz Wodzicki dating back to late 60's (on rats and other vertebrates) and that of Wodzicki and Laird in 1970 (on birds and bird lore). The terrestrial fauna of Tokelau is mainly comprised of bird species with at least a total of 26 species listed all of which are non-endemic and several of which are migratory transients. In Tokelau it is reported that there are 15 species of sea birds, 8 species of shore birds, and 3 land species (Wodzicki, K. and Laird, M., 1970). The populations of locally breeding species (particularly Noddies, Terns and Pigeons) are also a matter of concern (SOE Tokelau, 1994). The Polynesian Rat (*Rattus exulans*) is reported as the only native terrestrial mammal apart from human beings and the other currently introduced domestic animals (e.g. cats only) and livestock (pigs and chickens). Wodzicki (1968), Harrison (1973), Bonin (1988), all confirmed the exclusive presence of the Polynesian Rat in their earlier surveys. As far back as 32 years ago again Wodzicki (1968) warned of the need for a strengthened quarantine process and measures to avoid the accidental introduction of other pests particularly that of other rodent pests (e.g. *R. rattus*, *R. norvegicus*, *Mus musculus*). Wodzicki, 1967 correctly warned that *R. rattus* could easily arrive to the Tokelau shores via visiting "rat-infested" ships (see also interesting stories about the *kimoa*). Wodzicki's report also cited a comment from a "reliable source" that a mouse (presumably *M. musculus*) was seen in one of the prefabricated houses as it was being assembled ashore. However, none of these possible invaders has been seen since.

*Environmental Assessment:* There has been no comprehensive assessment in recent years of the status of endangered species (plant or animal) on the atolls. However, it is generally recognized that several species are in "decline". Of particular concern are several timber species 'Kanava' (*Cordia subcordata*); 'Puapua' (*Guetarda speciosa*); 'Puka' (*Pisonia grandis*); and 'Fala' (*Pandanus sp. var. 'Kiekie'*). A significant reduction in some of these species was the result of over harvesting and exploitation for local building and handicraft materials; however, the over-zealous clearing for coconut replanting schemes has also been cited as a factor for the depletion of some of the atolls forest areas in the past.

*Institutional Framework [Please refer to Section 1B]*

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## **CHAPTER 11: NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS and ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY**

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### ***REVIEW COMPONENT: Modern House of Tokelau***

The management and operating structures project is one of several under the auspices of the MHT. Work under the MHT is proceeding on the basis that improvements in service and benefits will come from the project, which currently involves:

- Building and developing the future governance structure around the village founded on the traditional authority of the Taupulega
- Integrating traditional decision-making processes with modern advice and support thereby allowing quality decisions to meet the modern needs of Tokelau
- Re-establishing the village as the focus of social and economic activities
- Transferring appropriate functions from national level management to village management
- Consolidating functions that can be more effectively carried out at national level
- Building capability and capacity to support Tokelau's developments.

The concept of the MHT has been in existence for some time. The "Way Forward" document developed in Apia in August 2000 formed the basis for subsequent discussion about the governance framework for Tokelau.

The framework was supported by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and representatives of the New Zealand Overseas Aid Division (NZODA). The Joint Committee subsequently took it to each village in September. The elders generally gave their endorsement to the direction of the MHT and expressed a strong desire for its prompt progression.

#### **Allocation of functions between village and nation**

An important aspect of the framework is a review of the division of functions between the village and nation in line with the objectives of the Modern House. A draft division was developed at the August meeting and was subsequently reviewed at the November meetings of the Joint Committee and the General Fono. The Transition Team has since done further work. The team's recommended amendments to the allocations form part of this report.

#### **Management and operating structures**

Villages need the ability to progress the MHT by making decisions about the management and operating structures they wish to adopt, as determined by their Taupulega.

Structures at the national level also need to be developed on the basis of decisions about future allocation of functions. The third element is looking at how the two are best coordinated and integrated and how the limited resources of Tokelau are best utilized.

The Joint Committee has asked the Transition Team to develop structural options for it to consider and ideas to improve support services to the Taupulega, General Fono and Council of Faipule.

#### **Review of OCOF, TALO and the Apia Office**

Given developments under the MHT the TPS Commissioner planned reviews of two key departments, Finance and the Office of the Council of Faipule (OCOF). The review of the Department of Finance was completed in September. It was agreed that the review of OCOF should be considered in a wider context of village and national management and structures. Hence it is addressed in the sections on national structures and proposals to improve governance support.

***Institutional Framework [Please refer to Section 1B]***

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## **CHAPTER 12: REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS and TECHNICAL COOPERATION**

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### ***REVIEW COMPONENT:***

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## CHAPTER 13: TRANSPORT and COMMUNICATIONS

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**REVIEW COMPONENT:** Prior to European contact, Tokelauans traveled by canoe to and from quite distant neighboring islands. Canoe travel other than for fishing purposes is no longer practiced due to the convenience of modern shipping services. Tokelau lies about 480 km north of Apia, Samoa. It currently takes 30 to 36 hours for a vessel to travel from Apia to the first atoll of Fakaofu, and a round trip from Apia to the atolls takes about seven days if one day is spent at each of the islands. On the average, ships leave Apia for Tokelau once or twice a month. The high cost of travel and schedule delays, however, have put severe constraints on inter-island travel. Transportation is the largest line item in the government budget and the situation remains unsatisfactory.

Convenient, cost effective and regular inter-island ocean transport will continue to be a key priority for government. It is a very necessary component of developing the local economy and in reducing Tokelau's remoteness relative to other countries. To help offset the costs of this heavily subsidized service, Tokelau is moving towards a 'user pays' approach managed through a corporate entity known as 'VakaTok'. Communications are expensive NZD \$ 2.20/min. for internet/e-mail connections.

### 13A. Progress and Achievements:

#### Shipping

One of the most critical issues for the government is the provision of reliable and cost-effective inter-island transport. It is the largest line item in the government budget and on the average these ships cost the government about NZ\$60,000 per sailing. Given that the only revenues generated are from the fares of NZ\$35.00 per person or, at most, several thousand dollars per trip, the government ends up subsidizing about 90% of the total cost of each sailing.

The *M.V. Tutolu* is a 5,136-ton ship that can carry on the average 50 passengers. Its main function is to transport passengers and cargo between the three atolls, serve in any emergency evacuation to Apia, and transport needed supplies from Apia. It is, however, not allowed to take passengers internationally.

*Forum Tokelau* is a 5,136-ton ship that carries 60 deck passengers and 8 cabin passengers between Apia and Tokelau. The ship was procured in 1997 with funding from NZODA and is currently being managed by the Pacific Forum Line under an agreement with PFL, NZODA, and the government of Tokelau. In February 1998, Forum Tokelau underwent repairs in New Zealand at a cost of NZ\$500,000; however, under consideration is the option to sell the ship and seek an alternative means to provide shipping services. One possibility may involve modifying the Tutolu to take both passengers and supplies to and from Apia. Nothing, as yet, has been finalized.

In an effort generate more revenues for the shipping service; the government is planning to set up a shipping corporation (VakaTok) along the lines of Teletok, the Tokelau Telecommunications Corporation, which uses a user pay system. An interim board would be established comprised of all three Faipule, technical people and the Director of Transportation.

The lack of a proper wharf where ships can load has been an on-going concern for Tokelauans. Currently ships have to anchor off shore and unload their cargo into small boats or dinghies. Narrow channels have been blasted into the reef to allow the dinghies to pull up to piers. The situation is unsatisfactory, particularly in rough weather. There is the additional risk to the environment of accidents with oil drums, petrol and other fuel. Sometimes these barrels are off-loaded directly into the deep ocean and floated to shore. The Tokelau government is seeking a more permanent solution to the problem and has approached UNDP and other donors for assistance. Unfortunately, at this time, human capacity building rather than infrastructural projects tend to be the focus of donors.

#### Telecommunications

Reliable telecommunication services are essential to run the government from the atolls. Until recently there were two communications systems being used in Tokelau; one was the PEACESAT facility installed in each atoll to support the Public Service, while the other consisted of high frequency single side band radios (radiograms) for government and public use. Neither system was adequate for Tokelau in that they were unable to support the level of communications needed by the TPS. Furthermore, they were unreliable and provided no privacy as people could be overheard talking to one another.



With funding from the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade for the construction, UNDP for technical assistance and the Tokelau national budget, a more suitable system was recently constructed. To manage the service, Teletok, the Tokelau Telecommunications Corporation was established in 1996, as a 'user-pays' community owned, not-for-profit organization with the intention that it should operate in a financially sustainable manner. Later expansion of Teletok may include the development of a DAMA-Net system to allow for a direct satellite link between the three atolls of Tokelau and Samoa. Teletok has been experiencing difficulties, operating with an acute shortage of qualified Tokelau telecommunications staff, a high rate of turnover, difficulties obtaining spare parts, and the harsh environment for electronic equipment.

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## **CHAPTER 14: SCIENCE and TECHNOLOGY**

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### ***REVIEW COMPONENT:***

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## **CHAPTER 15: HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

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### ***REVIEW COMPONENT:***

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## **CHAPTER 16: IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING and REVIEW**

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***REVIEW COMPONENT:*** Critical to this report are a number of key reports which outline the status of sustainable development for Tokelau.

Schuster, Afa, May, 2001. Tokelau IT Review. Prepared for the Modern House of Tokelau. Reliant Media Solutions, Apia, Samoa. 38p.

The Modern House of Tokelau (Transition Team), March 2001. Management and Operating Structures for Public Services in Tokelau. 27p.

The Modern House of Tokelau (Transition Team), March 2001. Capacity Building Proposals for Tokelau. 39p.

Tolosa, F. 1994. Tokelau Environmental Management Strategy [TEMS] *Action Strategy for Strengthening Environmental Management and Sustainable Development* (Tokelau 2000). United Nations Development Programme [UNDP] and the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme [SPREP] Apia, Samoa. 56p.

UNDP, August 2001. Programme of Assistance to Samoa, Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau. and Regional Programme on Environment. Apia, Samoa. 16p.

UNDP, *Pacific Human Development Report: Putting People First*, Suva, Fiji July 1994

UNEP, 1999. Pacific Islands Environment Outlook. United Nations Environment Programme. Compiled by: Gerald Miles SPREP, Samoa. Chapman Boundford & Associates, London Anagram Editorial Services, Guildford Kay Hyman, London. 65p.

United Nations Resident Coordinator for Samoa, Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau. Annual Report 2000. Prepared by: The Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator. Apia, Samoa. 36p.

*Unpublished Report.* UNDP, 1999. Equitable and Sustainable Human Development Situational Analysis Tokelau. 66p.

South Pacific Regional Environment Programme [SPREP], June 1992. Country Report for UNCED Tokelau. *Drafted by:* Foa Tolosa, David Collins and Stella Humphries. Apia, Samoa. 57p.

**Capacity Building:** With the new satellite telecommunications link, a country as isolated as Tokelau can be linked to an extensive pool of knowledge, experience and expertise that could be very beneficial to its development efforts. In many Pacific countries, governments, individuals, companies and NGOs are utilizing advances in telecommunications systems for general information as well as for the promotion of their products and destinations. The sustainability of a community, a region and a planet is the challenge of the new millennium. It requires new visions of the possibilities and the commitment to think globally but act locally. That can only take place in the hands, minds, and hearts of the Tokelauans themselves.

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## **CHAPTER 17: THE FUTURE TOKELAU**

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### ***FORWARD COMPONENT***

#### **The National Context**

As major initiatives are being pursued at a global level for a more sustainable planet, the concept of village and community based living systems may have even more relevance today than in the past. Viewed in this light, it is not the size of the economy that is of importance, but the manner in which a community can provide a sustainable quality of life for its inhabitants while protecting and enhancing the natural environment and resource base.

Using the quality of life indicators as a yardstick may give Tokelau a more favorable sustainable human development rating overall compared to other larger economies in the world. However, no country in the Pacific, as yet, can serve as a true SHD model, although many initiatives have been taken within various sectors of Pacific Island nations in this regard (e.g. village based Eco-tourism and conservation). Tokelau, with its small size, its adherence to cultural values and dependence upon a sustaining resource base, has an opportunity to develop more fully along those lines. What is needed is a real commitment on the part of government, the community and other external organizations active in Tokelau.

Fortunately, there exists today a great deal of support, interest and information on the many ways SHD is being pursued elsewhere. Pioneering efforts are being taken by whole communities as large as cities to incorporate innovative approaches to self-sufficiency, self-reliance and renewable living systems as a way to reduce cost, reduce poverty, enhance the environment, promote recycling of wastes, increase productivity and generally improve the quality of life for people. Some of these communities have produced their own publications and utilize other forms of media to describe their experiences and to network with others.

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## IX. Reference Materials Used:

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### A. Electronic Media/Websites Used

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-*CDR*: 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development Pacific Region Preparations Supporting Documentation Includes: Agenda 21, past Pacific Regional Assessments and Submissions (1992-2001), National Assessment Guidelines, Outcomes of the preparatory process to date & other relevant information. 5.4 MB CD Provided by SPREP

-<http://www.earthsummit2002.org/>

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