

# **OVERVIEW OF COASTAL –COMMUNITY BASED FISHERIES IN TONGA**



**Regional Seminar on Community-based Coastal Resource  
Management Project for Promotion of Grace of Sea in  
Coastal Villages- Phase 2  
Port Vila, Vanuatu 13 to 16 October, 2014**

A map of the African continent is shown in a light green color. Overlaid on the map is a detailed image of a coral reef with a clownfish swimming among the coral. The title 'Coastal Fisheries Background' is written in large, bold, red letters across the top left of the map.

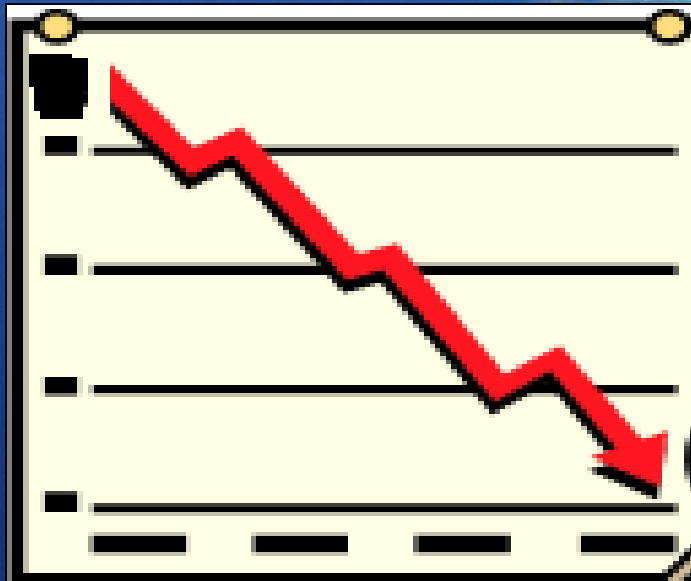
# **Coastal Fisheries Background**

- 1. Subsistence fishing (home consumption)**
  - 2. Small-scale commercial fishing (local markets)**
- **Plays a major role in the daily livelihoods of communities, particularly rural and island communities**





- Local communities primarily rely on fisheries resources for their livelihood



- However, they are aware of the degraded state of their inshore resources but feel powerless and unable to do anything about it



# Fisheries Management Act 2002

- The Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Forestry & Fisheries (through the Fisheries Department) is responsible for fisheries management in Tonga
- Communities may also be given the opportunity to actively take part in managing their inshore marine resources



# Coastal community managed SMA

SMA can be allocated by the Minister to a designated coastal community for the purpose of community-based fisheries management, where:

- The coastal community takes an active role in managing their coastal fisheries resources, with assistance from the Fisheries





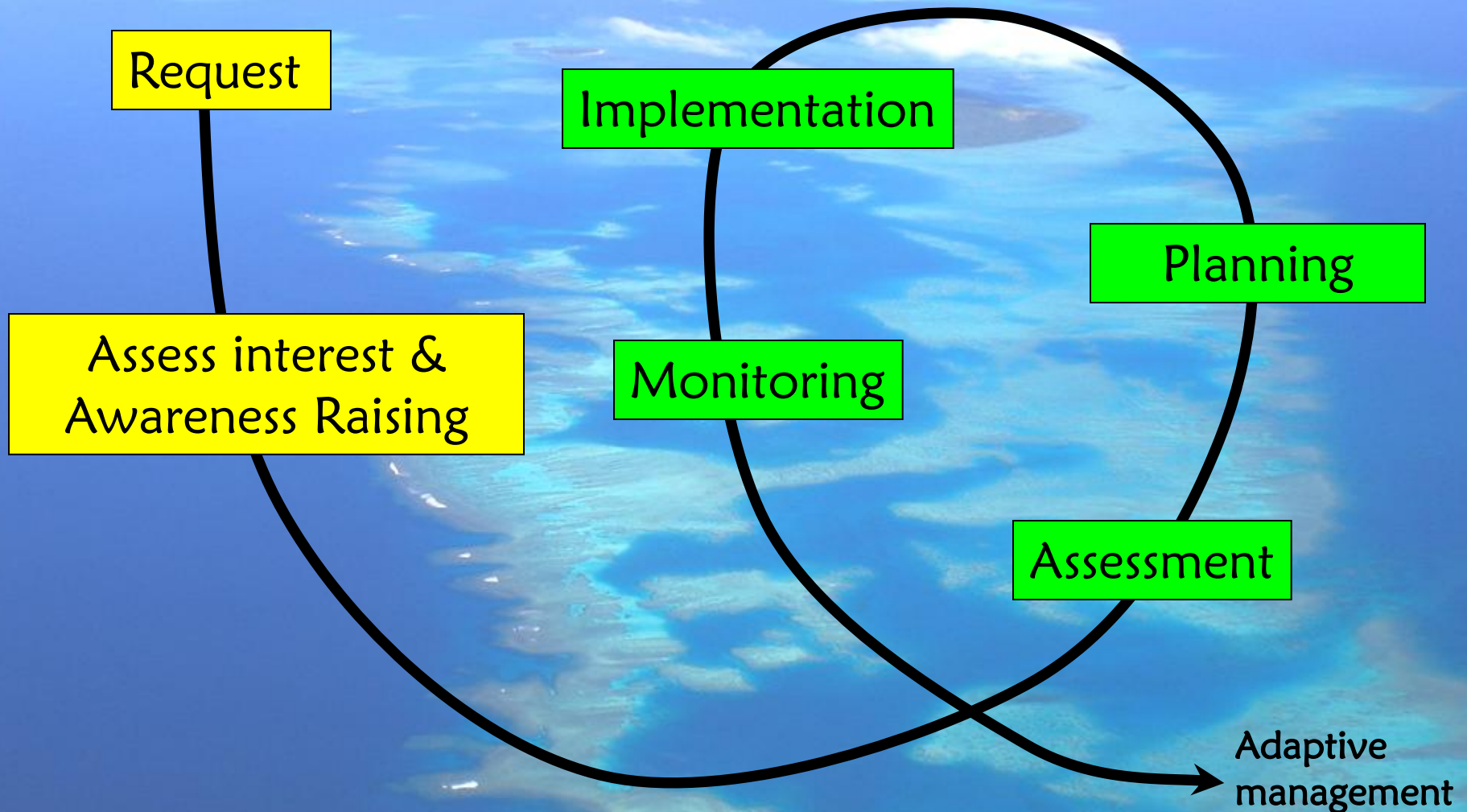
# Legal Instruments in place

- **Fisheries Management Act 2002**
- **Fisheries Management (Conservation) Regulations 2008**
- **Fisheries (Coastal Communities) Regulations 2009**
- **Special Management Order**

# Summary of SMA Process

- Initial request by the community
- Development of CCMC and management plan
- Presentation of plan back to the community for confirmation/as well as to the Fisheries Dept.
- Public Consultation with adjacent villages (28 days)
- Presentation of plan to the Fisheries Management Advisory Committee (FMAC)
- Ministerial decision on plan
- If approved, gazettal notice and regulations imposed
- Public announcement
- Implementation of plan

# Management Plan Process





# Map of Tonga



Niua Group



Samoa is right next door

- 4 main island groups
- 170 islands
- ~60 islands inhabited
- Main island is Tongatapu with the capital Nuku'alofa
- Fisheries Dept offices based at each island group: main office in Nuku'alofa

Vava'u Group

Ha'apai Group

Tongatapu Group



# Typical remote island communities



- Remote and coastal
- In most cases: one island, one village
- Surrounded by its own reef system
- High level of fishing activities occurring in their inshore area (from both locals and outsiders)
- Face the major concern of deteriorating inshore resources and feel the urge to manage them wisely

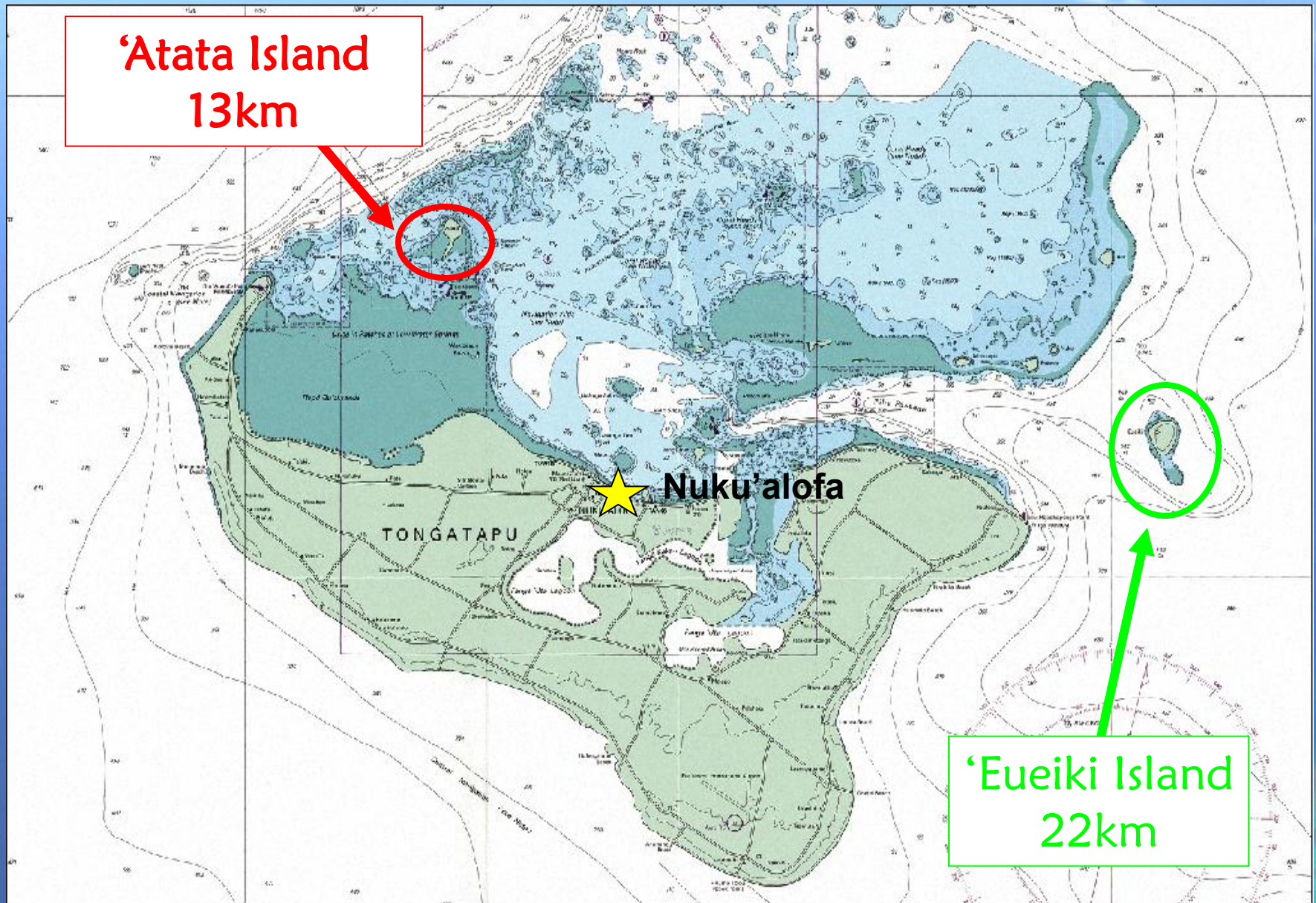




- Land can either belong to the King, a noble of the village or government
- Sea belongs to the government
- The village is run by a town officer (nominated through election)
- The village also belongs to a district (a group of villages (islands)) which is then run by a district officer (also nominated through election)
- Currently working with 9 villages (remote island communities)

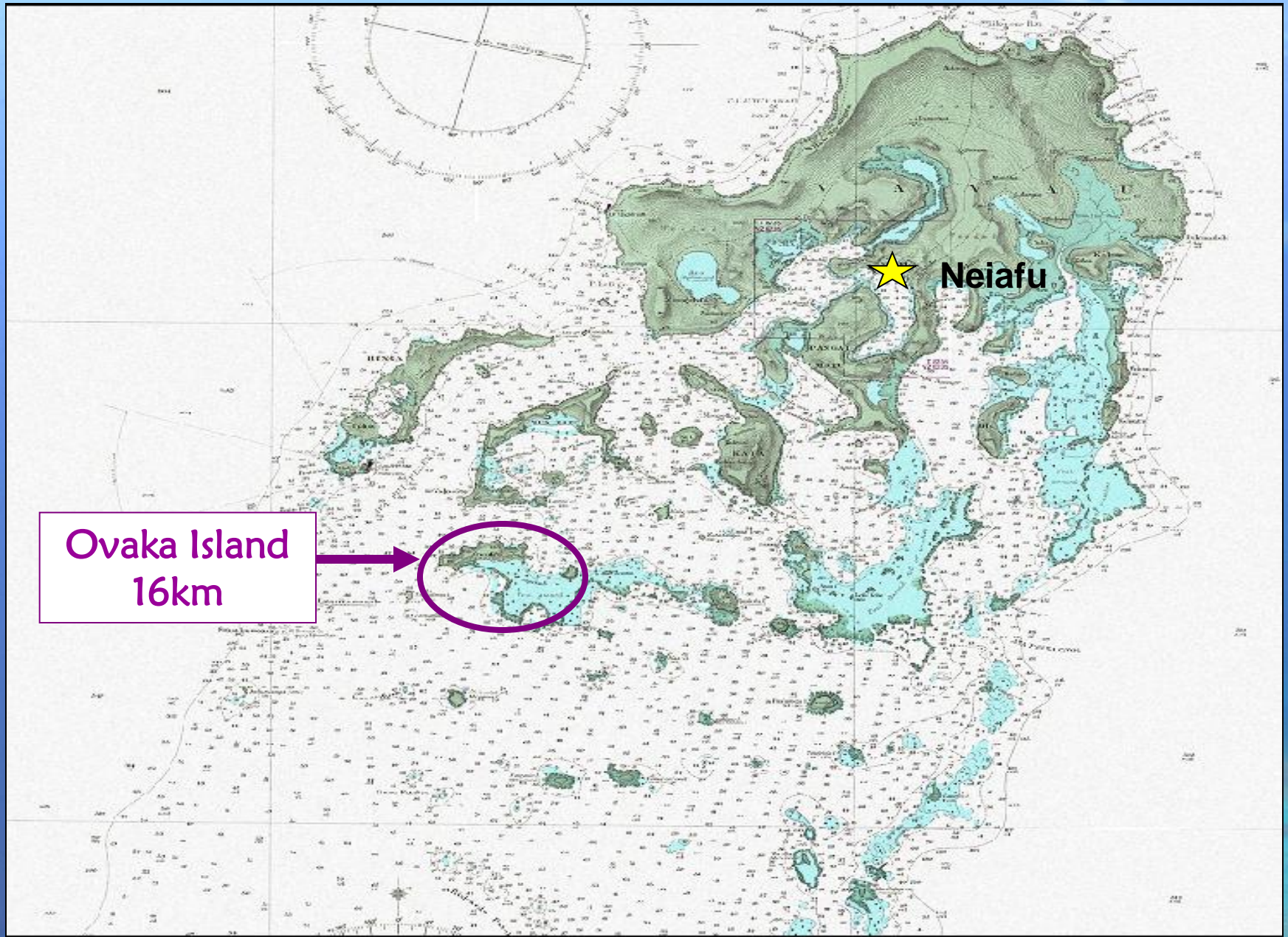


# Tongatapu Group (2)



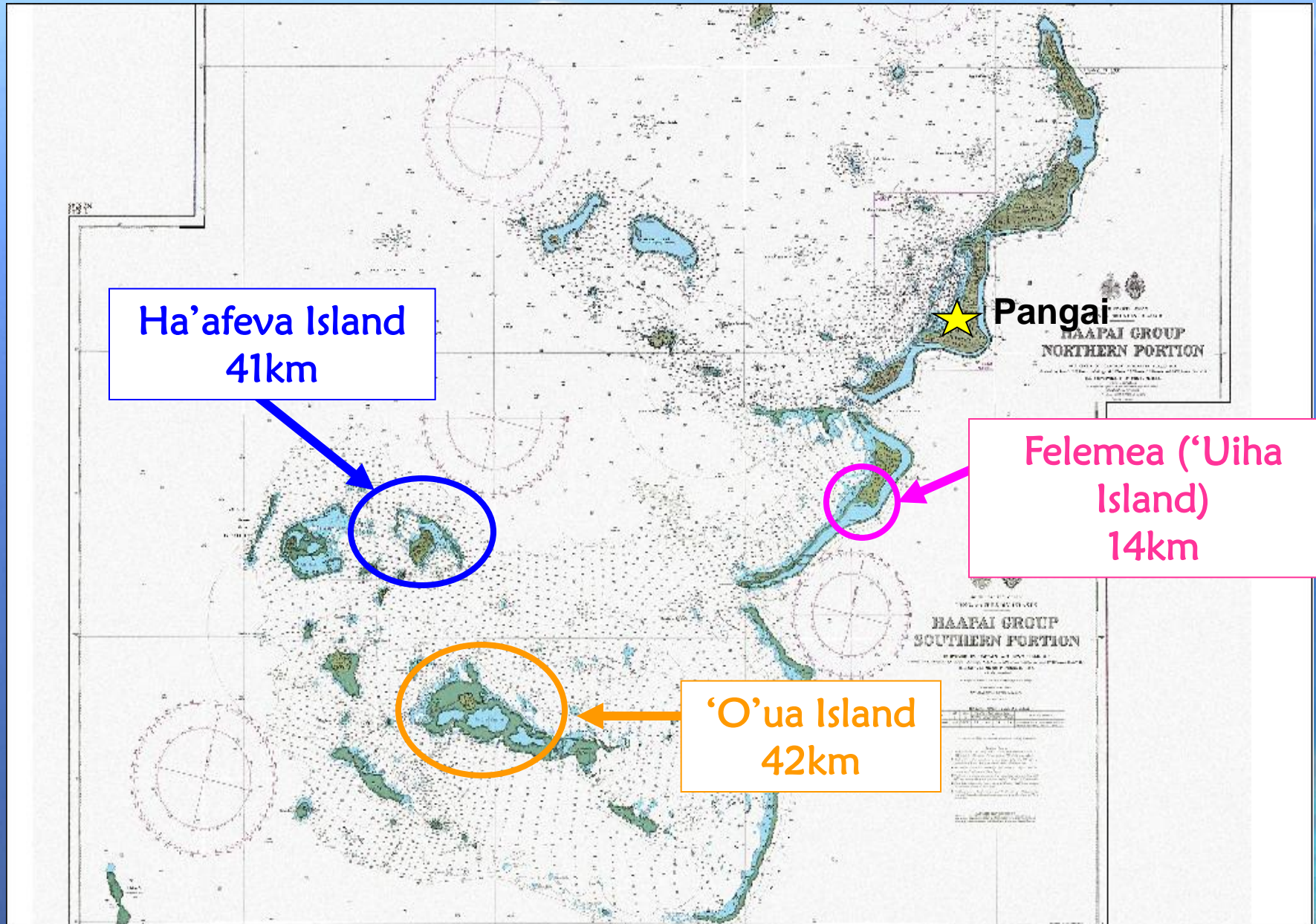


# Vava'u Group (1)





# Ha'apai Group (3)





An aerial photograph of a tropical atoll, showing a series of small, circular islands with white sand beaches and lush green vegetation, surrounded by clear, turquoise water. The water transitions from a light blue near the shore to a deeper blue further out. The sky is a pale, hazy blue with a few wispy clouds.

New Established SMAs includes the  
following;

- (1) *Nomuka* in Ha'apai
- (2) *Taunga* in Vava'u and
- (3) *Fafa Resort* in Tongatapu

# Coastal Community Management Committee (CCMC)



- Members are chosen in a public fono (village meeting)
- Members must include the town officer, district officer and a representative from the Fisheries Department (normally from the Fisheries office in that region)
- Members must also include representatives from fishermen, women and youth groups
- May also include other relevant stakeholders if needed





# Coastal Community Management Plan (Planning)

- The community (through the CCMC) is responsible for developing a Coastal Community Management Plan
- Preparation of the management plan is facilitated by the Fisheries Division, who also provide technical and legal advice
- This involves a series of workshops and meetings with the CCMC and focus groups
- Also enhances skills development and capacity building within the community in preparation for their leading management role of their coastal area
- Solutions identified are detailed into an Action Plan (management measures)



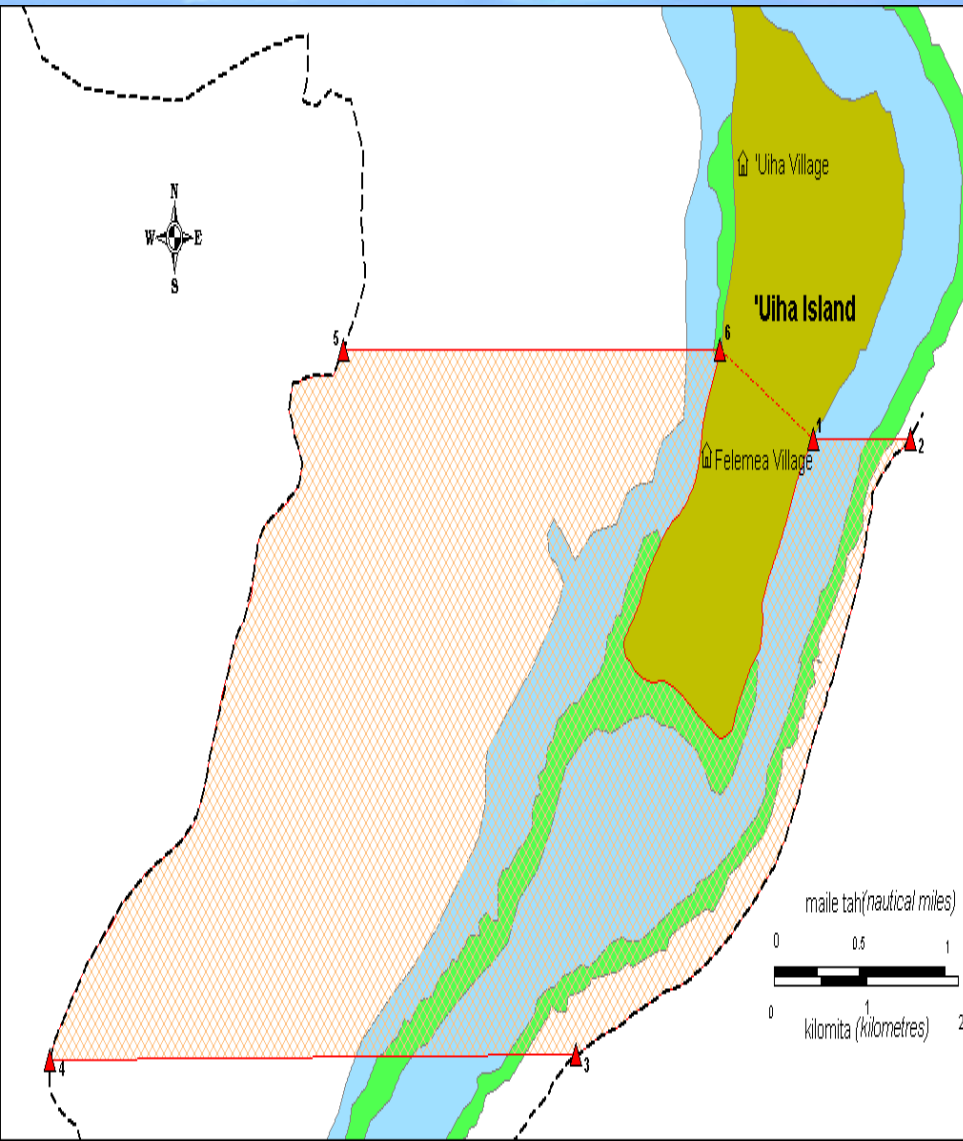
# Assessment Activities

- Involves a series of workshops/activities conducted by the community and CCMC:
  - Trend analysis: an assessment of the changes in the fishing situation and status of inshore resources based on community knowledge
  - Problem analysis: an assessment of prioritized issues occurring in their inshore area, their causes and effects
  - Solution analysis: an assessment of possible solutions (management strategies) to solve these issues





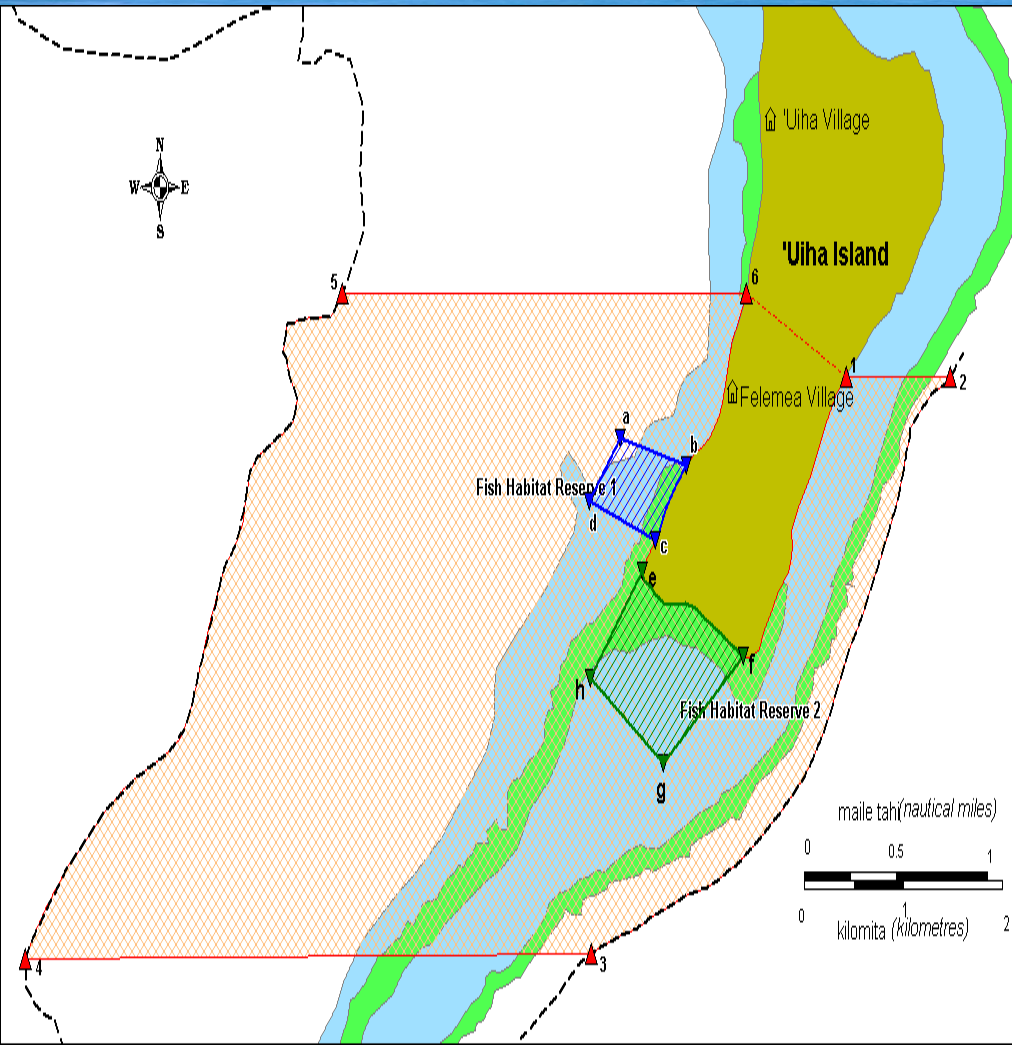
# Community Fisheries Management Measures: SMA boundary guidelines



- Shall be measured seaward from the high-tide mark of a coastal community extending to a maximum depth of 50m
- Should include a cross-section of inshore habitats
- Shall be clearly defined and demarcated
- The community must be able to manage / enforce the area (management plan and commitment)
- Zoning (spatial closures): could be divided into different areas for specific objectives



# Fish Habitat Reserve ("Tapu" area)

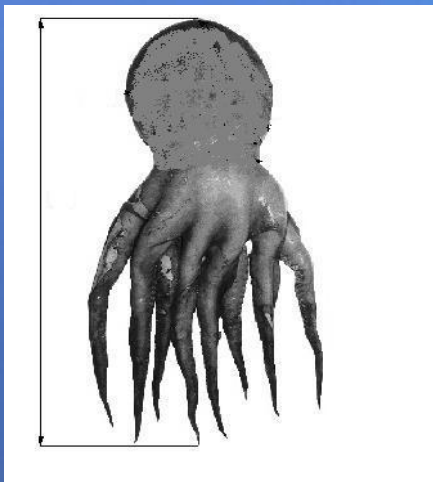


- An area where strictly NO FISHING is permitted to ANYONE ("tapu" area / "no-take" zone)
- Each community is willing to set aside such an area to protect fish and their habitat so they may grow and breed undisturbed in a healthy marine environment
- ~15% of the SMA area



# Fisheries Management Tools

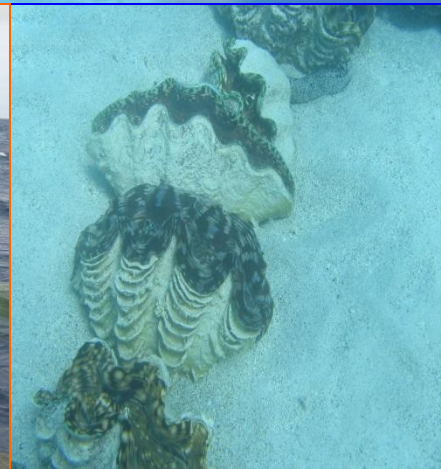
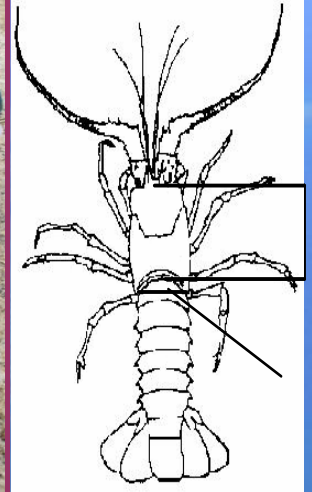
- Limiting fishers
- Limiting fishing gear
- Size limits
- Catch limits
- Environment conservation





# Implementation activities

- Marking the boundary
- Awareness raising
- Compliance training
- Offshore fishing training
- Restocking activities





# Monitoring activities

- Community monitoring
  - Community enforcement
  - Fish Catch Monitoring
  - Monitoring and maintenance of markers
  - Monitoring and maintenance of restocked clams / other resources
- Fisheries Department monitoring
  - resource / reef assessment



# Adaptive management

- Regular CCMC meetings
- Capacity building for the community
- Accessing funds
- Assessment of monitoring results
- Regular review of the management plan and progress of implementation activities





# Progress to date...

- 9 management plans prepared
- Four communities in Ha'apai ('O'ua, Ha'afeva, Felemea and Nomuka) is in the implementation phase
- Two in Vava'u (Ovaka and Taunga)
- Three in the main island ('Atata, 'Eueiki and Fafa)
- 2 CCMP has been initiated its still on progress (Kolonga and Kotu)
- Other communities have expressed their interest (16 written)

# Challenges

- There are very limited resources (funds, staff) for enforcement and conducting resource assessments and monitoring at the national level
- At the community level, illegal fishing within SMAs and FHRs is still being reported as a common problem
- Issues with data collection include recording errors, inconsistency and missing data although data analysis has been initiated.
- Planning and implementing activities can however be delayed due to the delayed process of securing funds and staff availability.



# Common faults at National level;

- Conflict amongst fishers
- Poor community management capacity
- Poor community compliance & enforcement capacity
- Lack of alternatives livelihoods
- Lack of community long-term commitment
- Lack of public awareness

# What can be done!

- Recruitment of staff to engaged with these activities
- More public awareness & education
- Strengthening community management capacity
- Compliance & enforcement training
- Secure funding sources and partnership – NGOs
- Ensure long-term ongoing engagement of the community
- Expanding the program to interested communities



# MALO 'AUPITO

