



GOVERNMENT OF NIUE

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Niue Announces New Initiative to Fund Ocean Protection

NGOs and private donors among the first to support Niue's Ocean Conservation Commitments, aiming for a target of USD \$18 million

NEW YORK (Sept. 19, 2023) – Today in New York, Premier of Niue, Hon. Dalton Tagelagi on behalf of the Government of Niue and the non-profit Tofia Niue (a public-private partnership) launched a first-of-its-kind sustainable funding initiative to ensure long-term conservation of its sovereign waters: Ocean Conservation Commitments (OCCs). This initiative will be managed by the newly formed Niue and Ocean Wide (NOW) Trust, a charitable trust established to support Niue's ambitious conservation goals and foster a sustainable blue economy for the people of Niue.

OCCs are a philanthropic mechanism designed to help fund the long term protection of Niue's ocean territory whilst leveraging a wide range of mutually reinforcing outcomes. Donors may sponsor one or more OCCs, each representing the costs to protect and manage a square kilometer of Niue's ocean territory for up to 20 years. Sponsorship of one OCC is US\$148 (NZD \$250), with 127,000 OCCs available (based on the size of Niue's Moana Mahu Marine Protected Area, which spans 127,000 km²).

As part of the launch of the new initiative, Premier Hon. Dalton Tagelagi says the Government of Niue will sponsor nearly 1,700 OCCs – one for every resident of Niue.

"As a small island nation, Niue's vast marine territory holds immense ecological, cultural, and economic value to our people. Its ecosystem services also provide regional and global environmental benefits. The ocean is everything to us. We are also proud that several NGOs and private donors have already committed to sponsor the first OCCs: the [Blue Nature Alliance](#), Chris Larsen and Lyna Lam, and [Conservation International](#)," said Hon. Dalton Tagelagi.

"The proceeds raised through OCC sponsorships will be held and managed by the Niue and Ocean Wide (NOW) Trust and used to fund a range of conservation, resilience, and sustainable development efforts that reinforce durable ocean conservation and sustainably manage the island's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and Territorial Sea (TTS), all of which is part of the Niue Nukutuluea Multiple-Use Marine Park, established in 2022. With a NOW Trust capitalization target of USD \$18 million, OCC sponsorship will directly contribute to the incremental cost, above what the GON currently spends, of conserving and managing the EEZ and TTS, as well as the value of ecosystem services the EEZ and TTS provides," says Premier Tagelagi.

Premier Tagelagi adds that, with the establishment of the Niue Nukutuluea Multiple-Use Marine Park last year and culminating today with the launch of the OCCs, Niue has established itself as a small but important global leader in ocean conservation.

The funding provided by the OCCs will allow Niue to achieve many things in conserving its marine environment, including enhanced community engagement and monitoring, compliance, and enforcement through building control and surveillance capacities.

“Niue will now have the ability to implement monitoring and evaluation activities to assess reef health and fish stocks and strengthen coastal management plans for the island’s 14 villages. Moreover, we are keen to also fund ocean conservation education programmes and scholarships for Niuean children and community members, as well as promote traditional knowledge and practices in park management. Ultimately, this approach to funding marine conservation via OCCs will empower Niue to build a climate-resilient and sustainable blue economy to ensure long-term durability,” says Premier Tagelagi.

Niue, a small island nation in the South Pacific, has a marine territory 1,200 times larger than its land mass. The 321,018-square-kilometer area is home to pristine coral reefs, undersea mountains and diverse marine life. Niue’s EEZ has largely been unexploited and serves as a sanctuary for many shark, whale, dolphin, ray and turtle species. Sponsorship of the OCCs, and/or general donations will help maintain Niue’s intact marine ecosystems for the benefit of its people and the global community at large.

“Even the smallest nations can make global waves. Congratulations to Niue, whose leadership in conservation is proving that our 30x30 ambitions are entirely attainable when we unite governments and private funders around innovative funding. We hope other island governments seize this historic momentum to protect the pristine beauty, and life-sustaining bounties, of our oceans,” added [M. Sanjayan](#), [Blue Nature Alliance](#) Steering Council member and CEO of [Conservation International](#).

The funds raised from sponsorship of OCCs will be held and managed by the Niue and Ocean Wide (NOW) Trust, a New Zealand Charitable Trust, established by the nation’s first public-private-partnership between the Government of Niue and Tofia Niue, a local nonprofit organization. After seven years of successful collaboration, the partnership has settled a trust that is establishing an endowment of at least USD \$18 million to directly fund Niue’s conservation efforts. Anyone from individuals to corporations to foundations, multi-laterals and bilateral development partners are invited to sponsor OCCs, thereby directly contributing to the conservation of Niue’s precious ocean resources and associated outcomes. OCC sponsorship will be made available through the [NOW Trust website](#) or by direct enquiry with NOW Trust.

For further information, please contact the NOW Trust team at niueoceanwide01@gmail.com.

Anzee Mougavalu, GON Communications Officer Email: niuegovernment.media@mail.gov.nu

(External Communications) Julien Leys, Pendulum Strategies, Mobile +64 21 655 598

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