



Project Title

'The Ports Authority of Tonga's **GreenPORT Framework** – Setting a new environmental benchmark in the Pacific'

Project Description

At the Ports Authority of Tonga, we are proud to nominate our inaugural **GreenPort Framework** in the IAPH / WPSP 'Environmental Care' Category in the 2026 World Port Sustainability Awards.

Our **GreenPort Framework** is a transformative, 'whole-of-port' environmental strategy that strengthens environmental performance, climate resilience, and long-term operational sustainability at our nation's primary international gateway.

Recognising our role as a critical lifeline for trade and community wellbeing, we established this framework to address the unique challenges we face as a small island port exposed to climate change and resource constraints.

Our **GreenPort Framework** is more than an environmental initiative; it is an investment in Tonga's future. It recognises that strong ports **and** a healthy marine environment are both essential to the prosperity, resilience, and wellbeing of our nation.

By protecting the environment today, we are safeguarding opportunities for future generations of Tongans

Our **GreenPort Framework** integrates six strategic themes into a coordinated program of action with short, medium and longer term aspirations. Our six strategic themes are:

- Governance
- Pollution and Waste Management
- Emission Reduction and Decarbonisation
- Climate Adaptation and Resilience
- Biodiversity Management
- Disaster Preparedness.

These are underpinned by our ISO 14001-certified Environmental Management System and aligned with national, regional, and international frameworks, including the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Importantly, the development of our **GreenPort Framework** included deep stakeholder engagement with port staff, port users/operators, government agencies and international experts.



IAPH Sustainability Awards 2026

Additionally, our **GreenPort Framework** has been developed with close reference to the World Bank's Port Reform Toolkit (Module 8 – Environmental Sustainability) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

As a Small Pacific Nation, we are proud of our achievements so far including: gaining ISO 14001 accreditation for our environmental management system, installing solar panel installation, installing shore power facilities at our domestic wharf, ensuring significant waste reduction / recycling during major infrastructure upgrades, procuring green-port operational equipment, installing dedicated oil waste recycling facilities and the construction of climate-resilient critical port infrastructure (helping to improve resilience to climate change, extreme weather and natural disasters) including at the recent upgrade of our international wharves in Nuku'alofa.

Our **GreenPort Framework** now stretches our ambition further and establishes a leadership position across governance, pollution and waste management, emissions reduction, renewable energy transition, biodiversity monitoring, and enhanced disaster preparedness.

Through the development of our **GreenPort Framework**, we are embedding enhanced environmental stewardship and sustainability into all aspects of our operations and positioning our port as a leader for climate-resilient ports across the Pacific.

Our project aligns strongly with the IAPH evaluation criteria. It demonstrates innovation through its integrated design, leadership through our organisational commitment, and clarity through a structured and actionable framework.

It contributes meaningfully to sustainability and the SDGs, while fostering strong collaboration across government, industry, and community stakeholders. Our GreenPort Framework represents a scalable model for small island nations.

By protecting the environment today, we are safeguarding opportunities for future generations of Tongans and the Pacific region.

Criteria 1. Original and innovative character of the project

Through our GreenPort Framework, we have introduced an integrated sustainability model specifically designed for the realities of small island ports. Our approach **brings together six strategic themes into a single coordinated framework** that connects environmental performance with operational resilience and future planning.

Unlike conventional approaches, we combine international best practice, such as ISO 14001, with solutions tailored to local constraints, including limited resources and high climate exposure. This enables practical, achievable implementation within our Pacific context.

We have also adopted a staged delivery model, using targeted **“sprint projects”** alongside longer-term actions to accelerate early outcomes while supporting systemic change.

By integrating global standards with local adaptation, we have created a scalable and transferable framework that can support other ports facing similar environmental and operational challenges worldwide.

In terms of originality – this is **the first integrated GreenPort Framework in the Pacific region** – and we are determined to lead change.



GreenPORT Framework with six (6) key themes and focus areas

Criteria 2. Vision and leadership deployed by the port's management

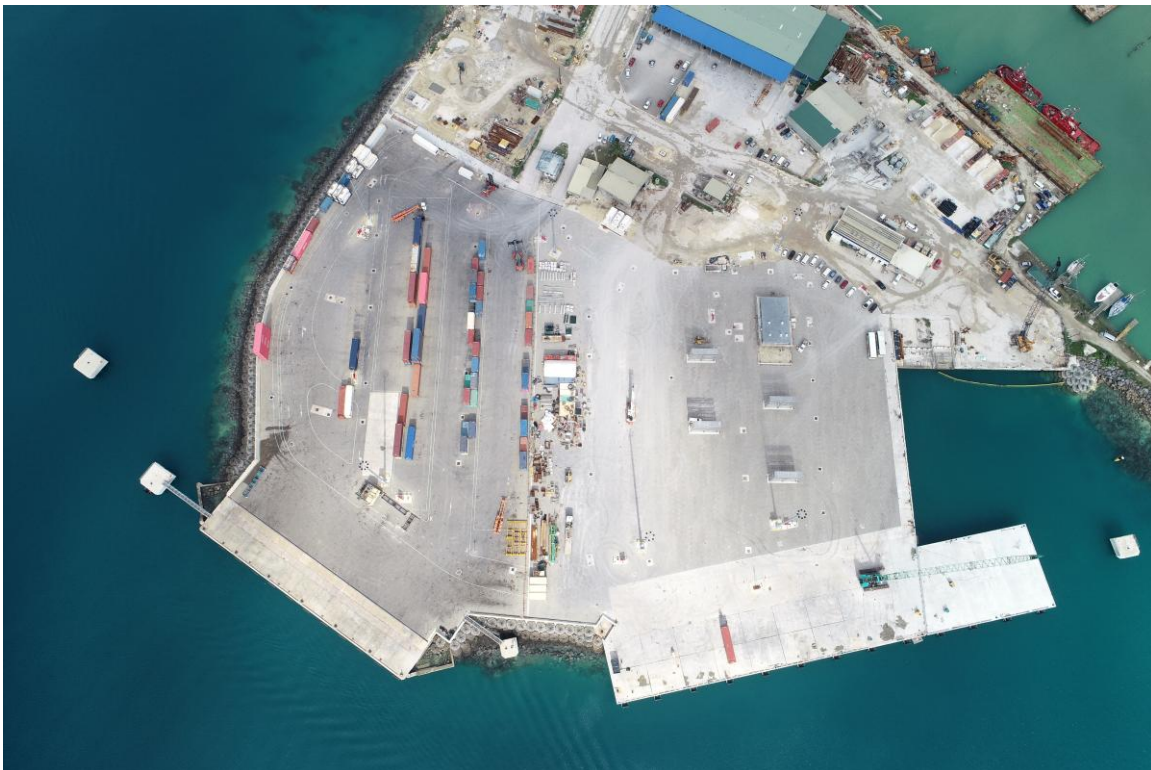
As the Ports Authority of Tonga, we have demonstrated clear leadership by embedding sustainability at the centre of our governance and decision-making processes.

We recognise our dual responsibility as both a national economic gateway and a steward of our marine and coastal environment.

Our leadership is reflected in our proactive approach, moving beyond compliance to establish a structured Environmental Management System and long-term sustainability framework aligned with national and regional strategies.

We have committed to ambitious targets in emissions reduction, resilience, and environmental performance, supported by clear governance structures and accountability mechanisms.

Through this project, we are not only improving our own operations but also demonstrating leadership across the Pacific port sector, contributing to broader national resilience and sustainability goals.



Tonga's international port

Criteria 3. Overall project impression

Our GreenPort Framework presents a clear, structured, and actionable framework that translates complex sustainability challenges into practical outcomes.

Our approach is organised around defined **themes, focus areas, and staged actions**, ensuring that implementation is both realistic and measurable.

We have supported the framework with documented achievements, including renewable energy initiatives and infrastructure upgrades, demonstrating that our strategy is grounded in real delivery. The inclusion of monitoring systems, governance arrangements, and regular reporting ensures transparency and continuous improvement over time.

Overall, we have developed a well-articulated and credible model that clearly communicates our objectives, progress, and long-term vision for sustainable port operations.



Cover of GreenPort Framework

Criteria 4. Contribution to sustainability and the UN SDGs

Our GreenPort Framework is delivering measurable contributions to environmental sustainability while supporting relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals. Each strategic themes in our Framework includes commentary on relevant SDGs – with the priority SDGs identified as:



Relevant SDGs for GreenPort Framework

Consistent with the Consistent with 'World Bank (2025) Port Reform Toolkit Module 8 - Environmental Sustainability' we see a clear relationship between the following environmental issues and SDGs:

Environmental priorities	3	6	7	9	12	13	14	15	17
Air quality	✓			✓		✓			✓
Climate change			✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Water quality	✓	✓		✓			✓		✓
Waste	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Light pollution	✓			✓					✓
Noise pollution	✓			✓					✓
Land use				✓	✓				✓
Biodiversity		✓					✓	✓	✓

Linkage between SDGs and key themes within GreenPort Framework

By aligning local action with global sustainability objectives, we are ensuring that the benefits of the GreenPort Framework extend beyond our port to support national and regional resilience.

Criteria 5. Cooperation with other ports and/or engagement of societal and commercial stakeholders

Collaboration has been central to the development and implementation of the GreenPORT Framework.

We engaged extensively with government agencies, port users, and community stakeholders to ensure our framework reflects relevant, practical and shared priorities.

We have established a GreenPORT stakeholder group to provide ongoing coordination, enabling shared decision-making and collective ownership of sustainability outcomes.

Our approach also promotes regional collaboration through knowledge sharing and the development of partnerships with other ports.

By embedding stakeholder engagement into our governance structures, we are strengthening operational alignment, building trust, and ensuring that long-term sustainability outcomes are achieved through coordinated action across the broader port ecosystem.



GreenPort Framework Stakeholder Group