MCST
Micronesian Center for Sustainable Transport

Press Release

For Immediate release

1 April 2026

MCST team co-author PBSP article - "Sailing Through Time: Building Pacific Maritime Resilience".

A new scholarly article titled "Sailing Through Time: Building Pacific Maritime Resilience" has been published in the peer-reviewed journal Global Policy, offering fresh insights into decarbonising maritime transport across Oceania.

The article is a multidisciplinary collaboration by an international team of co-authors, including several Micronesian Center for Sustainable Transport (MCST) researchers. The publication is led by Christiaan De Beukelaer – a Senior Lecturer in Culture and Climate at the University of Melbourne. The article examines the Pacific Blue Shipping Partnership (PBSP) — a bold initiative designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in one of the world's most vital and challenging maritime regions.

The peer reviewed article focuses on the PBSP's context within international maritime decarbonisation and the unique challenges faced by Pacific Island States. Drawing on Oceania-centred interdisciplinary perspectives, including Indigenous knowledge systems and contemporary climate science, the article argues for the integration of traditional Pacific seafaring practices with modern sustainable technologies.

The study explores opportunities that the cultural, historical, and technological aspects of wind-propelled shipping in the Pacific present for this integration. Highlighting the recent delivery of the modern sailing cargo ship *SV Juren Ae* to the Marshall Islands as a Pacific-led milestone, the authors demonstrate how this proof-of-concept vessel could be scaled and deployed across multiple routes in multiple Pacific Island States.

The *Juren Ae* is now operating in the Marshall Islands. This prototype for low-emission cargo shipping using wind propulsion marks a significant milestone. Hundreds of new vessels are needed to ensure energy independence, lower transport costs, and reliable service. The Pacific Blue Shipping Partnership brings countries across Oceania together to build this fleet by sharing knowledge and exchanging ideas.

Going from one prototype to a full fleet is complex, costly, and challenging. The Juren Ae proves the practicality of wind-powered cargo shipping. For Pacific Island nations facing high fuel costs and complete dependence on imported fuels, working vessels like this offer a realistic pathway to energy security, lower transport costs, and reduced emissions.

The paper contrasts the PBSP's potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and strengthen energy security in the region, with the financial, technical, and political challenges of implementing such a transition. It identifies key areas for further research and policy development, emphasising the need for a transdisciplinary approach that balances environmental, political, cultural, and economic considerations. The authors argue that the PBSP could serve as a model for collaborative regional leadership in maritime sustainability - potentially reshaping how states and communities collaborate towards long-term habitability across Oceania.

“This article illustrates that climate action needs to be anchored in local realities and knowledge. MCST sees global collaborations like these as central to our work: we build research partnerships to tackle complex challenges together, the Pacific way. The PBSP is not an initiative parachuted in by outside consultants, it has been developed by Pacific Islanders and grounded in local knowledge. Though it is not work we do in isolation. Collaborations like this article, with colleagues at Solomon Islands National University, the University of Hawaii, Transport Ministries in the Marshall Islands and Fiji, as well as the University of Melbourne help us strengthen our strategic initiatives while building long-term research capacity within MCST and the Pacific.”

Maria Sahib, MCST Co-Director and article co-author

The article is part of a “special collection” on “Tracing the Future(s): Tracing our legacies to shape a more inclusive future” in the Global Policy. This special collection explores how tracking historic traces of the past constitutes a way to tracing a potentially regenerative and more inclusive future in regional developments and major scientific projects. It is designed to explore the interplay between technology legacy, commercialization, and visions for regenerative and inclusive futures. MCST would like to thank Nikita Chiu (Durham University) for leading this special collection and including our collective work.

Are you keen to learn more about the Pacific Blue Shipping Partnership (PBSP)? Join the upcoming MCST webinar "Exploring Maritime Technologies for the Pacific: Existing Solutions and Future Pathways" on Wednesday, 08 April 2026 11:00 AM FJT / RMI (GMT+12).

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For further information, contact:

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About PBSP

The Pacific Blue Shipping Partnership (PBSP) is an ambitious Pacific, country-driven initiative, for a large-scale blended finance investment to catalyse a multi-country transition to sustainable, resilient, and low carbon shipping. The PBSP targets domestic shipping to zero carbon by 2050 with a 40% reduction by 2030.

About MCST

The Micronesian Center for Sustainable Transport (MCST), a Marshall Islands government-owned research center, is dedicated to promoting sustainable transport solutions in the Pacific region and beyond. MCST collaborates with various stakeholders to address the challenges of climate change and support the transition to a low-carbon future.

Website: https://www.mcstrmi.org