**Region: Melanesia**

Countries Include: Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, West Papua (Indonesia),

**Biodiversity and Global Environmental Benefits Regional Highlights:**

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| Country | Country-level biodiversity significance |
| Fiji | * Fiji is an island nation containing over 300 islands, with Viti Levu and Vanua Levu comprising 85 percent of the total country area. Fiji’s marine habitats include estuaries, sea grass, protected and exposed shores, coral reefs, lagoons, and slopes. The country has the third largest area of mangroves in the Pacific Island region.[[1]](#footnote-0) * Due to Fiji’s relative isolation, it has a considerable number of endemic species, which are found throughout the islands. This distribution is matched in the geographic scope of species range-size rarity—relative to the global average coverage, Fiji has high, and homogeneously distributed importance. * Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) within the country are protected at a rate below the global average, 10.36 to 44 percent, respectively. Large KBAs outside of/or partially within Protected Areas (PAs) include: [East Kadavu Passage](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/30103), and [Ringgold Islands Marine](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/31011), among others. PA protection of KBAs has risen from 2000, from 3.68 percent. * Stores of irrecoverable carbon are relatively low throughout Fiji, with concentrations along the coastal mangroves. * Academic and conservation prioritization mapping efforts include: [adaptive comanagement of marine protected areas](https://conbio.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/cobi.12153), [priority forests](https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/oryx/article/priority-forests-for-conservation-in-fiji-landscapes-hotspots-and-ecological-processes/8C3A5DBA456377210658669B0744DD3E), and an additional study by IUCN on [community conservation and native species](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Mbulelo_Dopolo/publication/331893668_South_Africa_works_towards_eradicating_introduced_house_mice_from_sub-Antarctic_Marion_Island_the_largest_island_yet_attempted_for_mice/links/5c91f844a6fdccd4602c0cf0/South-Africa-works-towards-eradicating-introduced-house-mice-from-sub-Antarctic-Marion-Island-the-largest-island-yet-attempted-for-mice.pdf#page=568). * The Marine and Coastal Biodiversity Management in Pacific Island Countries (MACBIO) has provided a spatial marine planning atlas [here](https://www.dropbox.com/s/d8p1uzmg3x1m2wl/FijiAtlas_final.pdf?dl=0), with accompanying [webmap](http://macbio-pacific.info/Interactive-Atlas/Fiji/Fiji.html) (report is more useful). * The primary land cover types are Forest - 1.25Mha; Agriculture - 604kha; Wetland - 95.9kha; Water - 34.2kha. * Fiji has 2 ramsar sites with additional context [here](https://rsis.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/rsiswp_search/exports/Ramsar-Sites-annotated-summary-Fiji.pdf). * Fiji is just below the global average in ocean health, with large gaps in sustainable food provision, and moderate deficiencies in coastal livelihoods and economies, and clean waters. |
| Papua New Guinea | * Papua New Guinea (PNG) is on the eastern half of the island of New Guinea. It’s marine ecosystems include more than 8,000 km of mangrove swamps, lagoons, wetlands, atolls, and coral reefs. Beyond PNG’s rich marine environment it also encompasses the third largest tropical rainforest in the world, with rainforests covering 28.8 million hectares. Coral reefs of PNG play an important habitat for approximately 10 percent of the world’s fish species. Mangrove swamps have the highest diversity in the world, and have been relatively stable for the past 40 years—playing a critical role as a carbon store.[[2]](#footnote-1) * The islands of PNG and its central corridor consist of the majority of the country’s endemic species, with this distribution matched in the geographic scope of species range-size rarity—relative to the global average coverage, PNG has high importance. * Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) within the country are protected at a rate below the global average, 6.3 to 44 percent, respectively. Large KBAs outside of/or partially within Protected Areas (PAs) are throughout the country and include: [Telefomin](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/26409), [Huon Peninsula](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/26364), and [Southern New Ireland Marine](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/30104), among others. PA protection of KBAs has risen from 2000, from 5.96 percent. * Academic and conservation prioritization mapping efforts include: a study on [climate impacts to biodiversity and species richness in New Guinea](https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/5/11/eaaz1455.full) (which emphasizes loss of species used by IPLCs), the [challenges of infrastructure with high priority conservation areas](https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0219408) (the study has some consideration of Indigenous Peoples priorities), and [PNG’s Fifth National Report to CBD](https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/pg/pg-nr-05-en.pdf) which highlights threats. * Stores of irrecoverable carbon are high throughout PNG’s dense forests, with additional concentrations along the coastal mangroves and islands. * The primary land cover types are Forest - 38.2Mha; Agriculture - 5.77Mha; Wetland - 1.63Mha; Water - 668kha; Sparse vegetation - 439kha; and Shrubland - 243kha. * PNG has 2 ramsar sites with additional context [here](https://rsis.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/rsiswp_search/exports/Ramsar-Sites-annotated-summary-Papua-New-Guinea.pdf). * Fiji is just below the global average in ocean health, with large gaps in sustainable food provision, and moderate deficiencies in coastal livelihoods and economies, and clean waters. |
| The Solomon Islands | * The biodiversity of the Solomon Islands are a core feature of the county, providing extensive ecosystem services and sustenance/revenues to the rural populations (85 percent of the country’s population).[[3]](#footnote-2) The Solomon Islands are unique in terms of their marine species, and are encompassed by the Bismarck Solomon Seas Ecoregion. * The Solomon Islands have high biodiversity and endemism throughout the entirety of the island network. This distribution is matched in the geographic scope of species range-size rarity. * Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) within the country are protected at a rate well below the global average, 8.54 to 44 percent, respectively. Large KBAs outside of/or partially within Protected Areas (PAs) include: [Guadalcanal Watersheds](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/26705), [Marovo](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/45052), and [Kolombangara Upland Forest](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/23641), among others. PA protection of KBAs has risen from 2000, from 3.51 percent. * Stores of irrecoverable carbon are modest and homogeneously distributed throughout the Solomon Islands. * Academic and conservation prioritization mapping efforts include: a [social impact assessment of IPLCs](https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/65964-safeguard-wwf-solomonislands-epf-socialassessment.pdf) by WWF for CEPF conservation, and a [second project document](https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/final-report-65755.pdf) that highlights project impacts and a conservation profile of the country as of 2017, and a [cultural landscape approach to community conservation](https://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol19/iss4/art41/). * The Marine and Coastal Biodiversity Management in Pacific Island Countries (MACBIO) has provided a spatial marine planning atlas [here](https://www.dropbox.com/s/iqok8emdasdce7w/SolomonsAtlas_final.pdf?dl=0), with accompanying [webmap](http://macbio-pacific.info/Interactive-Atlas/Solomon%20Islands/Solomon%20Islands.html) (report is more useful). * The primary land cover types are Forest - 2.59Mha; Wetland - 160kha; Water - 106kha; Agriculture - 47.8kha; and Settlement - 1.19kha. * The Solomon Islands have no Ramsar sites. * The Solomon Islands are below the global average in ocean health, with large gaps in artisanal fishing opportunities, and moderate deficiencies in sustainable food provision, and carbon storage. |
| Vanuatu | * Vanuatu is an archipelago in the Southwest Pacific Ocean, with high endemic biodiversity in terms of marine and terrestrial species. Vanuatu's fisheries are organized along subsistence, artisanal, and commercial scales—with increasing economic demand driven and fish population overexploitation by the artisanal and commercial fisheries.[[4]](#footnote-3) * Vanuatu has moderate biodiversity and endemism throughout the entirety of the island network. This distribution is matched in the geographic scope of species range-size rarity. * Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) within the country are protected at a rate well below the global average, 6.16 to 44 percent, respectively. Large KBAs outside of/or partially within Protected Areas (PAs) include: [Santo Mountain Chain](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/27485), [Vanua Lava Marine](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/31340), [Epi](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/44688), and [Gaua](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/27484), among others. PA protection of KBAs has risen from 2000, from 5.37 percent. * Stores of irrecoverable carbon are modest and homogeneously distributed throughout Vanuatu. * Academic and conservation prioritization mapping efforts include: an [urban ecosystem prioritization mapping project](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0964569118306719) based on significance to local communities, and an [ecosystem service valuation](https://ageconsearch.umn.edu/record/273524/) which found:   + “Subsistence gardens generate US$1.5 billion of value each year for Vanuatu;   + Tanna is potentially significantly more heavily reliant than Vanuatu on ecosystem services for food (45%, compared to 16%) and provisioning services generally (81% compared to 70%);   + Coral reefs present a greater proportion of ecosystem service value nationally than for Tanna (53%, compared to 39%).” * The Marine and Coastal Biodiversity Management in Pacific Island Countries (MACBIO) has provided a spatial marine planning atlas [here](https://www.dropbox.com/s/0rlp338yrcob2jf/VanuatuAtlas_final.pdf?dl=0), with accompanying [webmap](http://macbio-pacific.info/Interactive-Atlas/Vanuatu/Vanuatu.html) (report is more useful). * [Vanuatu's NBSAP (2018 - 2030)](https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/vu/vu-nbsap-v2-en.pdf) highlights Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas. * The primary land cover types are Forest - 1.16Mha; Agriculture - 66.6kha; Water - 33.0kha; Wetland - 23.3kha; and Bare - 2.49kha. * Vanuatu has no Ramsar sites. * Vanuatu is above the global average in ocean health, with strengths in coastal livelihoods and economies, carbon storage, and biodiversity. |
| West Papua - Indonesia | * Indonesia is an archipelago which comprises over 17,000 islands, and 7 major biogeographic regions. Indonesia is considered one of the world’s megadiverse countries, with two of the world’s hotspots: the Wallacea and Sundaland Biodiversity Hotspot.[[5]](#footnote-4) Indonesia’s population is highly dependent on the country’s coastal ecosystem services, particularly the mangroves, coral reef, and sea grass plain. * There are a number of endemic species to Indonesia's ecosystems, which are found throughout the archipelago. This distribution is matched in the geographic scope of species range-size rarity—relative to the global average coverage, Indonesia is among the homogeneously critical countries. * Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) within the country are protected at a rate below the global average, 24.92 to 44 percent, respectively. Large KBAs outside of/or partially within Protected Areas (PAs) clustered in Sumatra, Kalimantan, Papua, and Sulawesi, particularly Maputo and Gaza Province and include: [Rawa di Pesisir Kapuas](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/15905), [Pulau Nias](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/15804), [Kepulauan Selayar](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/44852), [Kawaluso](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/44748), [Wapoga](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/26463), [Bumi - Tobo - Sirwo](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/26434), and the [Hose-Laga mountains](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/16058). PA protection of KBAs has risen from 2000, from 18.77 percent. * Mapping efforts by AMAN’s membership are found [here](https://www.aman.or.id/peta/), with BRWA’s ancestral lands database [here](https://www.brwa.or.id/sig/).[[6]](#footnote-5) * Prioritization mapping efforts of the Wallacea Biodiversity Hotspot, conducted by CEPF have extensively profiled KBAs by irreplaceability, vulnerability[[7]](#footnote-6), as well as climate risk, Indigenous and local community capacity, and funding as of 2014.[[8]](#footnote-7) * The entirety of West Papua is considered to be a critical marine conservation area, with unparalleled species richness and endemism[[9]](#footnote-8). * Stores of irrecoverable carbon are relatively high throughout Papua. * The primary land cover types are Forest - 100Mha; Agriculture - 67.1Mha; Wetland - 15.9Mha; Water - 2.55Mha; and Sparse vegetation - 1.93Mha. This however, is not disaggregated by primary or natural forests, of which FAO produced estimates in 2015 as: Naturally Regenerated Forest - 40.0Mha; Primary Forest - 46.0Mha; Planted Forest - 4.95Mha.[[10]](#footnote-9) * Indonesia has 7 ramsar sites with additional context [here](https://rsis.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/rsiswp_search/exports/Ramsar-Sites-annotated-summary-Indonesia.pdf). * Indonesia is below the global average in ocean health, with large gaps in sustainable food provision, and moderate deficiencies in artisanal fishing opportunities, coastal livelihoods and economies, and clean waters. |

1. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=fj> [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=pg> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=sb> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=vu> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=id> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
6. There are ongoing disputes over the accuracy of this mapping effort and the level of recognition given by the government to communal lands in the one map policy. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
7. Appendix 3 <https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/ecosystemprofile_wallacea.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
8. <https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/ecosystemprofile_wallacea.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
9. <http://www.coraltriangleinitiative.org/sites/default/files/resources/8_Geographic%20Priorities%20for%20Marine%20Biodiversity%20Conservation%20in%20Indonesia.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
10. <http://www.fao.org/forest-resources-assessment/current-assessment/en/> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)