



FACT SHEET

Expanding digital connectivity in Palau via a submarine cable system

Project Name: Palau ECHO Submarine Cable Branch System

AIFFP INVESTMENT

LOAN: AUD12.6 million

GRANT: AUD2.1 million

PARTNERS

Belau Submarine Cable Corporation

Palau National Government

Japan Government

United States Government

CONSTRUCTION

2022 onwards

COMPLETION

Mid 2026

About the project

Australia, through the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific (AIFFP), has provided a loan and grant package to the Palau National Government alongside support from the Japan and United States Governments to construct Palau's second undersea cable. The submarine cable branch system will be a dedicated branch off the proposed ECHO cable network, which will pass within 200 kilometres of Palau, building on the bandwidth capacity afforded by Palau's first submarine cable constructed in 2017. The project will

provide increased reliable, secure digital connectivity in Palau and improved access to government services, including health and education, as well as opportunities to boost tourism, business and investment. The AIFFP is also providing support to strengthen Palau's digital regulatory environment and increase awareness of cyber safety, in partnership with the Palau Bureau of Communication. The project marks the first to be delivered under the Trilateral Infrastructure Partnership between the United States, Australia and Japan.

Map





Infrastructure highlights

In partnership with governments and private sector firms in the Pacific, the AIFFP facilitates the delivery of high quality, resilient infrastructure. This project's anticipated infrastructure footprint will include:



BRANCH SYSTEM

INTO PALAU OFF ECHO
SUBMARINE CABLE NETWORK



200 KILOMETRES

FROM PALAU TO
THE ECHO CABLE SYSTEM



LANDING STATION

AT NGARDMAU,
PALAU

Impact at a glance

The AIFFP prioritises lasting development and economic outcomes for people and communities. Its approach is guided by five impact areas: local content; climate resilience; social and environmental safeguards; gender equality, disability and social inclusion; and quality and integrity.

The project aims to provide reliable, secure and affordable internet connectivity to Palau and redundancy for its sole existing submarine cable. Its impact to date includes:

GENDER EQUALITY, DISABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Building on earlier work commissioned by the AIFFP into gender, social inclusion and digital connectivity in Palau, the AIFFP is working with the Palau Bureau of Communications to address harmful digital communication and **prioritise cyber safety**. The program of support will strengthen the regulatory environment; help establish a support mechanism to manage and address online harm; and facilitate community engagement activities to **increase awareness** of the potential risk of online harm as a result of increased connectivity to the community and particularly women, girls and people living with a disability.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE

The project will provide more **robust connectivity** to communities, building on the bandwidth capacity enabled by Palau's first undersea cable. The cable landing station was placed in an elevated, inland position, **reducing the chances of an outage** in the event of adverse marine and weather events caused by climate change.

LOCAL CONTENT

The project **contributed significantly to local employment**, creating opportunities for local workers and companies. Belau Submarine Cable Corporation procured the civil works contract from a local contractor, to a value of **USD1.36 million**. The project is also expected to generate up to **500 local jobs**.

