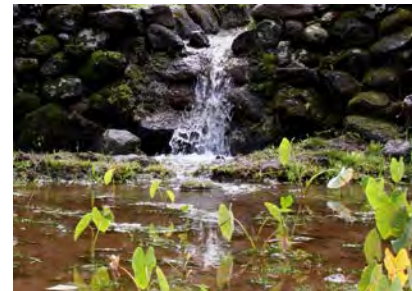




# STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2019

*Supporting Climate Change Adaptation*



PACIFIC ISLANDS  
CLIMATE CHANGE COOPERATIVE

## PACIFIC ISLANDS CLIMATE CHANGE COOPERATIVE

### Member Organizations:

- American Bird Conservancy
- Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum
- Hawai'i Conservation Alliance
- Hawai'i Wetland Joint Venture
- Kamehameha Schools
- Micronesia Conservation Trust
- Office of Hawaiian Affairs
- Pacific Science Association
- State of Hawai'i Dept. of Land & Natural Res.
- The Nature Conservancy Hawai'i
- Trust for Public Lands Hawaiian Is. Prog.
- U.S. Army Garrison Hawai'i
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Geological Survey
- U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Admin.
- U.S. National Park Service
- U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Office of Insular Affairs
- University of Hawai'i

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### Charter Purpose

The Pacific Islands Climate Change Cooperative (PICCC) is a self-directed, non-regulatory conservation alliance whose purpose is to assist those who manage native species, island ecosystems, and key cultural resources in adapting their management to climate change for the continuing benefit of the people of the Pacific Islands.

### Mission Statement

The PICCC will improve the ability of native island species and ecosystems to accommodate future climate change and related perturbations, and support the long-term protection of key cultural resources by providing useful projections of climate and natural resource change in the Pacific Islands, innovative management options, and a membership that supports coordinated action among institutional and community stakeholders.

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**PACIFIC ISLANDS CLIMATE CHANGE COOPERATIVE**  
**STRATEGIC PLAN: 2014-2019**  
*Supporting Climate Change Adaptation*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### a. Basis for Strategic Planning

Global climate change may well be the existential challenge of our time. In response, governmental and non-government organizations, communities, and individuals are becoming increasingly aware of and outspoken on the actions needed to understand, mitigate, and adapt to its effects.

In 2009, the Department of the Interior (DOI) recognized the need to address this issue and its effects on natural and cultural (biocultural) resources and the communities associated with them. Through Secretarial Order 3289<sup>1</sup> in 2010, an international network of landscape conservation cooperatives (LCC) was created to provide scientific capacity and technical support for tracking climate change and other large-scale stressors that no one management agency or organization could address on its own. The Pacific Islands Climate Change Cooperative (PICCC) is the LCC for Hawai'i and the U.S. affiliated Pacific Islands.

Established in 2009, the PICCC is a voluntary collaboration of Federal and State governmental agencies, academia, indigenous, and non-governmental organizations. The purpose of the PICCC is "to assist those who manage native species, island ecosystems, and key cultural resources in adapting their management to climate change for the continuing benefit of the people of the Pacific Islands."<sup>2</sup>

Over the past several years, agencies and organizations throughout the Pacific have expended considerable resources to conduct research, produce assessments, and project future conditions to better comprehend the nature and effects of climate change on biocultural resources under their stewardship. Knowledge has increased across various geographic scales, species, and systems; however, the translation and application of this knowledge into biocultural resource management planning and action has remained elusive.

In 2012, the PICCC acknowledged this issue and initiated a strategic planning process to sharpen the focus and align the collective efforts of the Cooperative's membership to advance climate change adaptation across Hawai'i and the U.S. affiliated Pacific.

*"Do we just get together to talk so we know what's going on? Or are we trying to get better individually? Or do we want to achieve something bigger together as a group?"*  
- PICCC Steering Committee Member

## b. Purpose of Strategic Plan Document

This Strategic Plan is written for the members and agencies that comprise the PICCC. It is a consolidation and synthesis of nearly 20-months of planning and decision-making into a single summary document that articulates the Steering Committee's intent to strategically align its actions during the next 5-years to further assist and guide climate change adaptation within the U.S. affiliated Pacific.

This Strategic Plan serves as a guide for individual Cooperative member organizations and for the PICCC as a collective when discussing and deliberating priorities and actions over the next several years. In addition, this Strategic Plan serves as the foundation for a communications strategy when engaging with local, regional, national, and international organizations and partners.

## II. STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND FIVE-YEAR GOALS

### a. Planning Process and Findings

In preparation for developing a Strategic Direction and Goals, the PICCC conducted a series of planning activities including:

- Landscape/SWOT Analysis<sup>3</sup> to better understand and clarify the PICCC's roles, internal and external relationships, and the needs, barriers, and issues confronting organizations as they seek to better adapt to climate change;
- PICCC Member Assessment<sup>4,5</sup> to identify and inventory the strategies, plans and actions of member organizations that have resource management responsibilities;
- Preference Exercise<sup>6</sup> to focus attention and strategic thinking on the collective preferences and priorities of the Cooperative; and
- Strategic Planning Retreat<sup>7</sup> to allow for the development of Strategic Direction and the identification of Strategic Goals

These analyses and activities provided many important insights about the PICCC, its partners, and working environment. The key findings that were instrumental in formulating the Strategic Plan are grouped below.

*"Facilitating consensus is great. But as leaders we have to make tough choices. If everything is 'mooshy middle', you'll lose people."*

- PICCC Steering Committee Member

### Regarding the Cooperative's identity:

- The PICCC **reaffirmed its Charter Purpose** "to assist those who manage native species, island ecosystems, and key cultural resources in adapting their management to climate change for the continuing benefit of the people of the Pacific Islands."; and
- The PICCC occupies a **unique niche** among conservation organizations due to its focus on biocultural resources and adaptation to climate change. Members and others offered that the PICCC elevate this focus to a wider audience via connection, cooperation, communication, and capacity building to deliver specific products and services such as: tools, visualizations, policy recommendations, knowledge syntheses, and best practices.

### Concerning PICCC's Organizational Role:

- The PICCC is seen to best serve as a **boundary organization** to transmit or coordinate information and assistance over the spectrum of adaptation that connects science, traditional knowledge and practices, and management actions.

### In prioritizing key focal areas and topics:

- Members support management approaches focused on **sustaining ecosystem functions and services**;
- Members chose to focus on **biocultural resources at a system level** that emphasizes the interactions of ecosystems (terrestrial, fresh water, marine) as well as human-ecological interactions that pertain to cultural identity and livelihoods;
- Members wanted the PICCC to direct efforts at the **intra-subregional spatial scale** which they defined to include island/atoll groups (or political jurisdictions), individual islands/atolls, or subdivisions of large islands (e.g. Hawai'i, Maui, etc.); and
- The PICCC believes it can best support climate change adaptation by informing specific **resource management plans and conservation actions**.

*"We need more emphasis on being a boundary organization. But let's not view any of these functions in a hierarchy, but as a matter of strategy."*  
- PICCC Steering Committee Member

## b. Strategic Direction and Goals:

Based on the planning process and findings, the PICCC articulated a Strategic Direction and established two goals to guide its activities during the next five years. The Strategic Direction and Goals below were adopted by the PICCC Steering Committee in December 2013<sup>8</sup>.

### Strategic Direction

Global climate change is occurring in the Pacific Islands. Native biodiversity, ecosystem function, and the ecosystem services that support traditional lifestyles, customary practices, and resource stewardship are being progressively degraded. Sustaining these biocultural resources and benefits requires effective adaptation to climate change.

Accordingly, the PICCC will direct its collective efforts during the next five years to promote climate change adaptation involving ecosystem and human-ecological interactions by influencing targeted resource management plans and actions. These efforts will focus on specific islands or atolls in Hawai'i, American Samoa, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, the Republic of Palau, or within the Marine National Monuments.

### Strategic Goals

The PICCC will undertake this Strategic Direction for five years and seek to influence a targeted number of resource management plans and actions by pursuing the following two goals:

**Goal 1:** Facilitate Climate Adaptation: The PICCC will support targeted managers and decision-makers in utilizing relevant assessments, tools, and techniques for resource management planning and implementation.

**Goal 2:** Foster Partnerships: The PICCC will maintain key international, regional and local partnerships in order to cultivate the optimal conditions for climate change adaptation to occur.

*"You need products -  
and get them out."  
- PICCC Steering  
Committee Member*

## III. LOGIC MODEL AND CHANGE APPROACH

We developed a Logic Model to depict the causal connections between the Strategic Direction and Goals (Figure 1). This Model provides a

concise synthesis of the steps the PICCC needs to take in order to transform goals into activities, activities into milestones, and milestones into successful attainment of our strategic direction. The Logic Model is a high-level construct and purposefully does not provide details at the program or project level.

Beginning the Logic Model with the Strategic Direction, the PICCC reasoned that climate adaptation actions focused on ecosystem and human-ecological interactions are the means to achieving our desired long-term outcome: that of sustaining biocultural resources and benefits in Hawai'i and the U.S. affiliated Pacific Islands. The Members further refined this strategic direction by agreeing to focus our efforts on the development and implementation of targeted resource management plans and actions.

The PICCC developed two strategic goals to support managers and decision-makers as they incorporate climate change adaptation into their resource management plans and actions. We will generate or make readily available climate change assessments, tools, and techniques (Goal 1); and maintain key partnerships to cultivate the conditions for adaptation to occur (Goal 2).

In further developing the Logic Model, the PICCC identified the following major outputs necessary to achieve Goal 1:

- Assessing and identifying management planning and implementation opportunities;
- Securing commitment from targeted managers and decision-makers that need assistance;
- Producing relevant assessments, tools, and techniques (products and services);
- Delivering products and services, and manager and decision-maker consultation; and
- Supporting managers and decision-makers to integrate adaptation in plans and actions.

Similarly, we identified the following major outputs are necessary to achieve Goal 2:

- Assessing the decision-making environment for potential regional partners;
- Identifying key partners that can influence targeted management plans and actions;
- Planning and deploying Cooperative members and networks to engage key partners;

*"Organizations that can explain WHY they exist, not just WHAT they offer, are more successful."*

- PICCC Steering Committee Member

*"Nothing will happen here (in the islands) unless you build trust. That takes a person, a body, a pair of eyes to look into."*

- PICCC Steering Committee Member



- Sustaining key partner relations through presence, responsiveness, and relevance; and
- Influencing key partners to support approval of targeted management plans and actions.

We further identified in the Logic Model, key activities necessary to complete each of the major outputs for Goals 1 and 2, which form the basis of program-level goals, outputs, and activities.

In sum, the Logic Model is the PICCC’s “theory of change” that identifies outputs and outcomes at organizational and programmatic levels; guides the development of programs and activities; and sets a framework for monitoring and evaluating performance.

#### IV. STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The PICCC used the major outputs and activities from the Logic Model to construct a 62-month schedule to put the Strategic Plan into action. This Implementation Framework<sup>10</sup> (Framework) consists of administrative and procedural elements that align the organization and its focus towards the Strategic Direction (Figure 2). The Framework identifies new program-level processes to advance the Strategic Goals and synchronize program activities with annual funding cycles. It also establishes a schedule for monitoring and evaluating program performance. Each of these elements is described in greater detail below.

##### a. Organizational Transition and Alignment:

The PICCC’s Strategic Direction emphasizes climate change adaptation and gives greater definition to Cooperative’s role as a boundary organization positioned to influence resource management plans and actions. This is a conscious shift to a management-driven approach to adaptation. We recognize the time investment needed to effectively engage managers, decision-makers, and partners on targeted plans and actions will vary, and thus we’ve designed the Framework for maximum flexibility.

During the first year of Strategic Plan implementation, the PICCC will complete the following tasks to transition the organization from past practices and align its activities:

- i. Orient PICCC programs towards “Adaptation Initiatives”: The PICCC adopted a new approach of coordinating and planning its activities within discrete focal groupings that align with the

*“It’s time to deliver.”*  
- PICCC Steering  
Committee Member

PICCC's priorities. These "adaptation initiatives" allow the PICCC to apply the appropriate and needed science, communication, consultation, evaluation, and coordination products and services to resource managers or decision-makers to support climate adaptation. Accordingly, the PICCC's administrative and operational programs (science, culture, data management, and communications) will be reconfigured to effectively function in this new way of operating.

- ii. Form an Adaptation Initiative Working Group: To support the development and implementation of adaptation initiatives, the PICCC Steering Committee approved the formation of the Adaptation Initiative Working Group (AIWG). This working group will supersede previous working groups for science, planning, and data management. The AIWG will support the PICCC Team by providing policy guidance, technical assistance, and decision-making capabilities on behalf of the full Steering Committee.
- iii. Align current PICCC-funded research towards Goals 1 and 2: This Strategic Plan is being implemented in the midst of previously-funded PICCC research yielding rich results. Consequently, the PICCC will assess previous or on-going research and seek opportunities for influencing adaptation-related outcomes.

#### **b. Adaptation Initiative Development:**

The PICCC will follow an active and iterative process to develop each adaptation initiative, resulting in a management organization or cohort of managers adopting a climate change adaptation plan or implementing an adaptation activity. This process will follow the steps below:

- i. Annual priorities for adaptation initiatives: On an annual basis the PICCC Team and AIWG propose for Steering Committee consideration a set of priorities to guide the development of one or more adaptation initiatives for the forthcoming funding cycle. Annual priorities will align with one or more elements of the strategic direction, strategic goals, and the PICCC's overall purpose.

*"Don't spoon-feed us. It'll make us lazy. We have to be careful not to leave it all on staff shoulders and the Steering Committee just rubber stamp decisions."*  
- PICCC Steering Committee Member

*In May 2014, the PICCC Steering Committee approved the annual priorities for first two years of the Strategic Plan. The priority for Year 1 (July 2014-June 2015) of the Strategic Plan is to review and transition existing PICCC activities into adaptation initiatives as described in Section IV.a.iii above. The priority for Year 2 (July 2015-June 2016) is to focus on developing adaptation initiatives in the western and south Pacific subregions.*

- ii. Adaptation initiative solicitation: For Year 2 and beyond, the PICCC's members and their networks will reach out to prospective resource managers to request responses only for initiative concepts that align with the details of the PICCC's Strategic Direction and the priorities identified for each year.
- iii. Initial consultation: The PICCC Team will consult with the responsive managers and decision-makers to better understand their needs regarding their proposed plan or action as well as determine if they align with the PICCC's capabilities.
- iv. Preliminary review and proposal invitation: The PICCC Team will discuss preliminary findings with the AIWG, conduct an initial sorting of the potential adaptation planning and/or implementation initiatives and invite select managers to submit a full proposal.
- v. Proposal review and selection: The PICCC Team and AIWG will review proposals according to pre-identified criteria and weighting pertaining to: a proposal's scope, cost, timeframe, scientific or technical needs, partners or collaborators, value to the PICCC, and impact to resources. Separate but comparable criteria may be developed for planning-focused proposals versus implementation-focused proposals. Final selection of an initiative will be discussed and approved by the Steering Committee.
- vi. Adaptation initiative agreement: After selection, the PICCC Team will develop an agreement that acknowledges in writing the shared understanding of the PICCC, the resource manager(s), and contributing partners to the initiative outcomes. The signed agreement marks the start of the adaptation initiative and allows the PICCC to begin its project development activities (e.g., execute research grants).

*"I'm proud of [the PICCC]. I want to help."*  
- PICCC Steering Committee Member

Depending on the complexity of the initiative, the process described above could span up to 12-months from development to execution.

However, we foresee the likelihood of a manager or decision-maker approaching the PICCC with a near-term, time-sensitive adaptation planning or implementation opportunity. Thus, we've designed this process to be scalable and flexible.

**c. Synchronizing Project Development and Federal Funding Cycles:**

The PICCC's research grants are funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and subsequently bounded by the annual federal budget and appropriation process. During the past four years, this funding process has occurred in the spring of each calendar year, with administrative deadlines for submitting contracts and encumbrance of funds in May through July. The PICCC has aligned the Framework with this funding cycle.

Once an agreement for an adaptation initiative has been executed, the PICCC will consult with the initiative partners, the AIWG, and relevant outside experts to identify the products and services needed by the resource managers or decision-makers.

The acquisition of these initiative-specific products and services will form the basis of each year's project development and funding. To implement this process, we will: 1) define needed products and services; 2) identify principal investigators and cooperators; 3) define project scope; 4) provide guidance for proposal development and submission; 5) review and select successful proposals; and 6) prepare and execute funding contracts or agreements.

**d. Performance Monitoring and Evaluation:**

The PICCC will develop evaluation metrics that consider both the process of implementation (formative) as well as the results of the PICCC's implementation actions (summative). By conducting formative and summative evaluations during the implementation of the Strategic Plan and incorporating learning from them, the PICCC will continue to improve our efficiency on subsequent efforts and initiatives.

We will conduct formative evaluations throughout the development and implementation of an adaptation initiation or its project(s), as well as the life of Strategic Plan itself. For these evaluations we will monitor feedback of observed successes and challenges against a baseline of identified pre-existing conditions and needs so that we can

*"Science to story"*  
- PICCC Steering  
Committee Member

make program adjustments “on the fly” to help achieve the Strategic Goals.

At the end of an initiative we will conduct summative evaluations to assess whether we have achieved the intended goals and if the outcomes are effective. Depending on the complexity of an initiative, we may conduct summative evaluations of an initiative’s component projects.

In addition, the PICCC will conduct a broader summative evaluation near the end of the Strategic Plan 5-year timeline to assess the impact the Strategic Plan implementation as a whole. We will consider the outcomes of the various initiatives and their cumulative, long-term impact on sustaining Pacific Island biocultural resources and their benefits. The results of this evaluation should offer insights for subsequent strategic plans as well as the PICCC’s organizational mission and purpose.

## V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We gratefully acknowledge the involvement and guidance from a number of individuals and organizations who were instrumental in completing this Strategic Plan. In particular, the members of Planning Working Group whose patience and contributions were essential throughout the 18-month planning process. The efforts of Dr. Susanne Moser were critical in guiding the planning process and providing clarity for the PICCC to define its role and assess its strengths and areas for improvement. Ms. Eavailaufaumu Sala’s analysis of plans and activities being conducted by PICCC member organizations in the Pacific region was informative and much appreciated. Ms. Meredith Speicher of the National Park Service was vital as an organizer and facilitator for PICCC’s strategic planning retreat and guiding the PICCC to the development of its Strategic Direction and Goals. We thank the many partners in Hawaii and the south and west Pacific for their willingness to share their perspectives, concerns and needs during interviews conducted in 2013. And lastly, we applaud the members of the PICCC Steering Committee for their commitment to this process, participation in the various exercises, surveys, and interviews, and for their affirmative support in decision-making on key aspects of the Strategic Plan.

The PICCC Team looks forward to working with the Steering Committee and partners during the next five years as we collectively implement this Strategic Plan to advance the understanding and practice of biocultural climate change adaptation in the Pacific.

*“We joined PICCC because we had to. But we would have done it anyway. It’s a no brainer. It’s the right thing to do.”*

- PICCC Steering Committee Member

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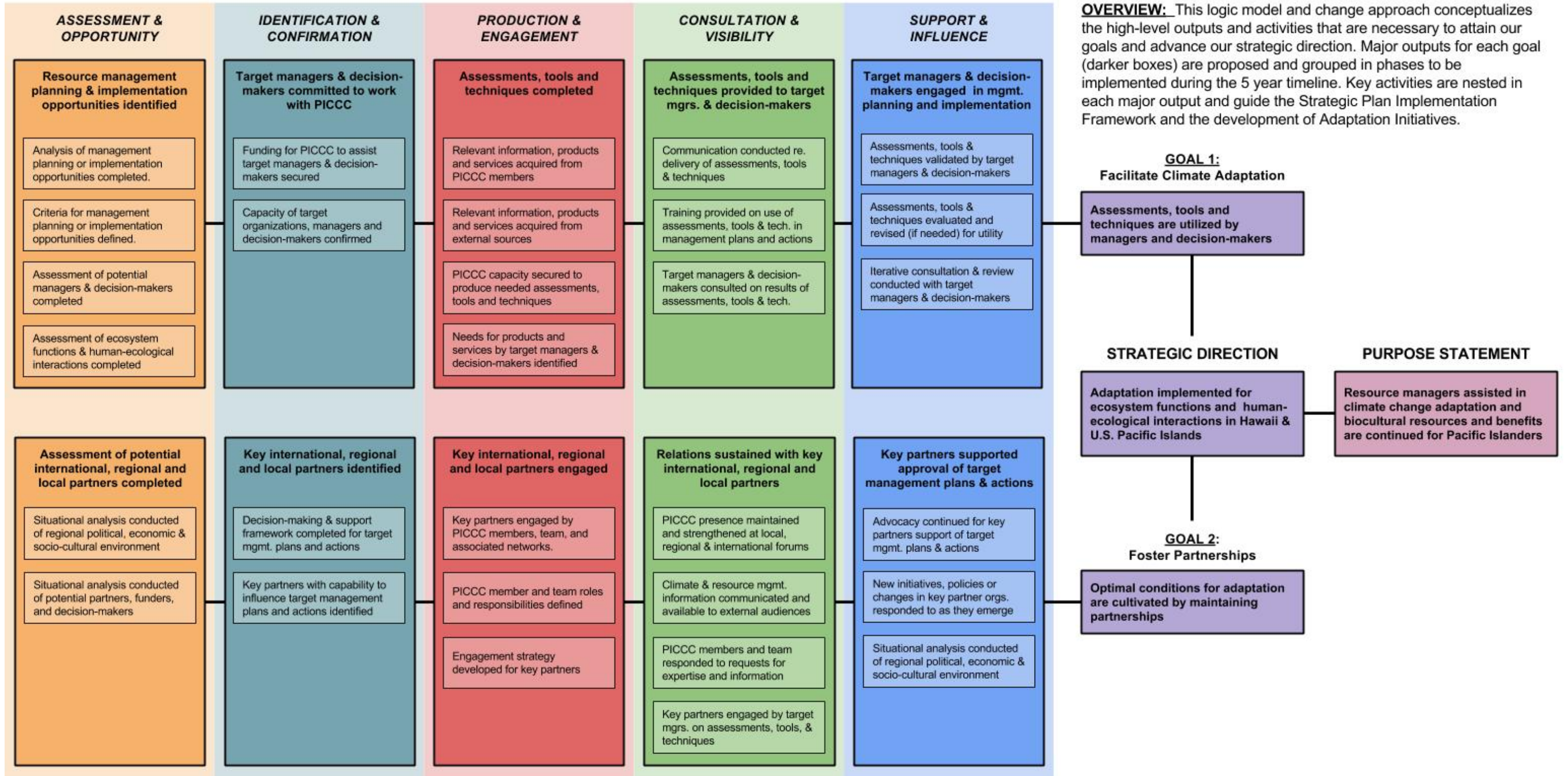
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## **VII. FIGURES**

- **FIGURE 1: LOGIC MODEL AND CHANGE APPROACH**
- **FIGURE 2: STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK**



**FIGURE 1: LOGIC MODEL AND CHANGE APPROACH**



**OVERVIEW:** This logic model and change approach conceptualizes the high-level outputs and activities that are necessary to attain our goals and advance our strategic direction. Major outputs for each goal (darker boxes) are proposed and grouped in phases to be implemented during the 5 year timeline. Key activities are nested in each major output and guide the Strategic Plan Implementation Framework and the development of Adaptation Initiatives.



