

Moana Data Service - A sustainable approach to closing the geospatial data gap in the Pacific.

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SUMMARY

Pacific Island countries (PICs) lack access to reliable, up to date survey and geospatial data. The data gap between Australia, New Zealand and the rest of the Pacific is glaring. Without accurate and up-to-date data, governments in PICs struggle to plan and respond to challenges like climate change, natural disasters, and population growth. Many Pacific Island nations are highly vulnerable to climate change. Detailed geospatial data on sea-level rise, coastal erosion, and storm tracking is vital for both immediate disaster response and long-term resilience planning. □□ There are a number of factors that are contributing to the growing data gap including, high cost of data acquisition, lack of local infrastructure and a shortage of local expertise. □□ PICs often lack the institutional systems to regularly collect and update reliable data. This includes not just geospatial data but also census, economic, and environmental data. Without modern data infrastructure, decision-making can become reactive rather than proactive. □□ There are efforts within the Pacific region to bridge this gap, such as collaborations through the Pacific Islands Forum and other regional organizations like the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). These organizations are working to improve data collection and sharing across the region but are unfortunately not closing the gap fast enough. □□ Kahuto will address this data problem directly by establishing the Moana Data Service, a private-locally led initiative that will source and acquire national scale lidar and imagery products and make the geospatial products available through a web platform.