

The Benefits of Strong Hydrographic Services in the SW Pacific Region

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ABSTRACT

Ever since waterways and seas became the primary mode of movement of trade and people between nations, the development and practice of hydrographic surveying has been vital to national development and the global economy. The provision of hydrographic data is essential for the proper management of the marine environment and achieving a strong economy within Small Island Developing States. Hydrographic services provided are often overlooked in spite of, and because of, their fundamental importance. Whilst marine researchers often use the hydrographic products, the services and products are often overlooked and marginalised because of a lack of understanding of what hydrographic services can provide. Strong hydrographic services are vital to Small Island Developing States for the facilitation of national trade, economic growth, defence and national wellbeing. These States depend on the marine environment for their economic survival with regard to exploration of marine resources, whether these resources are fisheries, minerals or tourism. The nature of hydrographic services, and the products they can provide, are so fundamental to environmental protection that they are often overlooked as a source of foundation or base line data on which to base marine management policies and action.

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