



TE TANGO AKATEREANGA MONI O TE IPUKAREA
MINISTRY OF FINANCE & ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT
GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS

Economic Development Strategy and Economic Recovery Roadmap Review June 2024



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Acronyms

2050 Strategy	2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent
BTIB	Business Trade and Investment Board
CIIC	Cook Islands Investment Corporation
CITTI	Cook Islands Tertiary and Training Institute
CI Tourism	Cook Islands Tourism Marketing Corporation
CRA	Competition and Regulatory Authority
EDS	Economic Development Strategy 2030
ERP	Economic Response Plan
ERR	Economic Recovery Roadmap
FMIS	Financial Management Information System
FSC	Financial Services Commission
FSDA	Financial Services Development Authority (Cook Islands Finance)
ICI	Infrastructure Cook Islands
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INTAFF	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MFAI	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration
MFEM	Ministry of Finance and Economic Management
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOCD	Ministry of Cultural Development
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MOT	Ministry of Transport
MTVKTV	Mei Te Vai Ki Te Vai
NCD	Noncommunicable diseases
NES	National Environment Service
NSDA	National Sustainable Development Agenda 2020+
NIIP	National Infrastructure Investment Plan
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
OPSC	Office of the Public Service Commissioner
PEFA	Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability review
PPP	Public-private partnership
SBMA	Cook Islands Seabed Minerals Authority
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
TCI	Telecom Cook Islands
TMO	Te Marae Ora Cook Islands Ministry of Health
TTV	To Tatou Vai
USP	University of the South Pacific
VAT	Value-Added Tax

Introduction

This follow-up review report looks at the Cook Island's Government's progress towards the set of actions we set for ourselves under the Economic Development Strategy 2030 (EDS) and the Economic Recovery Roadmap (ERR). Initial updates on each action were received from 18 agencies in December 2023, and further comments and updates were finalised in June 2024.

A first review was conducted in 2022 by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM), with Cabinet authorising public release of the final document on 31 January 2023. This follow-up review was needed as agencies continued to retain some of the EDS actions throughout the economic recovery period, which was guided by the ERR. During the recovery period we needed to re-evaluate our longer-term economic objectives in light of a tighter fiscal outlook, government agency capacity, and immediate recovery needs. As we near the end of the ERR, we now need to focus on the remaining EDS actions. The relationship between the EDS and the ERR is explained in more detail in Annex B.

Objectives

This EDS/ERR Review 2024 sets out to:

- Highlight agencies' progress on the EDS and ERR actions assigned to them
- review the timing and prioritisation of the EDS and ERR actions, in consultation with implementing agencies, to ensure they best support the Cook Islands' economic recovery and subsequent growth
- signal the actions that should be included in agencies' Business Plans for 2024/25 and beyond to support agency business planning, public communications and discussions with development partners.

Scope

This review focused largely on re-considering EDS actions in terms of priority and timing. ERR actions were considered to a lesser extent, given the regular ERR reporting that has been done. The review is not an evaluation of the effectiveness or efficiency of completed actions.

Activities in scope of the review:

- assess agencies' progress towards the EDS and ERR actions assigned to them
- agency consultation
- suggested timing for remaining (and ongoing) actions.

Activities **not** in scope of the review:

- review of the EDS objectives
- review of the ERR objectives/workstreams
- public consultation
- review of ERR or EDS funding
- gap analysis of actions that could have short-term benefits and meet the EDS objectives, but were not included in the plan.

Methodology

EDS/ERR actions are now incorporated into the business plans of the agencies. Because of this, partial updates on progress towards the relevant actions are provided at the end of the financial year. Typically, updates from agencies in their business plans include the following:

- action scope and agency roles
- key milestones and next steps (e.g., does the action require legislative change)
- anticipated completion dates
- capacity to implement and dependencies with other work
- other barriers to implementation.

However, as updates in business plans can sometimes be unclear, it was necessary to seek more information from agencies to conduct this review. We requested updates from agencies in December 2023 and again in June 2024. Updates on the EDS and ERR actions were refined and finalised by June 2024.

To prioritise actions beyond 2025/26, the following criteria was applied by agencies and MFEM:

Effectiveness	Achievability	Cost impact
Does this action still make sense in this new context?	Does the agency have the capacity to implement this action?	Does the implementing agency require additional funding for this action?
Will this action support a faster economic recovery?	Does implementing this action rely on others being completed first?	
	Will this fit in the legislative programme?	

There are EDS/ERR actions that are dependant on funding. Depending also on agency priorities, they may allocate their budget towards other urgent initiatives, which could result in the EDS/ERR actions being deferred or placed on hold until sufficient budget funds as well as resources are allocated.

Progress on EDS/ERR actions so far

Table 1 below provides a summary of progress towards EDS and ERR actions, as at June 2024. This includes a total of 119 actions, 33 are completed, 49.5 actions are in progress, and 13.5 actions have not yet started. 23 are on hold or deferred; some of these are dependent on national budget priorities. 1.9 has two parts; Northern Group airport sealing (In progress) and Southern Group airport sealing (Not yet started), hence the 0.5.

Table 1: Summary of EDS and ERR action progress

	Completed	In Progress	In Progress – Ongoing	Not Yet Started	Deferred / on hold	Total
EDS	24	42.5	3	9.5	22	101
ERR*	9	4	0	4	1	18
Total	33	46.5	3	13.5	23	119

*Note this refers to ERR actions that are not included as EDS actions. 14 actions are included in both the EDS and ERR; for the purposes of this report, they are counted as EDS actions.

Completed actions

The following actions are completed or progressed so far as to not need additional resourcing. They will not be included in the updated timeline.

- 1.1 Improvements to welfare system
- 1.7 Shipping Roadmap
- 1.12 Universal Access Fund
- 1.13 Kaveinga Ora Program
- 1.14 Pa Enea Medical Staff Incentive Scheme
- 1.16 Support Student Wellbeing
- 1.18 Review of VAT application and communication
- 1.23 Pa Enea Package Tour Support
- 2.14 Seabed licencing and exploration
- 2.17 TCI shareholding review
- 2.18 Capitalising on ICT Reforms
- 3.1 Labour Market Survey
- 3.2 Population Study
- 3.3 National Population Strategy
- 3.14 Apprenticeship Scheme
- 4.4 Airport Masterplan Capital Projects
- 4.5 Te Mato Vai Project
- 4.10 Cook Islands Business Registry

- 4.11 Online 'One-stop Business Info Shop'
- 4.12 Business start-up support
- 4.16 Cook Islands Tourism Business Partnership Programme
- 4.18 Commercial Agriculture Support
- 5.7 Pa Enea Water Tank Program
- 5.10 Sanitation Masterplan
- ERR ERP continuation measures
- ERR Quarantine-Free measures update
- ERR Updated Medium-term Fiscal Framework
- ERR Medium-term Debt Strategy
- ERR Building approvals processes
- ERR Fees Free Payments
- ERR Attraction and transit arrangements for migrant workers
- ERR Population measurement – departure cards
- ERR Migrant labour force investigation

In progress/not started actions

Table 2 below sets out EDS and ERR actions either in progress, not started or ongoing, and the updated expected completion timing. As at 30 June 2024, 30 EDS and ERR actions are expected to be completed in 2024/25. The implementation of some actions will stretch beyond the current timeline. This will be considered in future updates. Annex 1 provides further detail on the updates and proposed changes to these actions.

Ongoing	2024/2025	2024/25 (continued)	2025/2026 (and beyond)
2.1 Products/services and business lines in the financial services industry	1.2 Consider incentives for long-term worker accommodation	ERR E-Commerce Review	1.3 Rarotonga housing market study
4.3 New financial management policies under the MFEM Act	1.5 National Minimum Wage Policy	ERR Transport: WOF, vehicle registration and licensing processes and fees	1.4 Land tenure review
4.7 Implement the NZ Infrastructure fund	1.11 Universal Access Plan	ERR Promotion of working holiday visa pathways	1.8 Pa Enea harbour upgrades
4.2 Promotion and marketing of international financial services	1.21 BTIB skills training in the Pa Enea		1.9 Northern Group airport sealing
5.3 Aitutaki Renewable Energy stage 2	1.24 Animal welfare bill	3.2 Curriculum review	1.20 Commercial support for Pa Enea businesses
5.5 Cyclone shelter program	2.4 Extend remit of Competition & Regulatory Authority	5.8 Economic Crisis Management Plan	2.2 Financial Technology Transformation Strategy
5.11 Improve Public sanitation services	2.6 Review of banking sector competition	ERR Population measurement - statistics set	3.18 Develop Tertiary Strategy as part of the new education strategy
5.16 Maintain proactive and strategic Biosecurity measures	2.7 PEFA review		3.10 Childcare services regulation
	2.8 Continue rollout of FMIS		3.17 Strengthen Schools/CITTI collaboration
	2.1 Agency core functions review		3.20 Revise and implement the NCD Strategy
	2.15 Seabed minerals financial regime		4.1 Implement Medium-term Discal Strategy
	3.8 Diaspora Investment Marketing Strategy		4.8 Foreign investment framework review
	3.15 Public sector lifelong learning policy		4.17 Airline route development
	3.19 Cultural education support		5.1 Energy sector review
	3.22 Develop Aged Care framework		5.6 Pa Enea water security program
	4.2 Establish Sovereign Wealth Fund		ERR National Employment Policy
	4.6 Water Tariff Review		
	4.13 Banking Taskforce		1.17 Review of the NIIP
	4.15 Consumer protection		1.9 Southern Group airport sealing
	5.2 Pa Enea renewable pricing & governance		2.5 Investigate Commerce Commission-type role for CRA
	5.12 Solid and Hazardous Waste Bill		3.11 Support for early childcare education
	5.13 National Environment Policy		4.9 Develop and implement Revenue Strategy
	5.14 Wetlands survey		4.21 Review of local content in procurement policy
	5.15 Wetlands expansion measures		ERR Business small claims practices
			ERR Policies supporting secondary jobs and the gig economy
			ERR Baseline business cost research

Deferred / On Hold actions

There are EDS/ERR actions that are dependant on funding. Depending also on agency priorities, they may allocate their budget towards other urgent initiatives, which could result in the EDS/ERR actions being deferred or placed on hold until sufficient budget funds as well as resources are allocated.

- 1.10 Pa Enea Air Discount Scheme
- 1.15 Pa Enea student accommodation
- 1.22 Tourism business support Pa Enea
- 1.23 Pa Enea package tour support
- 2.3 Develop an Innovation Strategy
- 2.9 Public expenditure review
- 2.11 PPP Policy
- 2.12 Vaikapuangi Redevelopment Project
- 2.13 Creative Industries Initiative
- 2.16 Ministry of Innovation, Information & Communication
- 3.4 Pa Enea scholarship scheme
- 3.6 NZ IRD student loan repayment mechanism
- 3.7 Diaspora Network
- 3.9 Parental leave
- 3.12 After-school care
- 3.13 Domestic student loans scheme
- 3.21 Disability access policy
- 4.14 Bankruptcy laws
- 4.20 Industry trade strategy
- 5.4 Low carbon transport incentives
- 5.9 MTVKTV investment decision
- ERR Retirement investment attraction

Next steps

MFEM will publish an annual EDS/ERR progress update, incorporating the changes set out above. MFEM will then undertake another review and reprioritisation of the EDS in 2025, including identifying priority actions for the second half of the strategy. More information on the EDS is available at: <https://www.mfem.gov.ck/economic-planning/economic-development-strategy>

Annex 1 – Detailed EDS/ERR action updates

This annex provides updates on progress towards each of the EDS and ERR actions. The action update highlights any significant changes.

To keep the updates short, minor changes to actions (like calendar years or secondary agencies involved) are not included.






The timing for each action is represented in table format. The **original timing** is shown as below, with a closed circle representing the initial expected end date.



Updated/extended timing is shown as below with a dashed line and open circle representing the updated expected end date.



Each action is colour-coded to represent current progress, as set out in the key below. These updates are based on the latest available information as at June 2024.

	Complete
	In Progress
	Ongoing
	Not Started
	Deferred/on hold

Objective 1: Improving equity and access for all

1.1 Improvements to welfare system – Complete

Lead agency: INTAFF

Description: Implement recommendations of the review of the social welfare system to ensure we have an efficient and effective system that fully meets the needs of the most disadvantaged members of our community.

Update: The timing of this action has been extended through to June 2023. The priority recommendations for 2022/23 are development of the social Welfare Management Information System and mobile app, and review of social system policy. This action is being implemented with technical assistance from UNICEF and the UNDP.



1.2 Consider incentives for long-term worker accommodation – In Progress

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: As part of the Revenue Strategy, assess the merits for further incentivising tourism operators to build long-term housing for their staff.

Update: Development of the Revenue Strategy (action 4.9) was delayed due to COVID-19. This action is now expected to be completed by June 2025.



1.3 Rarotonga housing market study – In Progress

Lead agency: CIIC, with support from INTAFF

Description: Housing market study to better inform possible interventions to improve access to housing in Rarotonga.

Update: This action has been shifted to 2025/26 to allow for completion of CIIC's housing policy in 2022/23, which focuses on the current government housing stock.



1.4 Land tenure review – In Progress

Lead agency: MOJ, with support from OPM and MFEM

Description: Review of the current land tenure system to ensure equitable and efficient access to land.

Update: Following further scoping, the timing for this action has been extended through to June 2026. This reflects the significant consultation required.



1.5 National minimum Wage Policy – In Progress

Lead agency: INTAFF

Description: National Minimum Wage Policy developed to guide minimum wage setting from 1 July 2021 onwards.

Update: Minimum Wage was updated in June 2024; a Technical Advisor from the International Labour Organisation has been appointed to explore further changes to the Minimum Wage Policy and process.



1.6 Pa Enua grocery price investigation – Not started

Lead agency: Price Tribunal

Description: Investigation to determine the underlying cause of high pricing and provide the evidence base for further Government intervention.

Update: This action has been deferred.



1.7 Shipping Roadmap – Complete

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Implement Shipping Roadmap actions to ensure the sustainable, safe, reliable and affordable provision of inter-island shipping.

Update: In 2022/23 the Shipping Roadmap supported subsidised shipping to both Northern and Southern Group islands. The next step for this action was to determine further options for Government intervention and this has now been completed.



1.8 Pa Enea Harbour upgrades – In Progress

Lead agency: MOT

Description: Improve access and assess viability of installing permanent buoys to assist the safe anchoring of vessels during rough weather. *Update: June 2023 deadline has passed. Expected to be completed in 2025/26. This action is being implemented with assistance through the Pacific Maritime Safety Programme.*



1.9 Northern and Southern Group airport sealing – In Progress

Lead agency: ICI

Description: Sealing of selected Northern and Southern Group runways to permit larger aircraft operations.

Update: Preparations for Manihiki airport sealing are underway. Northern Group sealing is currently expected to continue past 2025/26. Sealing of Southern Group runways will take place after the selected Northern Group runways are complete. This action is being implemented with funding support from the New Zealand Government.

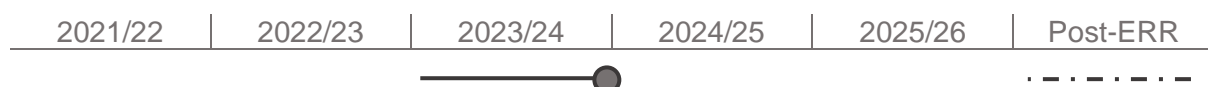


1.10 Pa Enea Air Discount Scheme – Deferred

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Assess the viability of establishing a Pa Enea Air Flight Connection to deliver lower air fares for the residents of Cook Islands remote communities (the Pa Enea other than Aitutaki).

Updates: This action has been deferred pending further work on the Pa Enea airport sealing (action 1.9 above).



1.11 Universal Access Plan – In Progress

Lead agency: CRA

Description: Develop a Universal Access Plan in consultation with Pa Enea residents.

Update: This action is required under the Telecommunications Act 2019. The Universal Access Plan will complement the upgraded telecommunications connectivity for the Pa Enea expected in 2024/25. The timing for this action has been extended to June 2025. This action is included in the ERR under the barriers to business workstream.



1.12 Universal Access Fund – Complete

Lead agency: CRA

Description: Establishment of a Universal Access Fund.

Update: This action was completed in 2021/22, with establishment funds set aside with assistance from the New Zealand Government.



1.13 Kaveinga Ora Program – Complete

Lead agency: TMO

Description: Implementation of Te Marae Ora’s flying doctor and dentist program

Update: Oral Health Services continued to roll out program to the Pa Enea. In the second half of the fiscal year, Palmerston, Pukapuka and Nassau were visited with screening of school children, health promotion activities in the communities and treatment of patients needing treatment both school children and adults were carried. In total, 7 islands were visited under the Kaveinga Ora Program.



1.14 Pa Enea medical staff incentive scheme – Complete

Lead agency: TMO, supported by MFEM

Description: Assess the merits of introducing an incentives scheme to attract more doctors and dentists to live and work in the Pa Enea.

Update: Pa Enea tax exemption implemented on 1 July 2023. TMO also implemented a Performance Excellence Recognition (PER) program to reward employees for their exceptional contributions to healthcare delivery on 1 January 2024 as a one year pilot program.



1.15 Pa Enea student accommodation – On Hold

Lead agency: MOE, CIIC

Description: Scoping and construction of dedicated student accommodation in Avarua for Pa Enea secondary school students.

Update: This action is on hold pending development of the Education Infrastructure Strategy and is dependent on national budget priorities.



1.16 Supporting student wellbeing – Complete

Lead agency: MOE

Description: Review current support services to ensure all secondary school students have access to mentorship and career guidance.

Update: The Ministry has a student wellbeing team based at HQ who provide support to all schools, students and their families, as appropriate.



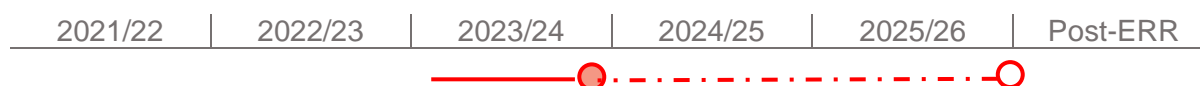
1.17 Review of the National Infrastructure Investment Plan (NIIP) – Not Started

Lead agency: CIIC, ICI, Island Governments

Description: Review of the NIIP, including ways to improve the efficient and effective delivery of projects to the Pa Enea.

Update: The last review of the NIIP was launched in August 2021. There are early discussions about a review to be conducted soon.

A copy of the report is available at: <https://www.ciic.gov.ck/publications/infrastructure-plans/>



1.18 Review of VAT application and communication – Complete

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: The Government will review the application of Value-Added Tax (VAT) in the Pa Enea to ensure that it is being implemented correctly.

Update: There is also a renewed compliance focus at RMD, following the appointment of new staff. Pa Enea VAT training has been implemented.

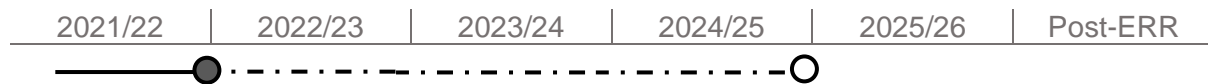


1.19 BTIB revolving fund loan expansion – on hold

Lead agency: BTIB

Description: Review the effectiveness of the BTIB revolving fund loan scheme, and consider expanding it to specifically target small Pa Enea businesses

Update: This action was deferred due to COVID-19.



1.20 Commercial support for Pa Enea businesses – In Progress

Lead agency: BTIB

Description: Review mechanisms, public and/or private, to connect Pa Enea businesses with commercial Rarotonga and export markets more effectively.

Update: This action requires more work and is now expected to be complete by 2025/26. In the meantime, Pacific Trade Invest and Business Link Pacific are providing support to Pa Enea businesses to support BTIB's existing loan and training activities.



1.21 BTIB skills training in the Pa Enea – In Progress

Lead agency: BTIB

Description: Review of BTIB’s current skills training programs to ensure they meet the marketing and commercialisation skills needs of Pa Enea businesses.

Update: This action is 50% complete and is now expected to be complete by 2024/25.



1.22 Tourism business support Pa Enea – Deferred

Lead agency: CI Tourism

Description: Support new small-scale tourism business development.

Update: This action has been deferred for consideration following the finalisation of the period of the ERR, when the Cook Islands economy is expected to shift from recovery to growth.



1.23 Pa Enea package tour support – Complete

Lead agency: CI Tourism

Description: Support private sector package tours to Pa Enea destinations.

Update: This action was completed in 2021/22, through discounted package tours for over 300 customers from Rarotonga to Pa Enea destinations.



1.24 Animal welfare bill – In Progress

Lead agency: MOA, supported by CISPCA and Te Are Manu

Description: Draft and consult on new animal welfare legislation.

Update: The timing for this action has been extended through to 2024/25. The Ministry has completed an Animal Welfare Strategy and will complement the new Agriculture regulations that are currently being drafted.



Objective 2: Transforming our economy

2.1 Develop and introduce new products/ services and business lines in the financial services industry – Ongoing

Lead agency: FSDA (Cook Islands Finance)

Description: Source new entrants / products/ services in line with demand, competitors' offerings and advancements in technologies.

Update: There are no proposed changes to this ongoing action. In December 2021, the FSDA launched the International Relationship Property Trust, a new product designed to provide couples with more certainty as to how their property will be managed in the event that they separate. More information is available at: <https://www.cookislandsfinance.com/>.



2.2 Financial Technology Transformation Strategy – In Progress

Lead agency: FSC

Description: Identify areas within (or missing from) the current regulatory framework that need reform to better capture fintech developments.

Update: The timing for this action has been extended through 2025/26 to reflect FSC's 5-year Strategic Roadmap 2021-2025, available at: <https://www.fsc.gov.ck/cookislandsFscApp/content/regulatory-framework/report/roadmap>.



2.3 Innovation strategy – Deferred

Lead agency: MFEM/ new Ministry of Innovation, Information & Communication (if established)

Description: Develop an Innovation Strategy, focusing on capacity building, research and development partnerships and growth opportunities to meet business and industry needs.

Update: This action has been deferred for consideration following the finalisation of the period of the ERR and the agency core functions review (action 2.10 below). A Digital Transformation Strategy has been prepared for the Cook Islands Government in the meantime (Agency: OPM)



2.4 Extend remit of the Competition and Regulatory Authority – In Progress

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Regulation policy and legislation to extend the CRA’s remit to the electricity, water and sewerage utility sectors.

Update: The timing of this action has been extended through to June 2024. Advanced drafts of the Bill have been prepared. This is included under the ERR barriers to business workstream.



2.5 Investigate Commerce Commission-type role for CRA – Not Started

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Commission expert report.

Update: The timing for this action has been shifted to 2024/25, to allow for the finalisation of action 2.4.



2.6 Review of banking sector competition – In Progress

Lead agency: FSC

Description: Competition review and recommendations to Government

Update: The timing for this action has been extended through to June 2025. It is included in the ERR under the cost of borrowing workstream. As part of this action, the Reserve Bank of New Zealand commissioned an external review of the Cook Islands banking sector and drivers of the cost of borrowing in the Cook Islands, including potential policy responses. The report is available at: <https://www.mfem.gov.ck/economic-planning/covid-19-err>



2.7 Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) review – In Progress

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability review by the IMF.

Update: An internal review is near completion, with an external review by the IMF due in 2025.



2.8 FMIS – In Progress

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Continue rollout of FMIS to all Government agencies.

Update: As at June 2024, there have been two new agencies added to the new system this year with seven Cook Islands Government agencies to be migrated to the new system.



2.9 Public expenditure review – Deferred

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Review the performance and expenditure of all agencies every four years.

Update: This action has been deferred pending the finalisation of the agency core functions review (action 2.10 below).



2.10 Agency core functions review – In Progress

Lead agency: OPSC

Description: Review the Cook Islands Public Sector core functions to improve efficiency.

Update: The Functional review report has now been tabled. This action is included under the ERR public sector efficiency workstream. It is expected that implementation of the review's recommendations will be phased over several years.



2.11 PPP policy – On Hold

Lead agency: MFEM, CIIC

Description: Consult on and finalise PPP policy.

Update: This action is on hold. Until a policy specific for Small Island Developing States can be developed, it is the view of MFEM (and PIMA) that the Cook Islands market is not deep enough for PPPs, and therefore the government is advised not to enter into any such arrangements.



2.12 Vaikapuangi Redevelopment Project – On Hold

Lead agency: CIIC

Description: Government investment decision on the consolidated Government building project. This project has been considered a lower priority than other critical infrastructure needs in the constrained fiscal environment up to the current time.

Update: This project is on hold pending Government funding decisions and is competing for capital funding in a constrained fiscal space.



2.13 Creative Industries Initiative – Deferred

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Design and implement a new grant funding initiative to support creative industry development.

Update: This action has been deferred for consideration following the finalisation of the period of the ERR, when the Cook Islands economy is expected to shift from recovery to growth.

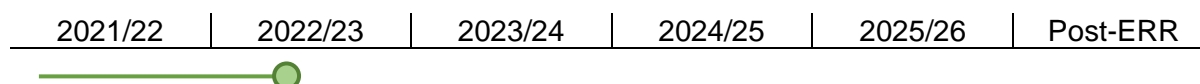


2.14 Seabed licensing and exploration – Complete

Lead agency: SBMA

Description: Complete exploration licensing tender process.

Update: In February 2022 the seabed minerals exploration licence granting ceremony saw the signing of three exploration licences. The press release is available at: <https://www.sbma.gov.ck/news-3/article-88>



2.15 Seabed minerals financial regime – In Progress

Lead agency: SBMA, MFEM

Description: Review of current royalty and taxation regime to ensure we maximise the financial benefits for Cook Islanders from mineral harvesting.

Update: The timing for this action has been extended through to 2024/25. See also 4.2 for the Sovereign Wealth Fund.



2.16 Ministry of Innovation, Information & Communication – On Hold

Lead agency: OPM, MFEM

Description: Assess the cost, benefits and required administrative arrangements to establish a new government agency to enable more effective and efficient strategic policy leadership and implementation for the ICT sector.

Update: This action is on hold pending the outcome of the agency core functions review (action 2.10). See also the update for 2.18 below.

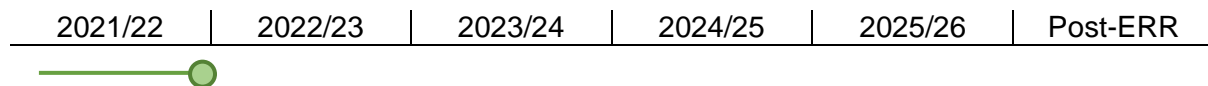


2.17 TCI shareholding review – Complete

Lead agency: CIIC, MFEM

Description: Conduct strategic review of Government shareholding in TCI.

Update: This action was completed in December 2021. A further review will be reconsidered in the future as the telecommunications sector opens up to competition.



2.18 Capitalising on ICT reforms – Complete

Lead agency: MFEM, OPM, Chamber of Commerce

Description: Develop action plan to maximise benefits of the cable and market reforms.

Update: OPM has completed the [National Digital Strategy](#) and the [National Digital Transformation Plan](#). These complement MFEM's E-commerce strategy. These strategies outline a plan for renewed digital governance for the Cook Islands Government.



Objective 3: Developing our people and culture

3.1 Labour market survey – Complete

Lead agency: Chamber of Commerce

Description: Comprehensive survey of the Cook Islands labour market to identify gaps and opportunities.

Update: The survey was completed last year with the reports yet to be released.



3.2 Population study – Complete

Lead agency: OPM

Description: Study to increase the understanding of the drivers behind population movements.

Update: This action was completed in 2022/23. It is included under the ERR labour force and population workstream.



3.3 National Population Strategy – Complete

Lead agency: OPM

Description: Research and development of a national population strategy for the Cook Islands.

Update: Te Kaveinga Tupu'anga iti Tangata- the Cook Islands Population Policy 2022-2032 was endorsed in late 2022 and is available at: <https://www.pmooffice.gov.ck/>. This action is included under the ERR labour force and population workstream.



3.4 Pa Enea scholarship scheme – On Hold

Lead agency: MFEM, MOE

Description: Increase the size of the scholarship from \$5,000 to \$10,000 for those students who return to the Pa Enea.

Update: The timing for this action is dependent on national budget priorities.

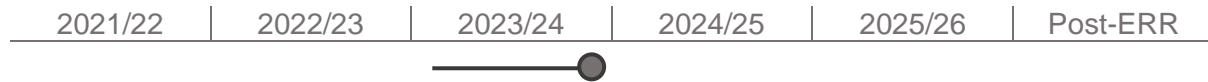


3.5 Extend & enhance scholarship scheme – On Hold

Lead agency: MFEM, MOE

Description: Expand the current scholarship system, including establishing a matched repayment scheme.

Update: The timing for this action is dependent on national budget priorities.



3.6 NZ IRD student loan repayment mechanism – On Hold

Lead agency: OPM, supported by MFEM, MOE

Description: Establish a payments system, to process repayments to the New Zealand Inland Revenue Department.

Update: This action has been placed on hold.

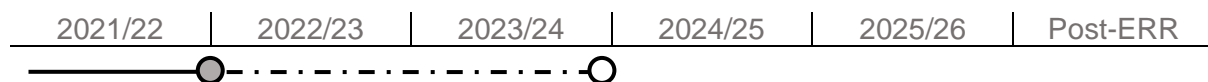


3.7 Diaspora network – Deferred

Lead agency: MFAI

Description: Establish a formal diaspora network for communication, including promotion of activities, available jobs and procurement in the Cook Islands.

Update: The timing for this action is dependent on national budget priorities. It is included under the ERR labour force and population workstream.



3.8 Diaspora Investment Marketing Strategy – In Progress

Lead agency: BTIB/CI Tourism

Description: Develop a marketing strategy with the aim of attracting Cook Islanders abroad to invest in the Cook Islands.

Update: 75% of the work is now complete, the remaining 25% will be completed in the next few months.



3.9 Parental leave – On Hold

Lead agency: INTAFF

Description: Review the current parental leave provisions, with a view to increasing it to 12 weeks or more.

Update: The policy work for this action is on hold until an update is received from the Crown Law Office.



3.10 Childcare services regulation – In Progress

Lead agency: INTAFF, MOE

Description: Introduce regulation of childcare services to those operating for children under 3.

Update: This item was brought forward to start in 2022/23, with a situational report developed through technical assistance from the Asian Development Bank. The timing for this action is dependent on national budget priorities.

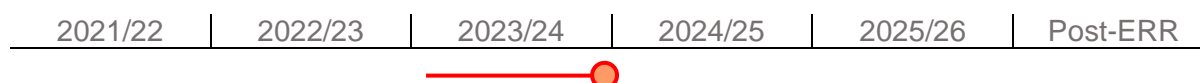


3.11 Support for early childcare education – Not Started

Lead agency: MOE, INTAFF

Description: Expand Government support for early childcare education to children between the ages of 0 and 3.

Update: The timing for this action is dependent on national budget priorities.



3.12 After-school care – On Hold

Lead agency: MOE, supported by INTAFF, MFEM

Description: Establish and resource after-school care options at all early childhood education providers and primary schools.

Update: The timing for this action is dependent on national budget priorities.

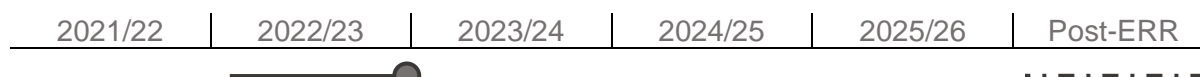


3.13 Domestic student loans scheme – Deferred

Lead agency: MFEM, MOE

Description: Establish a domestic student loan scheme for studies in-country.

Update: This action has been deferred for consideration following the finalisation of the period of the ERR, when the Cook Islands economy is expected to shift from recovery to growth.



3.14 Apprenticeship Scheme – Complete

Lead agency: CITTI, MOE, MFEM

Description: Develop a pilot apprenticeship scheme in the Cook Islands.

Update: There are five apprenticeship programmes fully in action including; cookery, electrical, automotive engineering and carpentry.



3.15 Public sector lifelong learning policy – In Progress

Lead agency: OPSC

Description: Review existing Training & Development and Performance Management policies and as required identify and develop new policies around learning and development. Deliver training to Managers, HR and Policy Practitioners to promote Public-Sector lifelong learning polices.

Update: The CIGOV Training and Development Policy review is complete and effective as of April 2024. OPSC is currently exploring potential training programmes.



3.16 Curriculum review – Not Started

Lead agency: MOE

Description: Strengthen and enhance curriculum as necessary to meet future job requirements.

Update: The curriculum review will begin once the new Education Strategy has been endorsed.



3.17 Strengthen Schools/CITTI collaboration – In Progress

Lead agency: MOE, CITTI

Description: Strengthen collaboration between schools and CITTI, through the Dual Pathways Programme.

Update: The timing of this action has been amended to extend to 2025/26.



3.18 Develop Tertiary Strategy as part of the new education strategy – In Progress

Lead agency: MOE, CITTI, USP

Description: Develop a strategy to ensure the tertiary education system is responsive to demands of the labour market, structured efficiently and maximises student outcomes.

Update: The title of this action has been updated to clarify the tertiary strategy will form part of the new education strategy. The description for this action has been amended to remove specific mention of teacher training.



3.19 Cultural education support – In progress

Lead agency: MOE, MOCD

Description: Expand partnerships with local NGOs to work with schools to foster continuity of traditional knowledge.

Update: The first phase of the project is closing in 2023 and the second phase of data preservation, promotion and access will continue for the next three years. In 2022/23, MOCD received support from UNESCO and the Estate Fund to support the traditional knowledge inventory collection of Intangible Cultural Heritage for Rarotonga and Pa Enea Communities.



3.20 National NCD Strategy – In progress

Lead agency: TMO

Description: Revise and implement the national NCD Strategy.

Update: 14 activities of the National NCD Strategy were implemented in the period July-December 2023. The NCD Strategy 2020-2025 Mid Term Review was facilitated by WHO and completed in November 2023. The Cook Islands Strategic Action plan to prevent and control non-communicable diseases 2021-2025 is available at: <https://www.health.gov.ck/tmo-non-communicable-disease-plan/>.

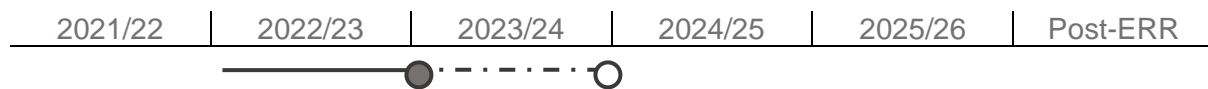


3.21 Disability access policy – On Hold

Lead agency: INTAFF

Description: Develop a policy and actions to improve disability access to employment opportunities.

Update: INTAFF – This has not commenced as the current UNPRPD Project is underway until Dec 2024. The outcome activity will assist develop the policy – 2024/2025.



3.22 Aged Care framework – In progress

Lead agency: INTAFF

Description: Develop a framework, in partnership with the community, to deliver an aged-care support service.

Update: In August 2021 Government officials, leaders of Civil Society Organisations and community members attended co-design workshops on what Aged Care Services could look like in the future for the Cook Islands. This action is being implemented with support from the Asian Development Bank and the Republic of Korea e-Asia and Knowledge Partnership Fund was due to be completed by June 2025.



Objective 4: Investing in our islands

4.1 Implement Medium-term Fiscal Strategy – In Progress

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Continue implementation and refinement of the strategy.

Update: This action is included under the ERR managing public debt workstream and has a review currently underway.



4.2 Establish Sovereign Wealth Fund – In Progress

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Scoping, design, consultation and legislative drafting of the Fund. The fund is intended to manage future revenues expected from seabed minerals harvesting, for use by future generations.

Update: Early scoping and design of the Sovereign Wealth Fund is now completed with consultations to begin in July 2024, and a policy expected to be finished in the second half of 2024.



4.3 New financial management policies under the MFEM Act – Ongoing

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Develop new financial management policies to further strengthen the management of public finances.

Update: Revisions to the MFEM Act have been made as well as enhancements to the Shared Services Concept schedule.



4.4 Airport Masterplan capital projects – Complete

Lead agency: Airport Authority, MFEM

Description: Review and prioritise identified airport capital projects.

Update: The Activity Planning Document for the capital projects has been submitted to MPPS.



4.5 Te Mato Vai Project – Complete

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Completion of the water network upgrade and handover to To Tatou Vai.

Update: This action is considered complete with the establishment of To Tatou Vai as a Statutory Agency.



4.6 Water tariff review – In Progress

Lead agency: TTV

Description: Review of water tariff structures and price levels.

Update: This action has been extended through to June 2024 to align with To Tatou Vai’s Statement of Corporate Intent 2022 – 2026. Proposed TTV Tariff regime was consulted on in June 2024 and this project is nearing completion.



4.7 NZ Infrastructure fund – Ongoing

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Implement the Fund.

Update: There are no changes to this action. This item is included in the ERR under the infrastructure investment workstream.



4.8 Foreign investment framework review – In Progress

Lead agency: MFEM, BTIB

Description: Comprehensive review of the current foreign investment framework to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

Update: This item is included in the ERR under the foreign investment workstream. The timing for this action has been extended through to June 2025 now that more is known about the scope of the work. This includes development and implementation of review recommendations, including public consultation.



4.9 Revenue Strategy – Not Started

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Develop and implement a new Revenue Strategy.

Update: This action was delayed due to COVID-19. Discussions will commence at a later date on the appropriateness of the action, or if alternatives are better suited.



4.10 Cook Islands Business Registry – Complete

Lead agency: MOJ

Description: Scope, develop policy and legislation and implement a new business registry.

Update: The registry is available at: <https://registry.justice.gov.ck/corp/clienthome.aspx>.



4.11 Online ‘One-Stop Business Info Shop’ – Complete

Lead agency: BTIB

Description: Develop and publish guides that identify and describe requirements to comply with key business regulatory processes.

Update: The One Stop Shop was completed in December 2021. It is available at: <https://btib.gov.ck/business-one-stop-shop/> and promoted through BTIB’s newsletter and gazette.



4.12 Business start-up support – Complete

Lead agency: Chamber of Commerce

Description: Establish a mentoring and assistance mechanism for business start-ups.

Update: More information is available at: <https://commerce.co.ck/business-support-helpdesk/>



4.13 Banking Taskforce – In Progress

Lead agency: FSC, MFEM

Description: Explore the future direction of the domestic banking sector, including sustainable options to reduce the cost of credit.

Update: This action is included in the ERR under the cost of borrowing workstream. The timing for this action has been extended through 2024/25. The Bankers Association of the Cook Islands has met with FSC and MFEM on various matters including Payments and Credit Card Fees and this engagement will be ongoing.



4.14 Bankruptcy laws – Deferred

Lead agency: MFEM, MOJ, FSC

Description: Assess options to introduce a bankruptcy law framework

Update: This action has been deferred to post-ERR.



4.15 Consumer protection – In Progress

Lead agency: INTAFF (previously MFEM)

Description: Assess options to improve consumer protection in relation to credit card fees.

Update: This action is included as part of the E-Commerce project under the ERR barriers to business workstream.

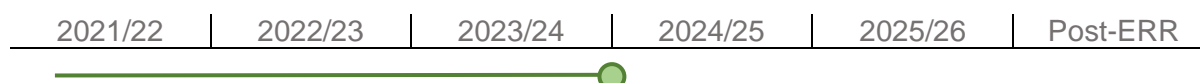


4.16 Cook Islands Tourism Business Partnership Programme – Complete

Lead agency: CI Tourism

Description: A newly restructured tourism accreditation scheme aimed at improving the quality of Cook Islands tourism products and services

Update: CI Tourism signed on to GSTC approved Regional Sustainable Tourism Standards and Guidelines requiring a revamped national approach. More information can be found at: <https://cookislands.travel/corporate/quality-assurance>.



4.17 Airline Route Development – In Progress

Lead agency: MFEM, CI Tourism

Description: Commission expert review of the net benefits of the route development to inform decisions.

Update: Action previously called Review of the airline underwrite. Formal review is planned for late 2025.



4.18 Commercial agricultural support – Complete

Lead agency: MOA

Description: Support to local commercial agricultural suppliers to meet local tourism demand by implementing the [Agriculture Sector Action Plan 2020-2025](#).

Update: The actions in the Agriculture Sector Action Plan 2020-2025 are currently being implemented including a new Agriculture Revolving Fund Policy, which is in advanced development.



4.19 Promotion and marketing of international financial services – Ongoing

Lead agency: FSDA (Cook Islands Finance)

Description: Implement ‘Positioning’ strategy goals to promote positive reputation through marketing initiatives.

Update: FSDA continues to implement actions to promote Cook Islands Financial Services internationally. This action is included in the ERR under the productivity growth workstream.



4.20 Industry trade strategy – Deferred

Lead agency: MFEM, BTIB, MOA, supported by the Chamber of Commerce

Description: Develop strategy to boost service and merchandise exports by local businesses.

Update: This action has been deferred for consideration following the finalisation of the ERR, when the Cook Islands economy is expected to shift from recovery to growth.



4.21 Review of local content in procurement policy – Not Started

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Develop strategy to boost service and merchandise exports by local businesses.

Update: Work on this action has not yet begun, aiming to begin 2024/25.



Objective 5: Greening our economy

5.1 Energy Sector review – In Progress

Lead agency: OPM, MFEM

Description: This will include a review of the renewable energy target to ensure that it remains an achievable, economically efficient outcome.

Update: Cabinet has approved TORs for the Energy Working Group for the Energy Policy and draft TORs for a Policy consultant is being drafted



5.2 Pa Enea renewable pricing and governance – In Progress

Lead agency: MFEM, OPM, CIIC

Description: New governance and pricing arrangements that will ensure the sustainable provision of affordable renewable electricity across the Pa Enea.

Update: The timing for this action has been extended through to June 2025.



5.3 Aitutaki Stage 2 – In Progress

Lead agency: CIIC, TMU

Description: Completion of installation of solar battery systems for stage 2 of the Aitutaki Renewable Energy project to increase renewable energy contribution on Aitutaki to approximately 50%. At the completion of Stage 1, the renewable energy contribution was estimated at approximately 24%.

Update: Progress has been made on the NZ climate Change funding pipeline



5.4 Low carbon transport incentives – On Hold

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Consider options to support the importation and use of low carbon transport.

Update: In 2018 the Cook Islands introduced a tax incentive for imported electric vehicles that are less than 10 years old. The description for this action has been updated to reflect the potential range of policy options that could be considered to further incentivise low carbon transport. This action is on hold pending confirmation of appropriate policy lead.



5.5 Cyclone shelter program – In Progress

Lead agency: CIIC, with technical support from ICI

Description: Infrastructure Cook Islands will continue its cyclone shelter program to ensure that all inhabited islands have access to safe refuge

Update: The cyclone shelter program includes planned centres for Rakahanga and Nassau, as well as other Pa Enea centre improvements and the Rarotonga cyclone shelter programme rollout.



5.6 Pa Enea water security program – In Progress

Lead agency: ICI

Description: Continue water security investment to ensure that each island is better prepared to withstand future dry periods.

Update: The Maramou water gallery (Atiu) project is now complete. Aitutaki Water Management has shifted to ICI for the next three financial years. Work has started to standardise the water supply systems and conduct a feasibility study for desalination units in the Pa Enea.

This action is expected to be completed post-ERR.



5.7 Pa Enea water tank program – Complete

Lead agency: ICI

Description: Consider the merits of introducing a water tank subsidy program for Pa Enea residents to improve household water security

Update: 230 household water tanks have been delivered for Aitutaki, 70 for Manihiki and 70 for Penrhyn. 2 community water tanks and catchment buildings have been completed in Manihiki.



5.8 Economic Crisis Management Plan – Not Started

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Develop a comprehensive Economic Crisis Management Plan.

Update: This action was delayed due to MFEM's focus on the COVID-19 response. It is now expected to be completed by June 2025.

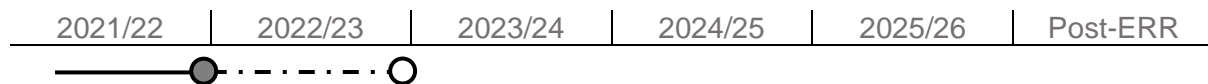


5.9 MTVKTV investment decision – On Hold

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Government to decide on whether to proceed to the construction phase

Update: This action has been placed on hold.



5.10 Sanitation Masterplan – Complete

Lead agency: MFEM/PMU

Description: Finalise the draft Masterplan.

Update: The Sanitation Masterplan was finalised in March 2021.



5.11 Public sanitation – In Progress

Lead agency: CIIC, ICI, CI Tourism

Description: Improve public sanitation services.

Update: Oxidation of seepage ponds program implementation on track. Further improvements require additional resources so are dependent on budget priorities.

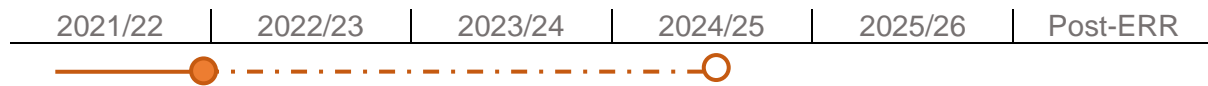


5.12 Solid and Hazardous Wastes Bill – In Progress

Lead agency: ICI

Description: Finalise and promulgate the Bill; Investigate the establishment of a local diversified recycling centre to develop products from recyclable material; Improve the rate of recycling through the investment in plant and equipment.

Update: Scheduled for presentation to Parliament in 2024.



5.13 National Environment Policy (NEP) – In Progress

Lead agency: NES

Description: Consult on and finalise the NEP 2022-32.

Update: The NES will first run consultations with key stakeholders in June/July 2024.

Then will look to conduct consultations for the whole of the Cook Islands.

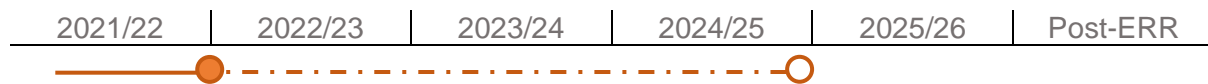


5.14 Wetlands survey – In Progress

Lead agency: NES

Description: Comprehensive survey of wetlands to better understand development impacts and to develop a more refined and measurable objective to track progress.

Update: The timing for this action has been extended through to 2024/25.



5.15 Wetlands expansion measures – In Progress

Lead agency: NES

Description: Explore potential for new direct measures to encourage the management of wetland areas.

Update: NES has published a factsheet on wetlands, available at:

<https://environment.gov.ck/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/NES-Factsheet-12-Wetlands.pdf>

The timing of this action has been updated to 2022/23 to 2024/25. This action will include developing recommendations to guide the management of wetlands.



5.16 Biosecurity – In Progress

Lead agency: MOA

Description: Maintain proactive and strategic biosecurity measures.

Update: Biosecurity continues to operate with its border protection and surveillance activities.

2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Post-ERR
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Economic Recovery Roadmap actions

The below actions are included in the ERR and do not come under any of the EDS actions. More information on the ERR is available at: <https://www.mfem.gov.ck/economic-planning/covid-19-err>.

ERP Continuation Measures – Complete

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Reactive implementation of continued ERP measures to support the Cook Islands private sector as appropriate in the event of a further border closure.

Update: Wage Subsidy and Sole Trader Grants continued to 15 April 2022, and applications for the final payments closed on 31 May 2022. This action was completed in early 2022/23, once final payments were processed.



Quarantine-Free measures update – Complete

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Supporting the implementation of a comprehensive set of measures to establish and continue Quarantine-free travel with New Zealand.

Update: This action was implemented as part of the ADB Policy-Based Loan agreement, under the Managing Public Debt workstream. The Cook Islands reopened its borders to travelers from New Zealand on 13 January 2022.



Updated Medium-term Fiscal Framework – Complete

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Approval and implementation of an updated Medium-term Fiscal Framework (MTFF) for 2022-2026.

Update: This action was implemented as part of the ADB Policy-Based Loan agreement, under the Managing Public Debt workstream. The MTFF was introduced through the 2022/23 Medium-term Fiscal Strategy, which was published in the 2021/22 Half year Economic and Fiscal Update (HYEFU), available at: https://www.mfem.gov.ck/images/MFEM_Documents/Budget_Books/2021-22/2021-22_HYEFU_v.2.pdf



Medium-term Debt Strategy – Complete

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Development and publication of the Cook Islands Medium-Term Debt Management Strategy 2022 – 2026 (MTDS).

Update: This action was implemented under the Managing Public Debt workstream. The MTDS is available at: https://www.mfem.gov.ck/images/ECON/Budget_docs/MTDS_-_CIG_final_final_June22.pdf.



E-Commerce Review – In Progress

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Policy and regulatory exploration of the Cook Islands e-commerce settings.

Update: This action is included under the barriers to business workstream. An E-commerce Strategy for the Cook Islands has been published and is available at www.mfem.gov.ck. The actions will be progressed ahead of schedule, with support from PACER Plus, the UNCDF and other donor partners.



Baseline business cost research – Not Started

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Establish metrics for monitoring and evaluation the cost of doing business in the Cook Islands.

Update: This action was not started due to the Cost of Business global cost benchmarking series being discontinued. In the meantime, Chamber of Commerce monitor business confidence and (some) business costs. This action is included under the barriers to business workstream.



Business small claims practices – Not Started

Lead agency: MFEM, MOJ

Description: Review the judiciary's processes for businesses making small claims.

Update: This action is included under the barriers to business workstream.

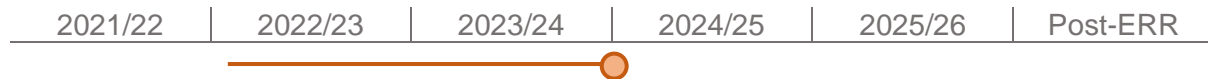


Transport: WOF, vehicle registration and licensing processes and fees - In Progress

Lead agency: MOT

Description: Review of the Transport Licensing Act, registration and transport licensing processes.

Update: This action is included under the barriers to business workstream. Following Cabinet endorsement, MOT will soon release the Cook Islands Land Transport Policy that encompasses findings and recommendations for future developments in land transport.



Building approvals processes – Complete

Lead agency: MFEM, NES

Description: Review the building permitting process with a particular emphasis on ways to improve certainty, independence and fairness.

Update: The review is now complete and is now in the implementation stage.



Fees Free Payments – Complete

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Continued tuition fee payments under the Fees Free extension.

Update: This action is included under the Productivity Growth workstream. Fees Free was extended through to Semester 2, 2022 for continuing students.



Attraction and transit arrangements for migrant workers – Complete

Lead agency: MFEM, MFAI, TMO, INTAFF

Description: Reduced barriers to entry to replace our lost migrant labour force and address workforce needs.

Update: June 2024 the NZ government announced removal of the transit visa for Fijian Nationals.



Population measurement – departure cards – Complete

Lead agency: MFEM, MFAI, Customs

Description: Investigate reinstating departure cards.

Update: New departure cards were procured and implemented in 2021/22. This action is included under the labour force and population workstream. MFEM intends to evaluate the departure card system by December 2024.



Population measurement – statistics set – Not Started

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Study to identify possible improvements to border statistics.

Update: This action is included under the labour force and population workstream. The Population Policy includes a priority action to strengthen population statistics.



National Employment Policy – In Progress

Lead agency: INTAFF

Description: National Employment Policy to be published and implemented.

Update: This action is included under the labour force and population workstream. The title and description for this action have been amended from “Labour Strategy” to better reflect the scope of the work, as set out in the Cook Islands Decent Work Country Programme. The timing for this action has been extended through 2023/24, to allow for stakeholder consultation. This action is being implemented with technical assistance from the International Labour Organisation.



Migrant labour force investigation – Complete

Lead agency: INTAFF

Description: Additional INTAFF staff member to assist with migrant worker investigations, complaints and transfer process.

Update: INTAFF received funding in 23/24 and 24/25 for an additional staff member to assist with migrant investigations and transfers. Substantial progress has been made by INTAFF on investigations. The Immigration Act changes also clarify migrant workers' visa rights. This action is now complete, with further funding to INTAFF dependent on future budget priorities.



Promotion of working holiday visa pathways – In Progress

Lead agency: MFEM, Tourism, INTAFF

Description: A promotional campaign based on longer-term stays and working holidays for digital nomads.

Update: Market Analysis & Positioning Strategy is due to commence in the next few months, with a draft delivered in September. Visa requirements for all types of visas including long-stays are now clearly described on <https://cookislands.travel/how-to-book/faq>.



Policies supporting secondary jobs and the gig economy – Not Started

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: Research on 'the Gig Economy' and the e-commerce and tax laws that are needed to enable this kind of working for Cook Islanders living in the Cook Islands.

Update: This action is complementary to the e-commerce review, the immigration settings and the National Employment Policy. It is included under the labour force and population workstream.



Retirement investment attraction – Deferred

Lead agency: MFEM

Description: A collection of activities designed to make it easier for people to understand the advantages of returning to the Cook Islands for retirement.

Update: This action is included under the labour force and population workstream. It has been deferred for consideration following the finalisation of the period of the ERR, when the Cook Islands economy is expected to shift from recovery to growth.



Annex 2 - The relationship between the EDS and the ERR

The EDS identifies actions that create the foundations for the Cook Islands economic development over the next decade. The EDS sets the vision of “Working together to build a dynamic, prosperous and inclusive economic future for Cook Islanders, which is in harmony with our culture and environment.”

The ERR was prepared in response to the country’s immediate needs following the pandemic and border closures. The overarching purpose of the ERR is to facilitate sustainable economic recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 so the Cook Islands is on track to achieve the EDS 2030 objectives.

The ERR seeks to facilitate sustainable economic recovery through reactive continuation of ERP measures, and through the following ‘growth’ workstreams:

- Reducing the Cost of Borrowing
- Managing the Burden of Public Debt
- Infrastructure Investment
- Barriers to Business Performance
- Productivity growth
- Improved Public Sector efficiency
- Labour force and Population
- Foreign Investment to benefit the Cook Islands.

The EDS sits under the National Sustainable Development Agenda 2020+ (NSDA). It sets out five objectives, with 101 associated actions:

- Objective 1: Improving equity and access for all
- Objective 2: Transforming our economy
- Objective 3: Developing our people and culture
- Objective 4: Investing in our islands
- Objective 5: Greening our economy

The NSDA sits under the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. The 2050 Strategy sets out our long-term approach to working together as a region, and as countries and territories, communities, and people of the Pacific.

The final strategy is the Sustainable Development Goals that serves as a global framework for achieving a more sustainable, equitable and prosperous world.

Figure 1 below sets out the relationship between the Sustainable Development Goals, 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, National Sustainable Development Agenda, the Economic Development Strategy and finally the Economic Recovery Roadmap.

