

IMPROVING THE AVAILABILITY OF MARITIME TRANSPORT COST DATA IN THE PACIFIC

Tonga Country Report



Acronyms

ASYCUDA	Automated System for Customs Data
IMO	International Maritime Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GRT	Gross register tonnage
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
LOA	Length Overall
LCT	Local Coastal Tankers
MEPC	Marine Environment Protection Committee
MOI	Ministry of Infrastructure
MORC	Ministry of Revenue and Customs
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTCC Pacific	Pacific Maritime Technology Cooperation Centre
NIIP	National Infrastructure and Investment Plan
NDPL	Neptune Pacific Direct Line
PACER	Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations
PAT	Ports Authority Tonga
PFL	Pacific Forum Line
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SPC	The Pacific Community
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Program
TC	Technical Co-Operation Committee
TNSS	Tonga National Statistical System
TSD	Tonga Statistics Department
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

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BACKGROUND

In an ever interdependent and globalized world, countries share not only in growth and prosperity but also in crises and challenges. One such challenge is climate change, and its implications for economies and societies developed and developing alike. Like other economic sectors, maritime transport is at the forefront of the climate change challenge.

With climate change being a global challenge and maritime transport an inherently international industry, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has led efforts to set clear goals, milestones, and regulations with a view to reducing Greenhouse-Gas (GHG) emissions in shipping.

The *2023 IMO GHG Strategy on reduction of GHG emissions from ships* acknowledges that impacts on countries of candidate GHG reduction measures should be assessed and considered as appropriate before their adoption, paying particular attention to the needs of developing countries, especially Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

The Comprehensive Impact Assessment of the IMO short-term GHG reduction measure (MEPC 76/7/13), adopted at the 76th session of the IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 76) identified several data gaps on maritime transport costs and the economics of shipping, especially in the Pacific region. To this, the IMO has initiated a project on improving availability of maritime transport costs data in the Pacific region, funded through the IMO's GHG TC Trust Fund.

In line with discussions in both the IMO's MEPC and the Technical Co-Operation Committee (TC), the Pacific Maritime Transport Cost project is implemented by The Pacific Community (SPC) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Program (SPREP), as hosts of the Pacific Maritime Technology Cooperation Centre (MTCC Pacific), building upon their presence in the region and established contacts with stakeholders throughout the Pacific region on matters related to the reduction of GHG emissions from ships.

The project focuses on nine Pacific countries, namely: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Tonga, and Vanuatu, and aims to improve the availability of relevant maritime transport costs data in the Pacific region, including with the view to facilitating future assessments of impacts of candidate IMO GHG reduction measures in that region.

This country summary report results from desktop reviews and a fact-finding country mission by the MTCC Pacific team to Nuku'alofa, Tonga between 29th October – 5th November 2022. This report documents the stakeholders that were consulted, the agencies, entities, and processes currently in place that collect, use, and store maritime transport costs data, and maps the availability of relevant data in Tonga.

COUNTRY PROFILE

The sovereign state of Tonga comprises of 169 islands spread out across approximately 800 kilometres of the Pacific Ocean from north to south. It is surrounded by Fiji and Wallis and Futuna to the northwest, Samoa to the northeast, Niue to the east and New Caledonia and Vanuatu farther to the west.

Its capital of Nuku'alofa is based on the main island of Tongatapu. Based on the 2021 Census, Tonga has a population of 100,179 persons with 70% residing on Tongatapu.

Trade Summary

Tonga had a total **export** of US\$18.9m and total **imports** of US\$218m leading to a negative **trade balance** of -US\$199m. The **trade growth** is 0.39% compared to a **world growth** of 0.23%. **GDP** of Tonga is US\$469,228,124.15. Tonga **services export** is US\$41,974,962.88 and **services import** is US\$78,224,209.72. Tonga **exports of goods and services as percentage of GDP** is 12.52% and **imports of goods and services as percentage of GDP** is 60.84%.

World Bank's World Integrated Trade Solutions

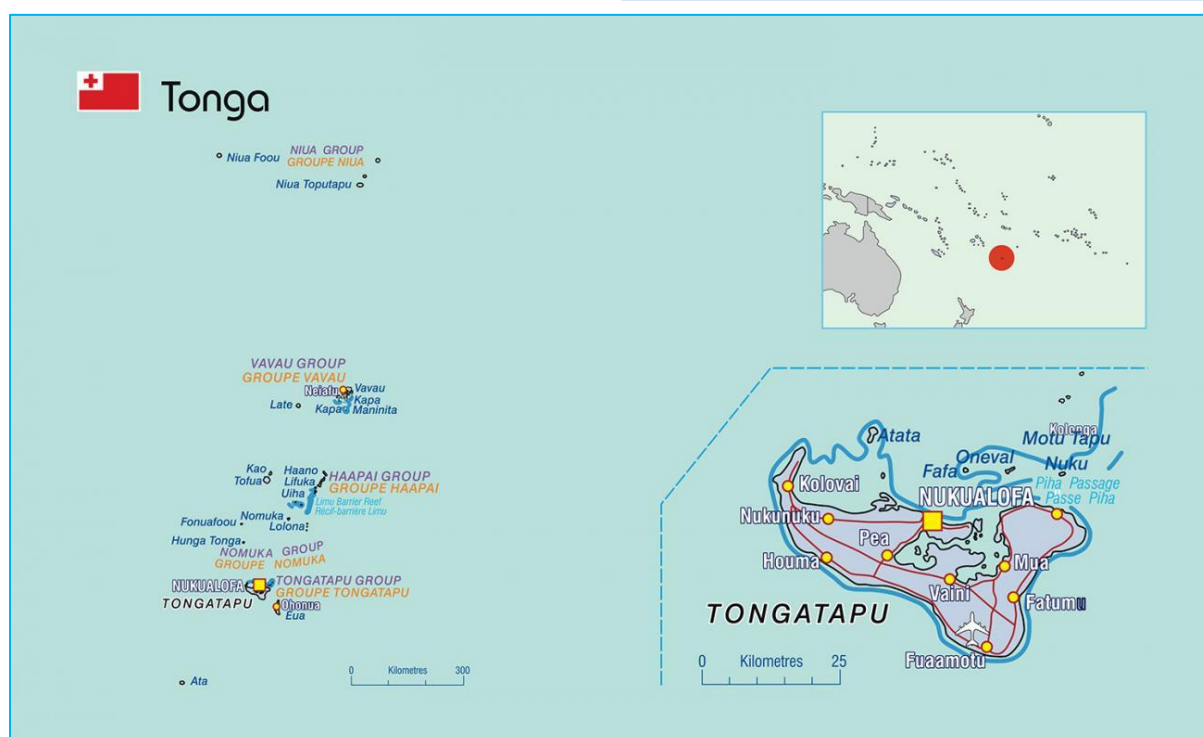


Figure 1: Map of Tonga (Source: <https://www.spc.int/our-members/tonga/details>, accessed 20 May 2023).

Tonga's economy is supported by a large flow of remittances from the large number of Tongans living abroad in the US, New Zealand, and Australia mainly. A substantial drop in remittances due to the global economic downturn has had damaging effects on the Tongan economy and Government revenues, where, in recent years, donors have provided budgetary support. Domestic economic activity is based on services, tourism and agriculture. Around 70% of the population derives at least part of their livelihood from farming, mainly for personal and domestic consumption. Tourism is the largest source of foreign currency earnings after remittances.

The top imports of Tonga are Refined Petroleum, Poultry Meat, Cars, Sheep and Goat Meat, and Sawn Wood, importing mostly from New Zealand, China, Fiji, Australia, and the United States. At the more granular Harmonized Tariff System code tariff-line, Tonga's most valuable exported products in 2021 were Jerusalem artichokes plus manioc roots or tubers including sweet potatoes (17.1% of Tonga's global total), petroleum gases (16.6%), miscellaneous aquatic invertebrates (14.5%), coral and similar materials, miscellaneous fresh or chilled vegetables (11.2%), coral, shells and similar materials (5.6%), whole fresh fish (3.9%), melons and papayas (3.8%), medicinal plants (3.3%), live fish (2.9%), and locust beans (1.6%). Combined, these key exported product groups represent almost two-thirds (65%) of revenues collected for Tonga's total exported goods in 2021.

Country-specific data shows that 83% of products exported from Tonga were bought by importers in: New Zealand (23.2% of the global total), Hong Kong (17.7%), United States (13.1%), Japan (10.9%), Australia (8.8%), Samoa (2.5%), Philippines (1.7%), South Korea (1.7%), Fiji (1.1%), Vanuatu (0.9%), United States Minor Outlying Islands (0.8%) and Taiwan Province of China (0.6%). In macroeconomic terms, Tonga's total exported goods represent 2.4% of its overall Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for 2021 at US \$0.47 billion.

The following pages provide the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's (UNCTAD) General statistics¹ and Maritime profile² for Tonga.

¹ UNCTADstat. *General Profile: Tonga*. <https://unctadstat.unctad.org/countryprofile/generalprofile/en-gb/776/index.html>. accessed 14 September 2023.

² UNCTADstat. *Maritime Profile: Tonga*. <https://unctadstat.unctad.org/countryprofile/MaritimeProfile/en-GB/776/index.html>. accessed 14 September 2023.



UNCTAD

STAT

GENERAL PROFILE: TONGA

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR 2021

Population
0.106 Millions

Exchange rate
2.265 TOP/US\$

GDP
489 Millions current US\$

Land area¹
(q) 720 km²

CPI growth
1.41 %

GDP growth
-3.20 %

INTERNATIONAL MERCHANDISE TRADE

Total merchandise trade

(millions of US\$)	2005	2010	2015	2021
Merchandise exports	10	8	18	(e) 16
Merchandise imports	121	159	209	(e) 276
Merchandise trade balance	-111	-151	-191	(e) -260

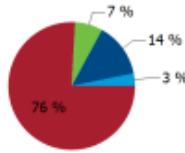
+5.9 %

Merchandise exports growth rate in 2021

Export structure by product group in 2021

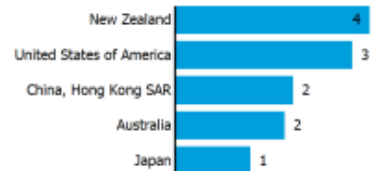
(as % of total exports)

- All food items
- Agricultural raw materials
- Manufactured goods
- Other



Top 5 partners in 2021

(exports, millions of US\$)



INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN SERVICES

Total trade in services²

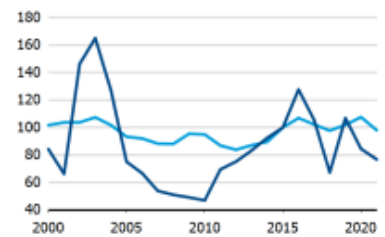
(millions of US\$)	2005	2010	2015	2021
Services exports	25	35	49	43
Services imports	41	48	55	72
Services trade balance	-16	-13	-6	-29

Services exports by main category²

(as % of total services)	2005	2010	2015	2021
Transport	10.4	19.3	23.1	33.8
Travel	56.6	46.0	65.1	21.4
Other services	33.0	34.8	11.3	44.8

TRADE INDICES

- Terms of trade index
- Purchasing power index of exports



ECONOMIC TRENDS

Economic indicators

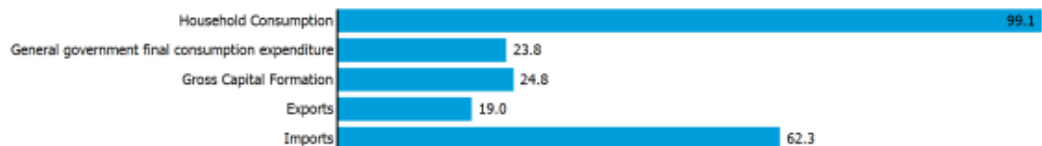
(millions of US\$ unless otherwise specified)	2005	2010	2015	2021
GDP, current	261	371	403	489
GDP per capita, current US\$	2 472	3 457	3 800	4 617
Real GDP growth, y-on-y, %	-0.41	0.80	1.17	-3.20
Current account balance, % of GDP	-9.32	-23.55	-10.93	-3.92
Exchange rate (/US\$)	1.943	1.906	2.106	2.265

-3.2 %

Gross domestic product growth rate in 2021

GDP by expenditure in 2020

(as % of total GDP)





UNCTAD

STAT

MARITIME PROFILE: TONGA

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR 2021

Population
0.106 Millions

GDP
489 Millions current US\$

Merchandise trade¹
(e) 292 Millions current US\$

Land area²
(o) 720 Km²

GDP growth
-3.20 %

Transport services trade³
115 Millions current US\$

MARITIME KEY FIGURES FOR 2021

Coast/area ratio²
1 262.5 m/km²

Ship building⁴
..

Ship recycling⁴
..

Fleet - National flag⁵
32 Thousands DWT

Fleet - National flag⁵
31 ships

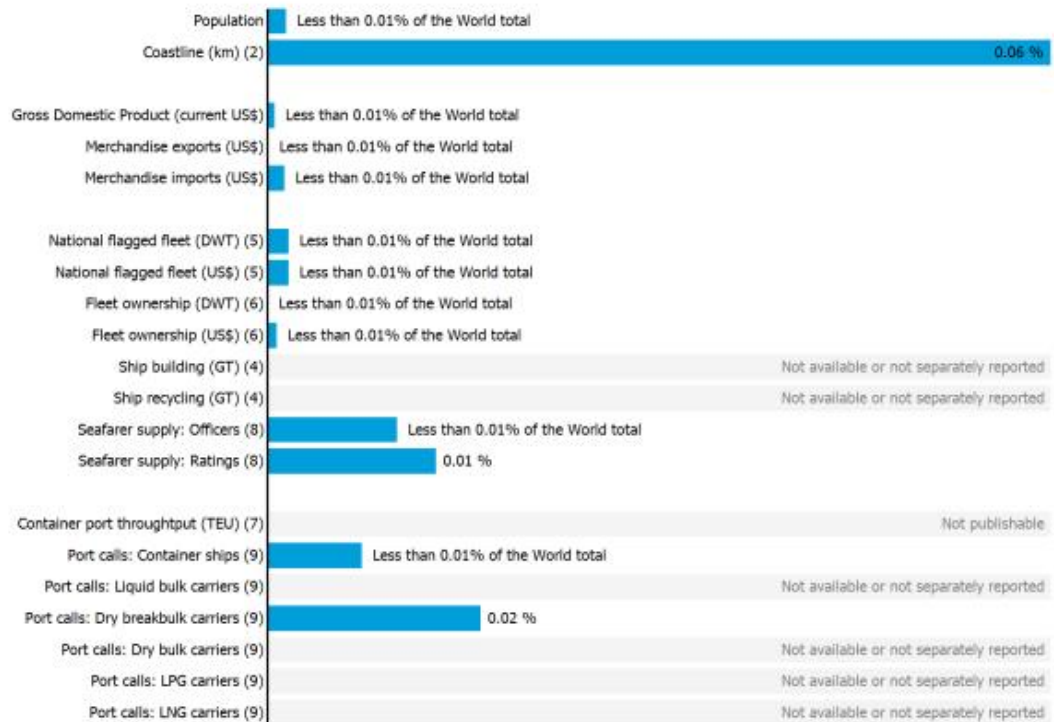
Fleet - Ownership⁶
0.538 Thousands DWT

Container port throughput⁷
-

Number of seafarers⁸
(I) 203

Number of port calls⁹
96

WORLD SHARES FOR 2021



INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT FOR MARITIME TRANSPORT COST DATA

Maritime Administrations

The Marine and Ports Division of the Ministry of Infrastructure (MoI) is the national agency responsible for overseeing the strategic development of the Tongan maritime industry and for ensuring a safe, secure, and efficient and pollution free maritime and shipping industry. The authority of the Marine and Ports Division is derived from five current national maritime legislations³ and there are nine new regulations currently being reviewed for the next financial year. Key activities for the Division centre around the following: Maritime Enforcement and Compliance; Maritime Safety and Security; Marine Environment; Harbour Management and the newly proposed Port Resilience.

The Marine and Ports Division currently manages and operates services to the following ports: Halaevalu Port (Vava'u); Taufa'ahau Port and Puluotu Port (Ha'apai); Futu Port and Pasivulangi Port (Niuas); and, Nafanua Port (Eua). Port operations are covered in detail under "Port Administration" section.

The Marine and Ports Division office does not collect any data relevant to this project.

National Statistics Office

Tonga Statistics Department (TSD) is the principal authority for official statistics. It is part of the Ministry of Finance and National Planning, with the Government statistician reporting directly to the Minister. There are two established offices, the main in Tongatapu and the other branch in Vava'u. TSD divides its coverage over five key programs: (i) Leadership and Policy Advice; (ii) Economic Statistics; (iii) Population and Social Statistics; (iv) Censuses and Surveys; (v) Statistical Coordination, Standards, and Trainings.

The Tonga National Statistical System (TNSS) is the network of interrelationships and workings of the public, government, and some private organisations that produce, provide and use statistics and statistical information. According to the TSD website, these agencies comprise of the following: Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Forest and Fisheries; Ministry of Fisheries; Tonga Visitors Bureau; Ministry of Revenue and Customs; Ministry of Infrastructure; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Internal Affairs; Tonga Energy and Environment Department; Tonga Meteorology Department; Ministry of Finance; National Reserve Bank of Tonga; Tonga Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc.

TSD, like national statistical agencies elsewhere, undertakes a regular program of statistical collections, comprising of Population and Agricultural censuses, every five and ten years respectively; social and economic household surveys, ideally every 5 years; as well as establishment surveys and business register updates. TSD also undertakes more frequent or ongoing collections, such as quarterly price surveys, and compiles data captured by other agencies in order to produce annual population updates on births, deaths, and population movement.

At the Regional Roundtable on Improving the Availability of Maritime Transport Costs Data in the Pacific, held between 15 – 16 February of this year in Suva, Fiji, the Tongan delegation shared that there is an existing MOU between TSD and the Customs Services Division. Annex 1 provides data mapping that the delegation shared with the participants.

³ Shipping Act & its Subordinates Regulations 1988, Marine Pollution Prevention Act 2002, Ports Management Act 2002, Harbours Act and Wharves Act.

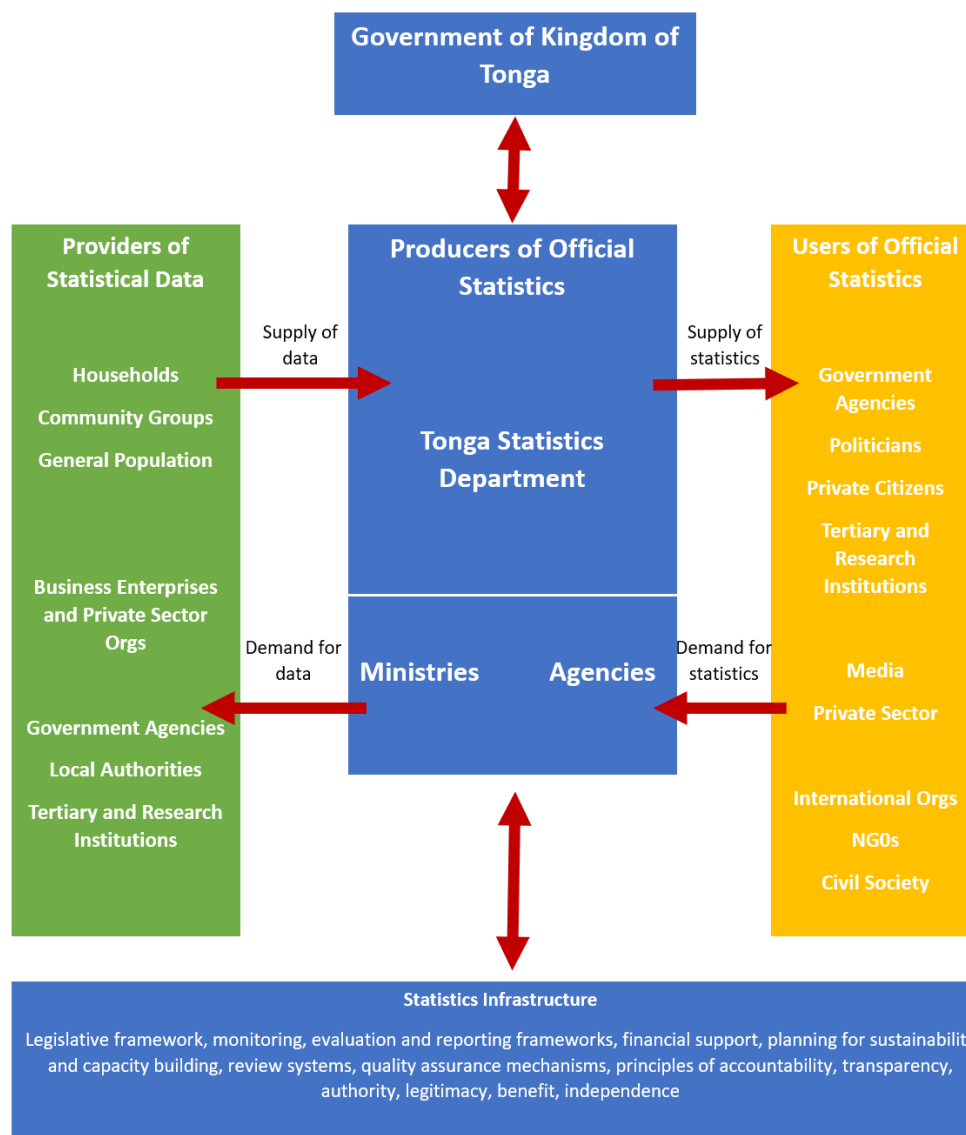


Figure 2: Tonga National Statistical System (source: <https://tongastats.gov.to/about-us/national-strategy-for-the-development-of-statistics/>, accessed 20 May, 2023).

Customs Administrations

The Customs Services Division under the Ministry of Revenue and Customs (MORC), inform, educate and facilitate any tax and Customs-related services between MORC on behalf of the Government of Tonga, with its key counterparts and stakeholders: businesses, taxpayers and the people of Tonga.

The COVID-19 pandemic challenged MORC's mandated functions in terms of revenue collection, border security and facilitation of legal trade; thus, priorities were refocussed through a "Kafataha Approach" (a project type operations). An organizational re-alignment also occurred focusing on empowering larger business group as the main source of Government domestic tax revenue. Under its current structure, three programs and eight sub-programs cover MORC's mandated work.

Tonga is party to the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) Plus Free Trade Agreement and through this mechanism, the Customs Services Division has acquired the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) system - a customs management system designed by UNCTAD, launching it on 1 August 2022.

Port Authorities

There are three main ports in Tonga: Neiafu, Nuku'alofa and Pangai. Nuku'alofa is the central hub for transport in Tonga and international import and export cargo shipping. It is also the entry point for international cruise ships. Nuku'alofa Port complies with relevant international and IMO operating requirements. The Nuku'alofa ports on the main island of Tongatapu, including Queen Salote Wharf, Vuna Wharf and the Yellow Pier, are managed and maintained by the Ports Authority Tonga (PAT). The main port at Nuku'alofa was corporatized in 1999 as a statutory authority.

The existing ports have sufficient capacity for foreseeable needs however the standard of infrastructure has suffered from a lack of investment in core infrastructure and facilities, and insufficient emphasis on maintenance of outer-island ports and channels. These issues are being addressed as part of the government's National Infrastructure and Investment Plan (NIIP) and there are currently three infrastructure-related projects in the pipeline for port upgrades.

Nuku'alofa harbour is the only deep-water harbour of the islands; it is the central hub for boats to the outer islands. Nuku'alofa port is a fairly deep harbor basin of approximately 3 by 10 kilometres surrounded by fringing reefs. There are two main channels into the alongside berth, one from the north available to all vessels and the other from the east for vessels of less than 110 m length overall (LOA). The Marine and Ports Department provide and maintain good solar powered navigation aids. There are two alongside berths and a mooring dolphin for discharge of oil and LPG cargoes. Nuku'alofa, as the major port of Tonga, supports container, ro-ro, general cargo and tanker traffic.

Approximately 200 vessels per annum use the port ranging in size from 4,000 to 50,000 Gross register tonnage (GRT) for passenger ships and from 1,500 to 14,000 GRT for merchant ships.

Shipping Agents

The following listed international shipping agents were identified to the SPC team while in-country, however, arrangements to meet respective agents were unsuccessful.

- **Transam Dateline Shipping Agency**
Pacific Direct Line (now Neptune Pacific Direct Line - NPDL) / Transam Shipping Tonga and Dateline Shipping Agencies merged their respective agencies in Nuku'alofa.
- **Pacific Forum Line (PFL)**
Founded by 12 Pacific Forum countries in 1978, PFL has been deemed both a shipping company and an instrument for regional development for over 35 years. PFL is active in Liner and project cargoes in the Pacific, servicing Samoa's, Tonga and Fiji at least once a week. The parent company is a joint venture between Government of Samoa and NPDL.
- **Mataliki Shipping Services (Nuku'alofa) / Vava'u Shipping Services (Vava'u)** in and in Matson Shipping Ltd. Vava'u Shipping Services also provide stevedoring services at Halaevalu Wharf.
- **Swire Shipping Ltd**
Swire Shipping has a long history calling in to Tonga, spanning more than six decades. A new office in Nukualofa was opened in October 2022. Via various liner services it has moved import and export cargo, and now continues to serve the community via two liner services, Pacific North Asia Service and New Zealand Eastern Pacific Service. In the 1960s, Swire Shipping also operated a passenger cruise service that called at Tonga.

There are two major companies marketing and supplying fuel in Tonga: Total and Pacific Energy SWP Limited. Since early 2009 a local Tongan company, Vatu, has been supplying the Ha’apai group of islands direct from Fiji using their own Local Coastal Tankers (LCT). The Niuaus are supplied with drums from Tongatapu. Total Energies and Pacific Energy operate a 30-day reserve. The largest single consumer of petroleum fuel is Tonga Power which uses diesel for electricity generation. Total Energies has the contract to supply this. Jet fuel/kerosene is only supplied to Tongatapu.

The cost of petroleum fuel in Tonga is made up of four main components: cost of the fuel on the international market (44%); cost of the supply route to get it to Tonga (9%); supplying companies operating costs and recovery on their investment (9%); taxes and levies applied by Authorities and the Government of Tonga (38%). There are no seasonal variations. Fuel price is Government controlled.

STATUS OF DATA COLLECTION

Commodity Data

Customs Services Division provided raw data sets detailing entry and exit of merchandise goods for the years 2014-2022. Secondary source from PAT also provided imports and exports from 2014-2017 and 2020-2021. TSD provided International Merchandise Trade Statistics for 2014-2021.

Trade Data

International

Annual exports by item (HS Code), country, quantity (kg), & value
 Annual imports by item (HS Code), country, quantity (kg), & value
 Annual Re-exports by item (HS Code), country, quantity (kg), & value
 Importers - transport costs
 Exporters - transport costs

2022 2021 2020 2019 2018 2017 2016 2015 2014

	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Annual exports by item (HS Code), country, quantity (kg), & value	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Annual imports by item (HS Code), country, quantity (kg), & value	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Annual Re-exports by item (HS Code), country, quantity (kg), & value	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Importers - transport costs	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Exporters - transport costs	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

National Macroeconomic Data

TSD supplied gross domestic product (GDP) data for 2011-2020 and inflation data from 2014- 2021. Contributions from sectors to GDP was also provided for 2020. Labour Force Survey for 2013 & 2018 was also shared to the SPC team.

Macro Economic Data

GDP - real, per capita, by sector
 Consumer price index, by month and year
 Employment statistics

2022 2021 2020 2019 2018 2017 2016 2015 2014

	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
GDP - real, per capita, by sector	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Consumer price index, by month and year	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Employment statistics	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Trade Routes

The following illustrate the routes of the designated shipping lines servicing Tonga.

There are three routes for Matson Shipping Ltd:

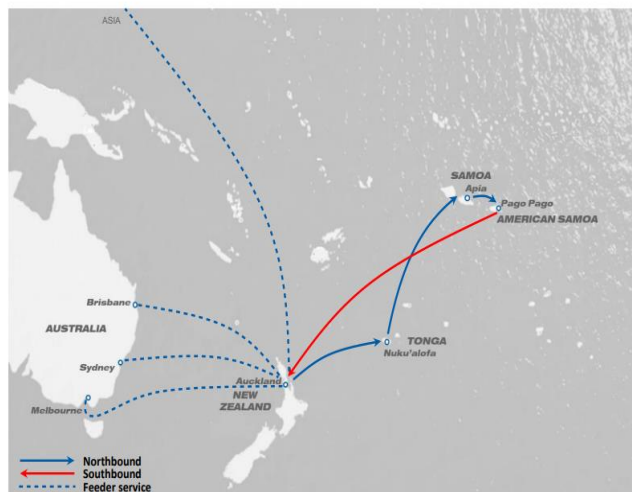
- i. Auckland -> Nukualofa -> Suva -> Apia -> Pago Pago -> Rarotonga -> Aitutaki -> Nukualofa -> Auckland.
- ii. Auckland -> Nukualofa -> Lautoka -> Suva -> Apia -> Rarotonga -> Aitutaki -> Nukualofa -> Auckland.
- iii. Auckland -> Nukualofa -> Lautoka -> Suva -> Apia -> Pago Pago -> Niue -> Vavau -> Nukualofa -> Shanghai.

Cargo from Australia and China are transhipped in Suva.

As mentioned previously, Swire Shipping service Tonga in their Pacific North Asia Service and New Zealand Eastern Pacific Service respectively. The Pacific North Asia Service is a weekly multi-purpose liner service accepting all types of containerized, breakbulk and project cargo connecting North Asia main ports with the Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, New Caledonia, Fiji, Tonga, the Samoa's and Tahiti. The New Zealand Eastern Pacific Service operates every 10 days from Auckland with connections from all main New Zealand ports to and from Tonga, Fiji, the Samoa's, Tahiti, the Cook Islands and Niue.

Figures 3 and 4 below show the routes for PFL as stated on their website.

Australia & NZ – Samoa, American Samoa & Tonga | Southpac



Service Highlights

- Weekly connections from Asia and Australia via NZ
- Breakbulk and project cargo also accepted

Transit time in days

Northbound

From	To	Nuku'alofa	Apia	Pago Pago
Auckland		4	6	7
Frequency		← 18 days →		

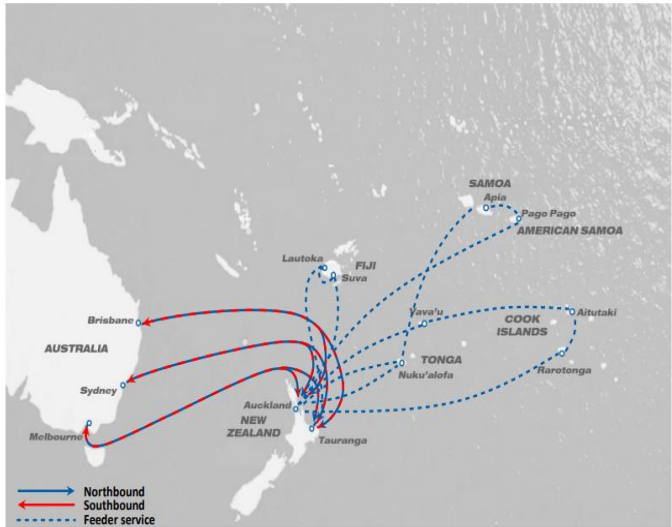
Southbound

From	To	Auckland
Nuku'alofa		13
Apia		10
Pago Pago		7
Frequency		18 days

Vessel Specifications

Southern Moana
 TEU Capacity: 907 TEU
 Reefer Capacity: 100 Plugs
 Speed: 17 Knots
 Built: 2008
 Flag: Singapore

Figure 3: Pacific Forum Line Southpac Route (source: <https://www.pacificforumline.com/services/>, accessed 26 May 2023)



Service Highlights

- 🌀 Weekly departures from Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane to Fiji
- 🌀 Weekly return services from Fiji to Australia
- 🌀 Australia to Tonga and return every 9 days
- 🌀 Samoa and American Samoa every 18 days
- 🌀 Connections to NPDL's inter-island network via Fiji
- 🌀 Breakbulk and project cargo also accepted

Transit time in days*

Northbound							
	To	Suva	Lautoka	Apia	Pago Pago	Nuku'alofa	Rarotonga
From							
Brisbane		12	14	16	17	13	24
Sydney		14	17	18	19	15	26
Melbourne		12	14	16	17	13	24
Frequency		weekly	weekly	18 days	18 days	9 days	15 days

* Transit time from Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne is based on optimal schedule, but may vary depending on transshipment timing

Figure 4: Pacific Forum Line Auspac Relay Service Route (source: <https://www.pacificforumline.com/services/>, accessed 26 May 2023)

Port Calls and Ship Characteristics

PAT supplied the various port and fleet data sets for 2019-2022. IMO call numbers were not recorded, however, PAT data showed that container vessels had the highest port calls, specifically being general cargo and followed by tankers.

Fleet Data

- Vessel call data by port, IMO, date, time, etc.
- Vessel characteristics by name, by type

2022 2021 2020 2019 2018 2017 2016 2015 2014

Port Data

- Vessel call data by port, IMO, date, time, etc. (no times)
- Fees & Charges, by type, unit of measure, rate
- Ports' container throughput, by port, by type

2022 2021 2020 2019 2018 2017 2016 2015 2014

Trade Throughput

PAT supplied the below data set for 2016-2022. Figure 5 depicts the steady volume of cargo throughput for the Kingdom. For 2020, overall cargo volume showed an 11% decrease as compared to the previous year noting the impacts of border closures due to COVID-19, reducing imports and exports.

I. Nuku'alofa Port Cargo Throughput 2016-2020

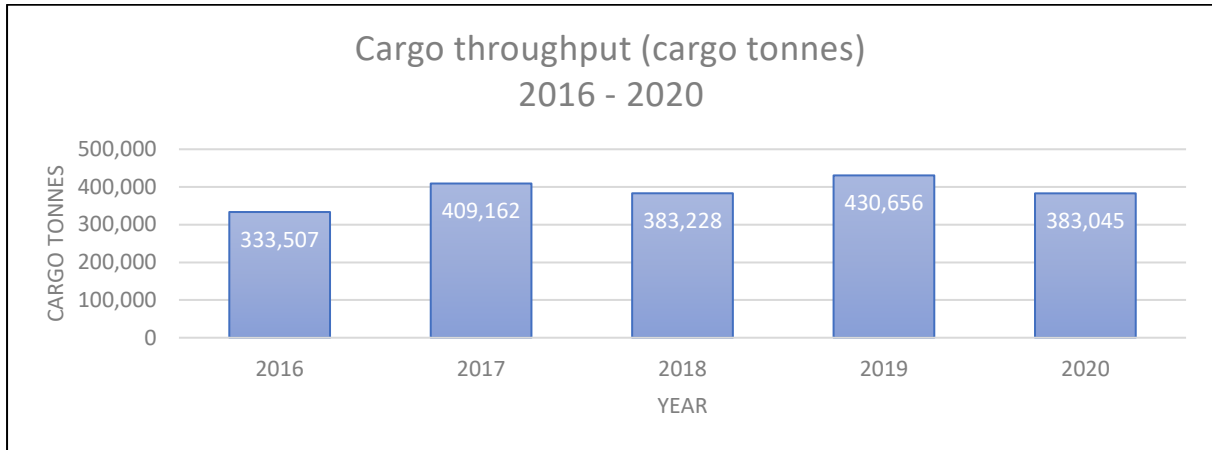
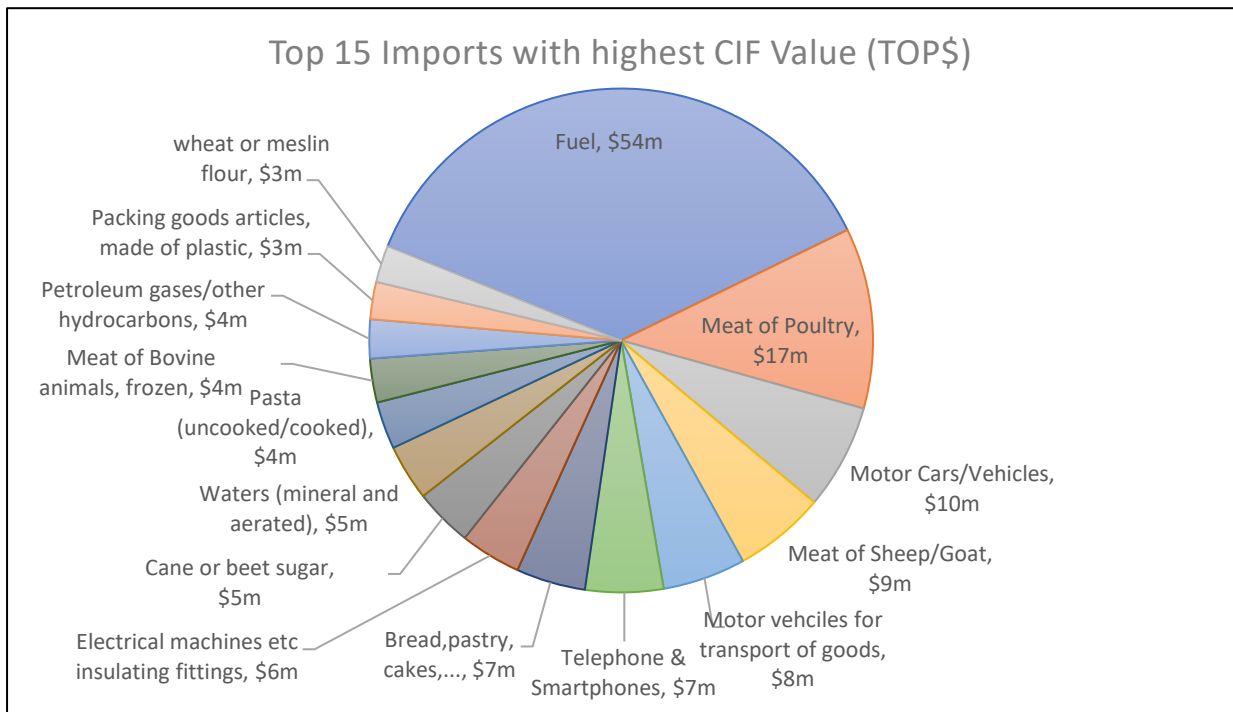


Figure 5: Cargo throughput at Nuku'alofa from 2016 – 2022

Figure 6 shows that refined petroleum of fuel was the highest recorded import in 2021, approximately, TOP\$ 30.3 million, making Tonga the 193rd largest importer of Refined Petroleum in the world.

II. Top 15 Imported Products with highest CIF value in 2021



Freight Rates (noting associated units)

Customs Services Division shared the freight rates from 2014-2022 recorded in Tongan Pa'anga (\$).

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Data Access Framework: With regards to data collection efforts, a key insight identified in Tonga was the approach of getting top-down approval and clearance, which proved useful in accessing data using the data sharing MOU mentioned above. It is understood that a cross-government department level of examination and/or endorsement is needed before access is given to government held information. Through this authorization, government stakeholders were more forthcoming with the raw data.

This may also reflect how statistical coordination amongst various government ministries is structured in Tonga, especially concerning ownership, use and control of statistical data. At the Regional Roundtable on Improving the Availability of Maritime Transport Costs convened by MTCC Pacific in February 2023, there was strong indication that TSD would be the primary entity to host the collection and storage of maritime statistics noting that TSD's TNSS is a tool the department is using to strengthen and enforce Tonga's Statistics Act of 2015 mandate of coordination amongst the relevant stakeholders.

Limited Resources: Similar to other Pacific Islands Countries in this project, TSD are constrained by limited resource allocations, dealing with the datedness and irregularity of accessible data, and statistical products. These key limitations need to be addressed prior to any further efforts on future data collection of maritime statistics in particular.

Connectivity Issues due to Natural Disasters: In support of disaster recovery and emergency responses following the calamities Tonga faced between 2020 to 2022, TSD looked to the ASYCUDA system to be a disaster-resilient customs management system that would help the country's economic recovery through the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the disasters of Tropical Cyclone Harold and the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcanic eruption and tsunami. This however has not been an easy transition into digitization, with TSD noting that since the migration from paper-based/manual systems as of 24 February 2023, access to stable and affordable internet access continues to be a challenge, especially for traders. TSD were also mindful that many government ministries, agencies and partners do not have automated systems and thus the transition has been staggered.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Tonga country mission, carried out by one SPC staff, took place from 28th October – 5th November 2022. Stakeholders from the Ministry of Transport’s Marine and Ports Division, Port Authority, Statistics Office, and Customs Service Division were visited and interviewed during the week.

The SPC team collected the following data sets:

- Trade data from 2014 – 2021
- GDP 2020 - 2021
- National Accounts data from 2014 – 2021
- GDP Contributions by sector 2020 – 2021
- Labour Force Survey for 2013 & 2018
- Port Calls and Ship Characteristics 2019 – 2022
- Trade Throughput 2017 – 2022
- Freight Rates 2013 – 2021 recorded in Tongan Pa’anga (\$).
- Trade routes from three shipping agents

While much of the data required for the project was captured, the extent of most of the data sets shared the 2020-2021 datasets were most complete.

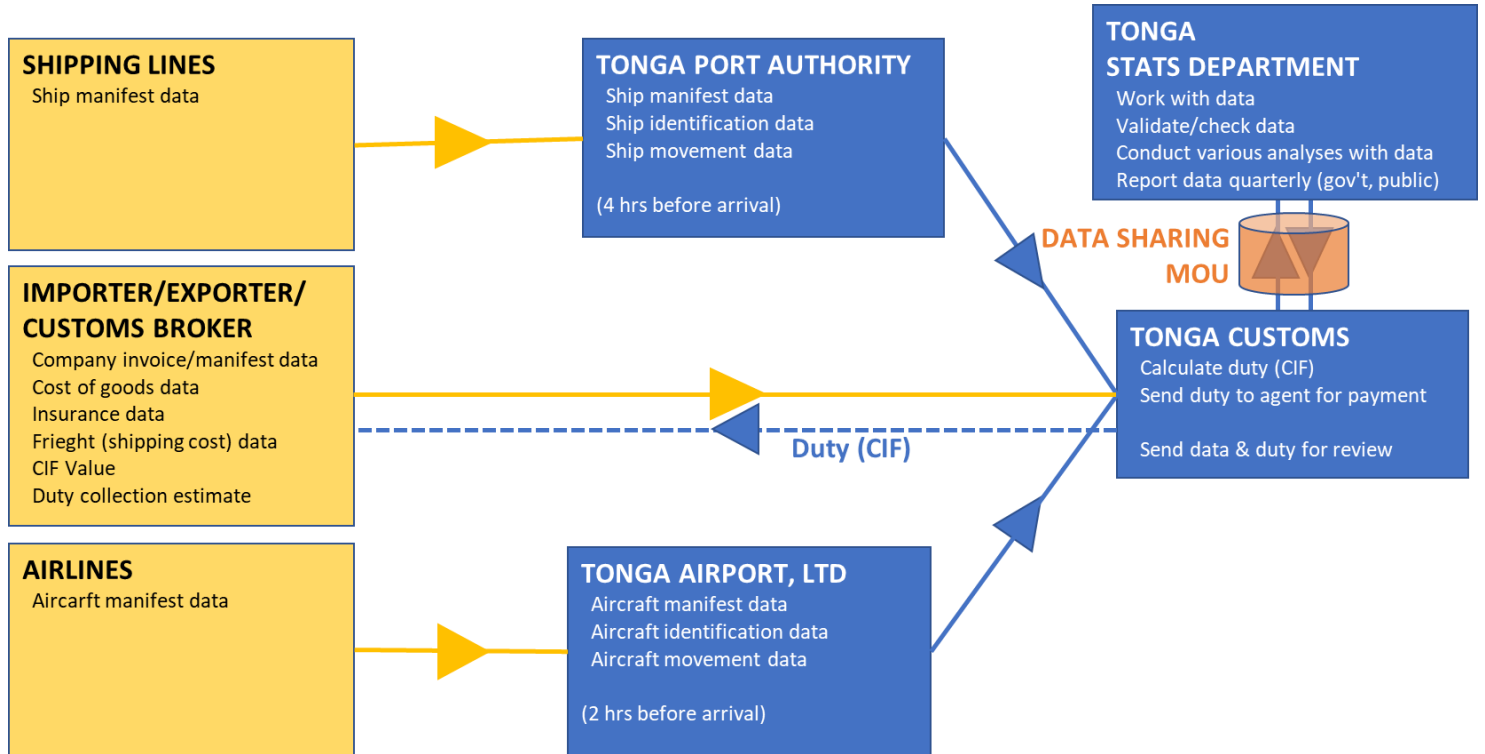
It was noted that identifying and tracking of marine transport costs is not currently a country priority. It would be helpful for the government to indicate the importance and priority to collect and assemble transport cost data, and this would trigger more focus to digitise and automate systems of data collection across all agencies and ministries.

Noting that Tonga suffered considerably following Tropical Cyclone Harold, border closures in early 2020 had been severely disrupted by a double blow from the Hunga Tonga–Hunga Ha’apai volcanic eruption and the first local outbreak of COVID-19 at the start of 2022, coordination and availability of maritime statistics can assist with economic recovery due to global, and now more often climate-induced shocks. It is important however that systems for maritime statistics are disaster resilient.

A tracker (summary) of available data by data category and year is provided in Annex 2. Data may be made available for further analysis by contacting the IMO Secretariat but remains the property of relevant data providers. Additional information such as contact details of focal points in relevant organizations from Tonga can be provided upon request.

ANNEX 1: Data Mapping

The data mapping presented below was provided by representatives of Tonga during the Fiji Roundtable (IMO, <https://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/Pages/WhatsNew>).



ANNEX 2: Data Collection Summary

Macro Economic Data

GDP - real, per capita, by sector
 Consumer price index, by month and year
 Employment statistics

2022 2021 2020 2019 2018 2017 2016 2015 2014

Trade Data

International

Annual exports by item (HS Code), country, quantity (kg), & value
 Annual imports by item (HS Code), country, quantity (kg), & value
 Annual Re-exports by item (HS Code), country, quantity (kg), & value
 Importers - transport costs
 Exporters - transport costs

2022 2021 2020 2019 2018 2017 2016 2015 2014

Domestic

Annual exports by item (HS Code), country, quantity (kg), & value

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Fleet Data

Vessel call data by port, IMO, date, time, etc.
 Vessel characteristics by name, by type

2022 2021 2020 2019 2018 2017 2016 2015 2014

Port Data

Vessel call data by port, IMO, date, time, etc. (no times)
 Fees & Charges, by type, unit of measure, rate
 Ports' container throughput, by port, by type

2022 2021 2020 2019 2018 2017 2016 2015 2014

Data Mapping

Data providers, organizations, positions, contact info, etc.
 Commodity/Essential Goods data mapping
 Commodity/Essential Goods economic data mapping
 Trade route mapping
 Data mapping

Y P N

Macro economic data
 Trade data
 Fleet data
 Port data

Notes

port annual reports 2013, 2020, 2021 pdf; port cargo xlsx 2020
 port fees & charges 2013
 customs data includes manifests 2017, with transport cost data, fees, surcharges, in pdfs at the manifest level
 transport cost data high resolution 2011-2017, 2020, 2021 in xlsx
 labor force surbey 2003