**Region: Polynesia**

Countries Include: The Cook Islands (NZ.), Easter Island (Chile), Niue, Samoa, Tokelau (NZ), Tonga, Tuvalu, Wallis & Futuna (Fr.)

**Threats to Biodiversity, Environment, and IPLC Regional Context:**

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| Country | Threats to biodiversity and environment | Threats to IPLCs, and Root Causes |
| The Cook Islands (New Zealand) | * Threats include: alien species, land conversion and unsustainable land use, unsustainable harvesting of wild resources, fire, climate change (sea and ambient temperatures).[[1]](#footnote-0) | * While the Cook Islands remain as an official part of New Zealand, it exercises full sovereignty over its internal and external affairs.There is no data specific to the Cook Islands’ performance on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| Easter Island (Chile) | * Tourism and unsustainable land and marine use. | * Easter Island (Rapa Rui) has the status of “special territory” within Chile since 2008. Administratively, it is placed under the Valparaiso region - and its charter remained under debate in the Chilean Congress since 2011. * Chile is ranked 142 /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). It had been gradually improving across cohesion, economic, political, and social indicators from 2012-2019, but the situation has severely worsened since then. There is no data specific to Easter Island’s performance along these indicators. * According to Global Witness, at least two land defenders were killed in Chile between 2016-2018. * A standoff over a land dispute between the Island’s Indiegnous people and the Chilean government in 2011 ended with the armed arrest of the protesters. |
| Niue | * Niue’s ecosystems and biodiversity are particularly vulnerable to disturbances because of its small size and isolation. Threats include natural disasters like cyclones, some fishing techniques, coral bleaching in recent years, natural instability and alien invasive species.[[2]](#footnote-1) | * Niue is a self-governing state in free-association with New Zealand. There is no data specific to the Niue’s performance on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| Samoa | * The main threats to biodiversity identified in the NBSAP include: forest clearance, population growth, over-exploitation of natural resources, non-sustainable development, natural disasters and the spread of introduced animal and plant pests. More specific threats include climate change, coastal pollution, logging, agricultural clearing, forest fires and human settlement.[[3]](#footnote-2) | * Samoa is ranked 112th/178 on the [fragile states index.](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/) It has been gradually improving across cohesion, political and social indicators for the past decade, while having mixed progress and regression on economic indicators. * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| Tokelau (New Zealand) | * Threats include key invasive species (Pacific rats, feral house, cats, feral pigs, yellow crazy ants and some weeds); development or human pressures; and climate change.[[4]](#footnote-3) | * Tokelau remains a dependent territory of New Zealand, meaning that it is not officially governed autonomously. Two referendums in the 2000s narrowly missed the threshold to achieve autonomy. * New Zealand is ranked 173/178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/), which places it among the most stable countries of the world. There is no data specific to the Tokelaus’ performance on these indicators. * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| Tonga | * Overexploitation and destructive fishing practices are still the major threats to the marine ecosystem although natural disasters (i.e. hurricanes & tsunamis, water temperatures variations, natural predators, etc.) may contribute. | * There is no data on Tonga on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/), * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| Tuvalu | * Threats include: littering, over-fishing and hunting, use of fishing nets and modern fishing methods, use of guns and the introduction of pests, use of inappropriate technologies (e.g. solid and liquid waste water disposal systems), uncontrolled use of resources and uncontrolled livestock, increasing consumption patterns arising from increases in human populations. Climate change is rapidly emerging as the greatest long-term threat to biodiversity in Tuvalu. Indeed, the islands’ vulnerability to tropical storms has increased by actions such as the reduction in tree cover and damage to reefs. Invasive and alien species are also a major threat to biodiversity in the Pacific Islands, with nearly 65 percent of the flora found in Tuvalu being alien.[[5]](#footnote-4) | * There is no data on Tuvalu on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/), * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| Wallis & Futuna (France) | * Certain types of man-made pressure are directly threatening the territory’s natural resources and biodiversity and include:   + Pollution caused by inadequate waste management, pig-farm effluent and the lack of a community sewerage system;   + Invasive species that were assessed by a 2014 study at 150 in the islands, including fire ants and giant African snails;   + Ever-faster natural environment destruction caused by urban sprawl and farming (bush clearance and fire).[[6]](#footnote-5) | * Wallis and Fotruna are a French Overseas Collectivity which has its own set of statutory laws. * There is no data on Wallis and Futuna on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/), * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |

1. https://www.sprep.org/attachments/VirLib/CookIslands/Conserving-biodiversity-Enhancing-Ecosystem-Functions-Ridge-to-Reef-GEF-PIF-2013.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=nu#facts> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=ws#facts> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. <https://www.tokelau.org.nz/site/tokelau/CONSERVATION%20SURVEY%20OF%20TOKELAU.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=tv> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
6. <https://integre.spc.int/images/pdf/INTEGRE/telechargements/Action_Plan_WallisFutuna.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)