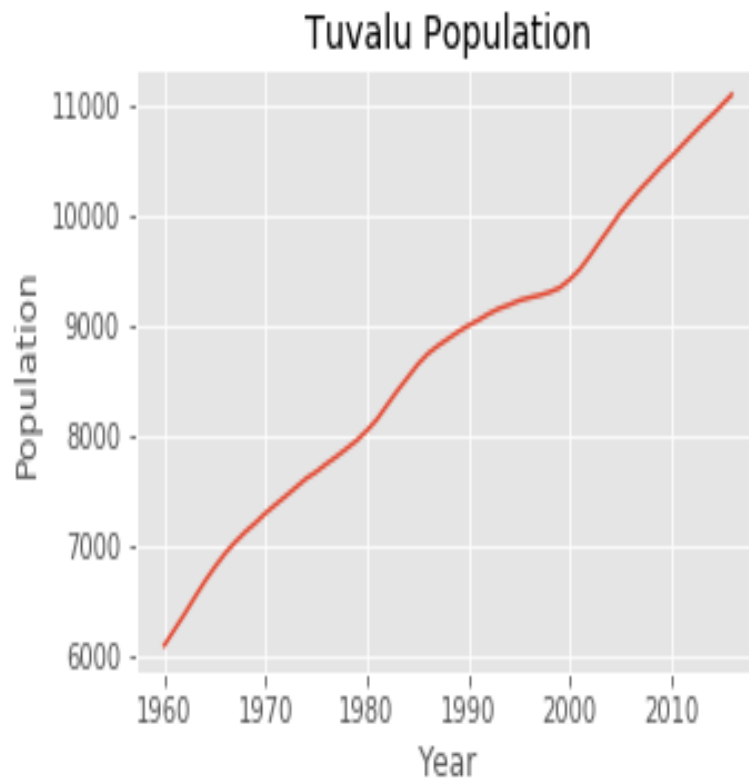


Tuvalu



Coordinates: 8°31′15″S 179°11′55″E﻿ / ﻿8.52083°S 179.19861°E﻿ / -8.52083; 179.19861Tuvalu (/tuˈvuːluː/ (listen) too-VAH-loo or /tuˈvuːluː/ TOO-v-loo), formerly known as the Ellice Islands, is a Polynesian island nation located in the Pacific Ocean, about midway between Hawaii and Australia, lying east-northeast of the Santa Cruz Islands (belonging to the Solomons), southeast of Nauru, south of Kiribati, west of Tokelau, northwest of Samoa and Wallis and Futuna and north of Fiji. It comprises three reef islands and six true atolls spread out between the latitude of 5° to 10° south and longitude of 176° to 180°, west of the International Date Line. Tuvalu has a population of 10,640 (2012 census). Situated in Oceania, the total land area of the islands of Tuvalu is 26 square kilometres (10 sq mi). The first inhabitants of Tuvalu were Polynesians. The pattern of settlement that is believed to have occurred is that the Polynesians spread out from Samoa and Tonga into the Tuvaluan atolls, with Tuvalu providing a stepping stone to migration into the Polynesian Outlier communities in Melanesia and Micronesia.