

The following submission is by the Vice Chair of PICISOC Maureen Hilyard which outlines the reasoning for the development of a Small Island Developing States (SIDS) grouping within ICANN's At-large structure.

Will Tibben

.....

Thank you for the opportunity to attend ICANN Cartagena as a Fellow, and for enabling me to submit a proposal on behalf of the people of the Pacific and other small island states.

My name is Maureen Hilyard and I am the Vice Chair of the Pacific Chapter of the Internet Society (PICISOC). I attended my first ICANN meeting in Cartagena as an ICANN Fellow and appreciated being able to participate in the meeting along with other Chapter members of the Internet Society. PICISOC represents 22 unique self-governing Pacific Island states : American Samoa, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Northern Marianas, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Wallis & Futuna. These countries lie in an expanse of ocean that is of a size greater than that of some of the areas that have been assigned "geographic region" status within ICANN.

I have three points that I wish to raise regarding this discussion about regional representation.

1. ICANN uses UN Statistics that exclude some small island states from participating in ICANN and other similar meetings as members in their own right.
2. Small island states are usually 'lumped' together with larger countries and continents because of their proximity but with little consideration for their greatest barrier to development - their isolated situations within large expanses of ocean.
3. I would like to recommend that ICANN consider the creation of another region (or another special interest group) that represents the needs and concerns of small island states within the Pacific (and perhaps similar small island states currently assigned to other regions.)

## Discussion:

1. I realise that this discussion point may perhaps be more relevant to ICANN's Membership Implementation Task Force (where I note the Pacific is represented by three members from Australia)<sup>1</sup> but it is relevant to my later issues. The UN Statistics used by ICANN does not recognize some Pacific Island States in their own right, for example, the Cook Islands, Niue and the Tokelau Islands. These countries are unique in themselves and are self governing but have free association with and are considered protectorates of New Zealand. New Zealand has retained some responsibility for the external affairs of these countries so that our small island states are not full members of the United Nations (although we do participate in WHO, UNESCO and UNESCAP).

As a Cook Islander, I am unable to apply to attend ICANN and similar meetings because the list does not acknowledge my country, even though it is a developing nation with internet technology issues that differ greatly from the country which is supposed to represent us. New Zealand benefits from the funds generated from the use of expensive internet, landline and mobile technology in the Cook Islands due to its 60% NZ-owned Telecom monopoly. Even within the Cook Islands itself, the users have little say about the development of the internet in their own country.

Countries like the Cook Islands, Niue and the Tokelaus, would appreciate an application procedure to enable us to apply for Fellowships to participate in ICANN's decision-making process in our own right.

2. One of the major hindrances to the economic and technological development of many of the island states that PICISOC represents, is their isolation within large expanses of ocean. For countries that are bound to others by land, there is greater accessibility to the infrastructure required for the development of internet technology. The large expanse of water between countries and between islands within our countries creates a major barrier to internet development. In the attached appendix is a very brief overview of the islands within PICISOC's regional responsibility, describing the spread of the different countries over the Pacific region, emphasizing the extent of their isolation within this great expanse of the Pacific Ocean and explaining some administrative features which can impact the technological and internet development on each island.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.icann.org/en/committees/at-large/mitf.htm>

To summarise, the uniqueness of each of these islands is demonstrated by:

- The range in population - from 50 (Pitcairn) to seven million (Papua New Guinea)
  - The range from completely independent republics to countries that remain territories of large countries (eg United States, France and the UK)
  - Their internal administration by single government entities, to multiple provincial governments
  - The range in size and composition from one small island of 21 sq kms (Nauru) to a portion of a large land mass plus 30 groups of islands (Papua New Guinea)
  - Their basic income, from traditional subsistence to innovative sales of domain names (Tokelau)
3. During the meeting in Cartagena, the idea was raised about the difficulties of representation for small island states in the Pacific and the Caribbean. The issues described elsewhere in this paper were discussed at length, and it was proposed that our small island states be given some cognizance due to their uniqueness and their seemingly unrelated and insignificant needs and concerns when being associated with other more developed countries within the regions to which they have been assigned.

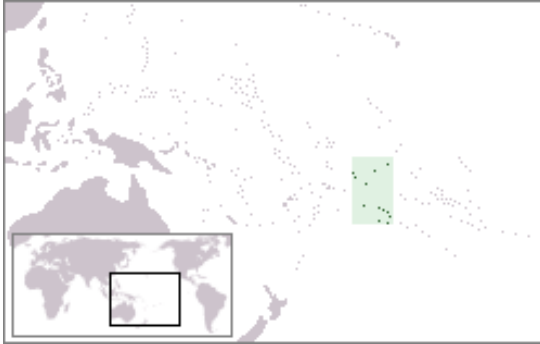
The Pacific islands are frequently grouped with Asia – within which it has no historical affiliation and where the needs are so different that the Pacific interests are often not considered when there is any representation required. If not with Asia, then the Pacific Islands are usually grouped with New Zealand or Australia, both countries being providers of Aid Funding to the Pacific region, often for basic needs so that representation in the area of technological or internet development is not considered in the broader scheme of things. With respect to the Cook Islands, as mentioned before, a NZ company returns 60% of profits paid for expensive telephone, mobile and internet charges by low income-earning locals, to New Zealand. There is a conflict of interest here.

Although until quite recently the APRALO Board had a representative from PICISOC (recently replaced by Pakistan), I believe that ill health developed soon after his appointment so that our members in the Pacific region missed out on important information about what was happening in ICANN. The lack of regular representation from the Pacific at ICANN meetings also resulted in a lack of understanding about ICANN's role in internet development but more importantly, how our PICISOC members might be able to contribute to its decision-making about internet development within our Pacific region and globally.

It is for this reason that I would like to recommend to this working group, that some special consideration be given to small island states in the Pacific region (and other regions if they wish) to be assigned their own “regional area” or be given “special interest” status so that during ICANN meetings they may be able to raise and discuss issues and concerns that are applicable to the technological and internet development of small island states globally.

## APPENDIX: MEMBER ISLAND STATES OF THE PACIFIC CHAPTER OF THE INTERNET SOCIETY

### The Cook Islands (.ck):



The fifteen islands of the Cook Islands lies within nearly 62 million sq kms of the (South) Pacific Ocean. We have a monopoly Telecom whose bottom line focuses development of the internet on the main island of Rarotonga in the Southern Group. Another major barrier to development is our small population (20,000 – 2006), half of whom are on Rarotonga.

**Niue (.nu):** is an island situated within the triangle formed by Tonga, Samoa and the Cook Islands. Its land area is 26 sq kms, and has a population of 1400 (2009). Wikipedia records that in 2003, it became the first “WIFI nation” - providing free wireless connection to internet users on the island. In 2008, the education system engaged in a One Laptop Per Child project so that all their school children were allocated an OLPC XO-1<sup>2</sup>.

**Tokelau Islands (.tk):** lies northwest of the Cook Islands. Consists of three atolls (each with their own administrative centre) with a combined land area of 10 sq kms, and a population of 14,000 (2009). According to US CIA statistics, Tokelau has the smallest economy of any country in the world. It is dependent on NZAid for health and education services. However, Tokelau has begun registering domain names under their ccTLD .tk<sup>3</sup> so that it can fund its own technological resources and development.

**Samoa (.ws):** is located west of the Cook Islands and north of Tonga. Became independent of NZ in 1962 and a member of the United Nations in 1976. Its two islands are among the largest in Polynesia with a total land area of nearly 3000 sq kms. Nearly three-quarters of Samoa’s population (90,000) live on Upolu (the smaller of the two islands). Samoa’s economy relies

<sup>2</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niue> (Under “Information Technology”)

<sup>3</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tokelau> (Under “Internet Domain Names”)

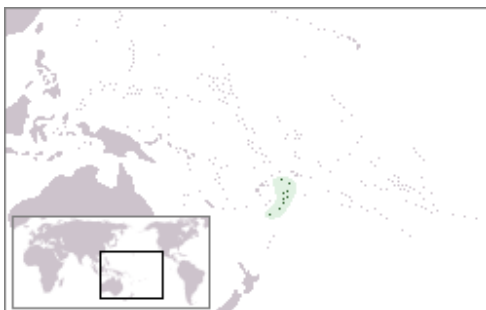
heavily on remittances from overseas nationals<sup>4</sup>. In 2009, Samoa was hit by a tsunami with major loss of life.

**American Samoa (.as):** is part of the Samoan chain of islands and is the southern-most territory of the United States. The country has a total land area of 200 sq kms, and a population of 66,000 (2009 est.) who are American Nationals not US citizens. The territory consists of three islands and an atoll. The largest island, Tutuila, is also the most populated. In 2009 Tutuila was also devastated by the tsunami.

**Fiji (.fj):** The Fijian archipelago consists of 332 islands of which 110 are inhabited, and more than 500 islets. 87% of Fiji's population (850,000 - 2009) live on the two major islands, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. The country was taken over by military coup in 2006. There are 14 administrative provinces, which is compounded by three confederacies which are social divisions within indigenous Fijian society. In 2009 Fiji was suspended from the Pacific Islands Forum and from the Commonwealth of Nations.

**Vanuatu (.vn):** lies just west of Fiji. It lies on the Ring of Fire with active volcanoes on some of its 65 (out of 80) inhabited islands. The archipelago experiences at least 100 tremors a day. It has a population of 221,500 which is predominantly rural although there are large populations in Port Vila and Luganville. The island is divided into 6 administrative provinces which are autonomous units which elect their own provincial councils which make decisions about basic services.

#### **The Kingdom of Tonga (.to):**

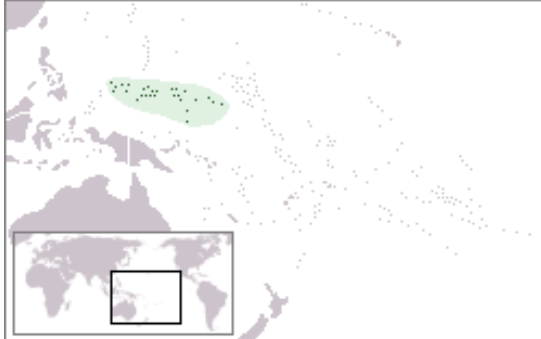


Tonga is an archipelago of 176 islands spread across 700,000 sq kms of the South Pacific Ocean (to the west of the Cook Islands). 52 of the islands are inhabited. Tonga's economy is mainly reliant on remittances from Tongans living overseas. A member of the royal family became a 60% shareholder of a satellite company, TongaSat, which brings in major revenue to the royal family rather than to

the state<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samoa>

### The Federation of Micronesia (.fm):

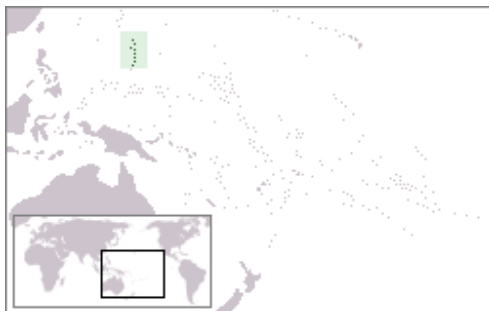


The Federated States of Micronesia covers a slightly larger area of the (West) Pacific Ocean (2.6 million sq kms) and consists of 670 islands which make up 4 states within the Federation. FSM has a population of 111,000 (2009 census). FSM is shown in the map (left). Historically FSM used to belong to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands which was administered by the

United States. After becoming independent and self-governing, FSM retained free association with USA, but have their own seat in the United Nations.

Two other former Trust Territories also became independent. They were: **The Republic of the Marshall Islands (.mh)** which lies to the northeast of FSM. It has a population of 62,000 (2009) on 29 atolls and 5 other islands; and **The Republic of Palau (.pw)** which lies to the west of FSM. It is a new nation having become independent in 1994 and has a population of nearly 20,000 who reside on an archipelago which is made up of 16 states. Over half of the population lives on the main island of Koror.

### Northern Marianas (.mp):



Northern Marianas is a separate country which is generally included in *Micronesia*. It consists of 15 islands which are managed by 4 municipalities. The country has a population of nearly 70,000 (2000). Unlike FSM, Marshall Islands and Palau, the Northern Marianas remained a member of the United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and is administered by the USA.

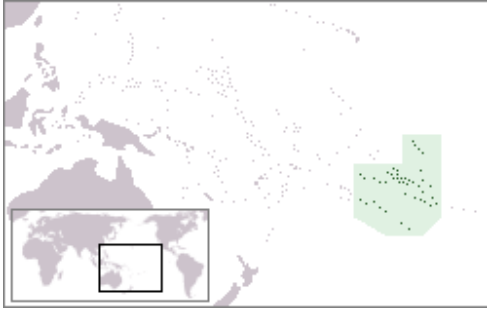
**Guam (.gu)** is another territory within Micronesia, administered by the United States. It is the largest and most southern of the Mariana Islands. The island has 19 municipalities for a population of 175,000 (2008) and the US military has jurisdiction over nearly 30% of the island's

---

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.stuff.co.nz/world/639180> Tonga's royal satellite company settles debt

land area. A population increase has been programmed for 2010-2014 for US military buildup which will significantly impact Guam's very limited and aging infrastructure<sup>6</sup>.

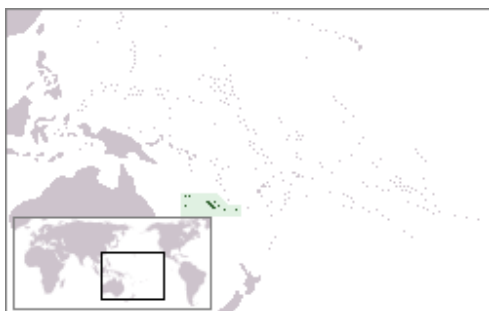
#### **French Polynesia (.pf):**



French Polynesia consists of 130 islands lying in 2.5 million sq kms of the (East) Pacific Ocean. It is made up of 6 groups of islands (the Austral, Bass, Gambier, Marquesas, Society Islands, and the Tuamotu Archipelago) with a population of about 267,000. Tahiti (in the Society Islands) is the largest and most populated island. French Polynesia is an overseas constituency of the French Republic.

**Pitcairn (.pn):** is the last of the British overseas territories in the Pacific. It lies in the south-eastern end of French Polynesia's Tuamotu Archipelago. Made famous as the home of the surviving Bounty mutineers, it consists of 4 volcanic islands spread over hundreds of sq kms of ocean. Pitcairn is the only inhabited island measuring 3km across and with a population of 50. It is accessible only by boat through Bounty Bay. There is one Government-sponsored satellite internet connection and the sale of .pn domain names has become a source of revenue for the island.

#### **New Caledonia (.nc):**



New Caledonia has a special French status of *sui generis*, in that between 2014 and 2019, it will decide as to whether it wants to remain as a territory of the French Republic. The archipelago is divided into three provinces: South (capital – Noumea; population 183,000), North (capital – Kone; population 45,000) and Loyalty Islands (capital – Lifou, population 17,400). These provinces are again divided into

33 communes or local administration areas. Most of their income is from mining of their rich mineral resources.

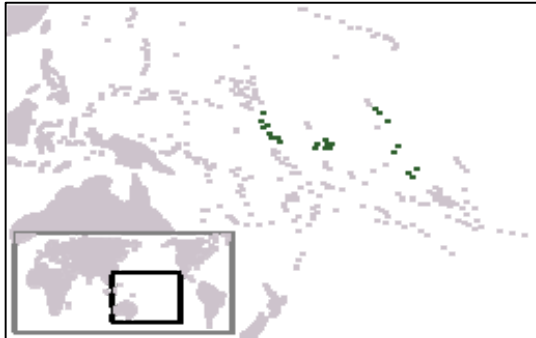
---

<sup>6</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guam>



**Wallis and Futuna (.wf):** French island territory between Fiji and Samoa; population 15,000 (2009 estimate); divided into three traditional kingdoms; economy based on traditional subsistence agriculture. According to Wikipedia, the ccTLD .wf has been suspended in favour of .fr and .nc (Nouvelle Calédonie)<sup>7</sup>.

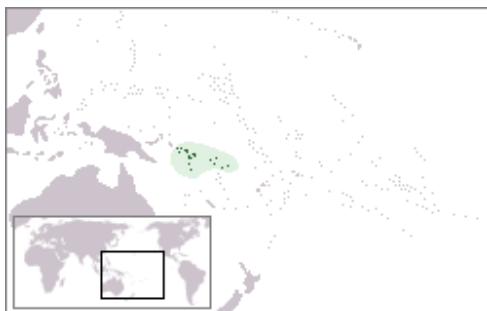
**Kiribati (.ki):**



Kiribati consists of 3 main island groups (Gilbert, Phoenix and Line Islands) made up of 32 low-lying atolls and one raised coral island (Banaba) dispersed over 3.5 million sq kms of the (Central) Pacific Ocean. It is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations and a full member of the United Nations. Kiribati is one of the most vulnerable nations on the planet in terms of climate change and is a member of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).<sup>8</sup>

**The Republic of Nauru (.nr)** is Banaba's nearest neighbor, and is the world's smallest island nation (21 sq kms) and also a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. It has a population of 14,000 (2009). Despite its small size, Nauru has 14 administrative districts. The environment was seriously harmed by phosphate mining, despite its bringing in major revenue to the island at the time (1960s-70s) it is now impoverished. Australia made an out-of-court settlement to rehabilitate the mined out areas of the small island.

**Solomon Islands (.sb):**



Lies east of Papua New Guinea and consists of 15 islands or groups of islands. One group of islands, Santa Cruz, is situated north of Vanuatu, about 200kms away from the others. Bougainville is geographically part of the Solomons, but politically belongs to Papua New Guinea. The Solomons is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. It is divided into 10 administrative areas. 75% of its population (523,000

<sup>7</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wallis\\_and\\_Futuna](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wallis_and_Futuna) (under *Miscellaneous*)

<sup>8</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kiribati>

– 2009) are employed in subsistence and fishing<sup>9</sup>.

**Papua New Guinea (.pg):** About 7 million people inhabit the eastern half of New Guinea and about 30 groups of islands spread across the archipelago<sup>10</sup> just north of Australia (within the region referred to as Melanesia). PNG is the most culturally diverse country in the world with 850 indigenous languages and at least as many traditional societies. Only 18% of its people live in urban centres. The majority of the population live in traditional societies and practice subsistence-based agriculture. The country is divided into 18 provinces plus Bougainville and the National Capital District. Provincial governments are branches of national government<sup>11</sup>.

---

<sup>9</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solomon\\_Islands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solomon_Islands)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.oceandots.com/pacific/png/>

<sup>11</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Papua\\_New\\_Guinea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Papua_New_Guinea)